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Capt. Nichola Goddard, 'a person with passion'; Calgary funeral honours first female combat soldier killed in battle.

PUBLICATION: The Guardian (Charlottetown)

DATE: 2006.05.27

SECTION: Canada

PAGE: A9

SOURCE: CP

PHOTO: canadian press photo canadian press photo

DATELINE: Calgary

ILLUSTRATION: Jason Beam, right, the husband of Capt. Nichola Goddard, wears a Memorial Cross as he follows the coffin of his wife into the church for her funeral service in Calgary.; Members of the Royal Canadian Horse Artillery carry the coffin of Capt. Nichola Goddard into the church for her funeral service in Calgary, Friday. Goddard was killed by enemy fire in Afghanistan on May 17.

WORD COUNT: 509

In his final act as her father, Tim Goddard lovingly ran his hand over the length of the flag-draped coffin of his daughter Nichola – just moments after delivering a heart-rending eulogy for the young artillery captain.

"Yours was a short life but a good one. You had so much promise, so much potential, and the world is a far lesser place with your passing," Goddard said in a speech that moved many of the 600 mourners at her Friday funeral to tears.

Capt. Nichola Goddard, 26, died May 17 in a grenade attack by Taliban insurgents. She was Canada's first female combat soldier to die in battle and the 17th Canadian soldier to die in Afghanistan.

"Ours has become a very public grief, but I would urge you to remember our beautiful girl not just as a soldier, not just as the first Canadian woman killed in combat," he said. "But as a person with passion – one with a great enthusiasm for life."

Goddard also used his eulogy to criticize Prime Minister Stephen Harper's Conservative government for its new policy of barring the news media from covering repatriation ceremonies for fallen soldiers.

"I find it troubling that the privacy decision means that we are keeping the press outside the wire," he told mourners. "I would like to think Nichola died to protect our freedoms, not to restrict them."

In Victoria, Harper said the policy was never meant to go against any family's wishes and he would re-examine it.

Nichola Goddard died on her father's birthday, and he read from a letter she had written to her parents on her own birthday, May 2. The letter arrived after her death.

"I have been thinking a lot about fate lately," she wrote.

"It seems to me that we have such a responsibility to make the world a better place for those who were born into far worse circumstances. It is more than donating money to charities.

"It is taking action and trying to make things better. You have both shown me that throughout my life, but here, I realize it more than ever before."

A grey sky and light rain greeted Goddard's flag-draped coffin as it arrived at the church on an artillery gun carriage pulled by a Second World War gun tractor. Mourners were given a red poppy, Canada's symbol of war remembrance, as they entered the church and miniature Canadian flags once the service was over.

At the front of the church, the young soldier, helmetless and dressed in battle fatigues smiled widely from a large photo taken in Afghanistan.

Her father drew laughter as he lovingly related anecdotes about Nichola's mischievous childhood.

Jason Beam, Nichola's widower, recounted how the couple met during basic training and fell in love between such mundane army chores as shining their boots.

Beam said leafing through some photos over the last few days brought back cherished memories of their time together, including many camping trips.

"We had so many excellent adventures and good times together. I remember all of our long walks with our dogs, Sam and Bill, just the four of us, miles away from civilization, chatting for hours," Beam told the crowd at St. Barnabas Anglican Church, the same church where the couple married in 2002.

"I'm going to miss you so much, Nic. I still can't believe you're gone. I'm going to miss your smile, your laugh and your company. Most of all, I'm going to miss having my best friend to share life with. I love you, Nic."

CANADIANS FIGHTING LONG, BLOODY BATTLE

PUBLICATION: The Winnipeg Sun

DATE: 2006.05.27

EDITION: Final

SECTION: News

PAGE: 10

ILLUSTRATION: photo by Bob Weber, CP Bombardier Jim Clark of the Royal Canadian Horse Artillery watches for the return of Canadian soldiers engaged in rooting out Taliban from the village of Banzya, Afghanistan.

SOURCE: BY CP

DATELINE: BANZYA, Afghanistan

WORD COUNT: 322

Eight suspected Taliban prisoners squatted in the old crater left by a long-ago Russian bomb, handcuffed, blindfolded with duct tape. A Canadian soldier stood over them, rifle ready, and summed up the last 48 hours of what will become known as the Battle of Panjwai in two terse sentences.

"Last night we were fighting for our lives. Today we're taking them prisoner."

For nearly two weeks, hundreds of Canadians have been fighting in the mud-walled villages of the Panjwai district west of Kandahar, facing large concentrations of Taliban militants who — unusually — have chosen to fight rather than fade away.

The battle, a hide-and-seek affair of house-to-house searches and sudden, ferocious ambushes, has cost lives both Afghan and Canadian. Forty Taliban fighters were reported killed and 40 others captured in Panjwai last week in a battle that also took the life of Capt. Nichola Goddard, whose funeral was held in Calgary yesterday.

And still the fighting continues.

"We're not 100% sure why (the Taliban) are fighting so hard for this area," said Capt. Dave Johnston of Second Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry.

"But this is definitely the main event now."

On Wednesday and Thursday, the big action came to Banzya — one of many villages in the desert along the Arghandab River that contains within its drab ramparts irrigated vineyards, tiny wheat fields, pomegranate orchards, a little marijuana and poppies and a maze of lanes and compounds.

BEDDING DOWN

A long convoy of light armoured vehicles — or LAV IIIs — and G-Wagon patrol vehicles had pulled into an adjacent field the previous night, its soldiers bedding down on the flat plain of dust and goat droppings. By 8 a.m., about a dozen soldiers had filed through Banzya's main gate to begin the operation.

The Canadians set up a blocking cordon along one side of the town. Then, working with the Afghan police and army, they formed a line at right angles to the cordon. They started from one end of the cordon, searching homes, poking down alleyways and questioning villagers, moving along methodically like a squeegee

cleaning a window. KEYWORDS=WORLD

A FAREWELL TO NICHOLA DAD CRITICIZES HARPER DURING MOVING EULOGY

PUBLICATION: The Winnipeg Sun

DATE: 2006.05.27

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SECTION: News

PAGE: 10

ILLUSTRATION: 1. photo by Mikael Kjellstrom, Reuters The flag-draped casket of Capt. Nichola Goddard is brought into St. Barnabas Church in Calgary yesterday. 2. photo by Jim Wells, Reuters Goddard stops at the casket of his daughter during yesterday's service. 3. photo of NICHOLA GODDARD

SOURCE: BY CP

DATELINE: CALGARY

WORD COUNT: 459

In his final act as her father, Tim Goddard lovingly ran his hand over the length of the flag-draped coffin of his daughter Nichola — just moments after delivering a heart-rending eulogy for the young artillery captain.

"Yours was a short life but a good one. You had so much promise, so much potential, and the world is a far lesser place with your passing," Goddard said in a speech that moved many of the 600 mourners at her funeral to tears yesterday.

'PERSON WITH PASSION'

Capt. Nichola Goddard, 26, died May 17 in a grenade attack by Taliban insurgents. She was Canada's first female combat soldier to die in battle and the 17th Canadian soldier to die in Afghanistan.

"Ours has become a very public grief, but I would urge you to remember our beautiful girl not just as a soldier, not just as the first Canadian woman killed in combat," he said. "But as a person with passion — one with a great enthusiasm for life."

Goddard also used his eulogy to criticize Prime Minister Stephen Harper's Conservative government for its new policy of barring the news media from covering repatriation ceremonies for fallen soldiers.

"I find it troubling that the privacy decision means that we are keeping the press outside the wire," he told mourners. "I would like to think Nichola died to protect our freedoms, not to restrict them."

In Victoria, Harper said the policy was never meant to go against any family's wishes and he would re-examine it.

Nichola Goddard died on her father's birthday, and he read from a letter she had written to her parents on her own birthday, May 2. The letter arrived after her death. "I have been thinking a lot about fate lately," she wrote.

"It seems to me that we have such a responsibility to make the world a better place for those who were born into far worse circumstances. It is more than donating money to charities.

"It is taking action and trying to make things better. You have both shown me that throughout my life, but here, I realize it more than ever before."

Goddard is the second father to speak out about the government policy while burying his child.

At Cpl. Matthew Dinning's funeral in Wingham, Ont., last month, Lincoln Dinning criticized Harper on two fronts: for the government's banning of the media at repatriation ceremonies, and for its decision to stop lowering flags on Parliament Hill to half-mast upon the death of a soldier.

Just two weeks earlier, Dinning had penned a letter to the prime minister decrying the flag decision.

Harper, at a Conservative fundraiser in New Brunswick the day of Dinning's funeral, didn't respond to the remarks.

The situation was different yesterday when the prime minister suggested some type of communication problem led to the media being banned again from covering a repatriation ceremony.

"I'm troubled to hear that," Harper said in Victoria. "I had given fairly clear instructions that when bodies were to come home, that families should be consulted and if all families agreed on making that particular ceremony public, then I thought our government should have no difficulty with that."

"I'm not sure what happened in this case. I spoke with Mr. Goddard this week. He didn't raise the issue with me so I didn't realize there is a problem."

He added he would try to figure out what went wrong. KEYWORDS=CANADA

FRONTPAGE COPS, CYCLISTS CLASH TWO-WHEELED ACTIVISTS ARRESTED AFTER 'CRAZY' RUN-IN WITH POLICE

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SECTION: News

PAGE: 1

ILLUSTRATION: 1. photo by John Woods NOT YOUR AVERAGE BIKER GANG Police arrest a member of the Critical Mass activist group downtown yesterday. 2. photo of NICHOLA GODDARD 'SO MUCH PROMISE' Nation bids farewell to slain soldier 'So much promise' Nation bids farewell to slain soldier p.10

WORD COUNT: 0

FAREWELL TO A SOLDIER CAPT. GODDARD'S LAST LETTER HOME

PUBLICATION: The Toronto Sun

DATE: 2006.05.27

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SECTION: News

PAGE: 37

ILLUSTRATION: 2 photos by Jim Wells 1. The coffin is carried into the St. Barnabas Anglican Church, during a memorial service for Capt. Nichola Goddard. 2. Hands rest on a memorial service program. 3. photo by Kevin Udahl Husband Jason Beam and parents Sally and Tim Goddard say goodbye. 4. photo by Darren Makowichuk A woman comforts a boy. 5. photo by Brett Gundlock Young mourners weep as the coffin is driven away.

WORD COUNT: 328

Clockwise from left: The coffin is carried into the St. Barnabas Anglican Church, during a memorial service for Capt. Nichola Goddard; husband Jason Beam and parents Sally and Tim Goddard say goodbye; young mourners weep as the coffin is driven away; hands rest on a memorial service program; a woman comforts a boy.

This is a letter written by Capt. Nichola Goddard on May 2, her birthday.

Her parents, Tim and Sally Goddard, received it exactly one week after she was killed.

The days seem to move along at their own pace. Some days fly by and others creep along.

We are officially at the half-way point now, though. I can't believe that I've been here for three months. In some ways, it feels like I've been here forever. In others, as if I just got here. I am sort of getting used to things, I guess. I try to remind myself to appreciate every experience -- even the ones I don't really enjoy.

I have been thinking a lot about fate lately. It was such an accident of birth that we ended up where we did when we did. That we are where we are now, with the choices that we have available to us. It seems to me that we have such a burden of responsibility to make the world a better place for those who were born into far worse circumstances. It is more than donating money to charities -- it is taking action and trying to make things better. You have both shown me that through my life -- but here, I realize it more than ever before.

My current job and role in Afghanistan is part of that -- but it is more the non-governmental organizations that come later. They are the ones that really make the difference. I like to think that my being here means they will be able to come that much sooner and operate that much more freely.

I will be looking for more opportunities to volunteer in Wainright and to really try to make a difference. It is very humbling to be here, part of something so much bigger than myself. KEYWORDS=CANADA

'SHE DIED A SOLDIER'S DEATH' NICHOLA GODDARD LAID TO REST

PUBLICATION: The Toronto Sun

DATE: 2006.05.27

EDITION: Final

SECTION: News

PAGE: 3

ILLUSTRATION: 1. photo of NICHOLA GODDARD Killed in battle 2. photo by Mikael Kjellstrom, CP Jason Beam, husband of Capt. Nichola Goddard, pauses beside her coffin during a funeral in Calgary yesterday.

SOURCE: BY PABLO FERNANDEZ, SUN MEDIA

WORD COUNT: 199

Tim Goddard and his eldest daughter Nichola had agreed to meet yesterday.

The meeting did take place but it wasn't in Kabul, as the University of Calgary professor and his artillery officer daughter had originally intended.

Instead, Tim and Nichola found themselves together outside St. Barnabas Anglican Church in Calgary, in the rain.

Tim and his wife Sally walked under umbrellas and behind their daughter's casket as it was carried slowly on the shoulders of soldiers from her second family, the 1st regiment of the Royal Canadian Horse Artillery.

More than 600 people — family, friends, soldiers, dignitaries and perfect strangers — looked on as Nichola's loved ones said farewell to a young woman who, at 26, had already lived a lifetime.

Tim gave a heart-wrenching eulogy to his fallen daughter, at the end of which, he stood by her casket, tapped it once, choked up slightly and whispered, "farewell Nichola."

Showing more pride for his daughter than sorrow for his loss, Tim talked about his daughter's "promise, so much potential."

"And the world is a far lesser place with your passing," he said. "Nichola lived more in her lifetime than many of much longer years."

Nichola was killed on May 17, while serving as a forward observation officer with the Canadian task force in Afghanistan.

She died in an ambush following a day-long operation launched against Taliban fighters by coalition forces and in which Nichola distinguished herself, her commanders have since said.

In death, Nichola made history as the first Canadian woman soldier to be killed in combat.

"She was a soldier and she died a soldier's death," Tim said. "And now she's home."

KEYWORDS=CANADA

PM BACKPEDALS ON MEDIA BAN

PUBLICATION: The Toronto Sun

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SECTION: News

PAGE: 3

ILLUSTRATION: photo of STEPHEN HARPER "Families should be consulted"

SOURCE: BY PABLO FERNANDEZ AND CP

WORD COUNT: 183

Prime Minister Stephen Harper's decision to keep the media away from flag-draped caskets returning from war-torn Afghanistan flies in the face of what his daughter died for, said Tim Goddard.

At Capt. Nichola Goddard's funeral in Calgary yesterday, Goddard criticized Harper's decision to keep the media out of CFB Trenton when caskets of fallen soldiers arrive from Afghanistan.

"I cannot support that decision," Tim said.

Waiting for the casket to be taken off the aircraft at the Ontario base was heart-wrenching, but a limited number of press representatives would not have intruded in his family's grief, he said.

"I find it troubling that the privacy decision means that we are keeping the press outside the wire, where the bad guys are," he said. "I would like to think that Nichola died to protect our freedoms, not to restrict them."

Last month, the Harper government announced it would no longer permit media into the base when fallen soldiers arrive, saying the policy was permanent.

But yesterday, Harper suggested the situation was the result of miscommunication.

"I had given fairly clear instructions that when bodies were to come home, that families should be consulted and if all families agreed on making that particular ceremony public, then I thought our government should have no difficulty with that," he said. KEYWORDS=CANADA

FRONTPAGE TEARS FOR A SOLDIER A NATION MOURNS NICHOLA GODDARD

PUBLICATION: The Toronto Sun

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PAGE: 1

ILLUSTRATION: 1. photo by Jeff McIntosh, CP 2. photo YOU CAN WIN FREE GAS FOR A YEAR!

WORD COUNT: 0

LETTER OF THE DAY COLUMN

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SECTION: Editorial/Opinion
PAGE: 18
COLUMN: LETTER OF THE DAY
WORD COUNT: 235

A matter of a woman's choice

I respect Mike Strobel's opinion on the matter of women in combat roles traditionally held by men. ("Are we really ready for this?," May 26). I don't have to agree with it though.

As a retired soldier who served in Afghanistan in 2002, where I lost four friends, I can tell you this is not the first time women have been in combat roles.

I have served with a few women who were infantry soldiers. Some are good at what they do and some are not. The same goes with the men.

The kinder and gentler of our species (Strobel's words) are lawyers (a kind and nurturing profession), police officers (serving on the front lines everyday). So why not as combat soldiers?

Women have fought for equality for as long as I can remember. If Canadians want equal rights, then the equality should go across the board.

The Jessica Lynch capture was a media circus that made her a hero, and many men risked their lives to rescue her. Would the same be done for a man? I know it would, but the media would cover it for about 30 seconds.

Why is Strobel bringing up the matter of women in combat? Do the men who have served and died get the same amount of ink?

I agree with Lew MacKenzie — a soldier is a soldier, no matter the gender. Capt. Goddard deserves the same respect as if she were male. To surmise that women are the kinder and gentler gender discredits her as a soldier, a Canadian, and as a woman.

Strobel is wrong about Canada being the only country that puts women up front in combat. Israel has women in the combat arms and has for a long time.

Women (proud Canadians), who are in combat roles, do so by choice. Get over it.

MICHAEL D. WICKS

EDMONTON

(Fair arguments, although Jessica Lynch never asked to be turned into a hero)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR COLUMN

PUBLICATION: The Toronto Sun
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SECTION: Editorial/Opinion
PAGE: 17
COLUMN: Letters to the Editor
WORD COUNT: 623

STROBEL PRAISED

Thank you Mike Strobel for a well-worded opinion on women's suitability in a combat role in the Canadian Forces ("Are we really ready for this?," May 26): He raises an issue that hits home for all Canadians, and is most welcome and refreshing to say the least. I am a 40-year veteran of the forces (regular and reserve) as an army officer. Perhaps we were not ready for the death of Captain Nichola Goddard. She honoured our nation with her dedication to duty and in her unfortunate death while serving in Afghanistan. Her name will join the honoured dead in the Seventh Book of Remembrance. We will mourn her passing and remember her for the quality of person she was in life. She had the right to enrol and to serve in whatever capacity that she chose and qualified to serve, in equal measure with those who served before her, with her and who will serve after her. We need not question her motives or gender-distinction, as Lewis MacKenzie said, with great respect and no differently. No, we are not used to women KIA and I am certain that we would be very alarmed with a woman MIA, especially MIA in a country like Afghanistan where Captain Goddard's gender would rate a fate worse than death in the hands of Taliban or al-Qaida captors. She served there knowing that, in some way, her service would help the people of Afghanistan, especially those of her gender. We will remember her with great respect.

SCOTT FULLER

CAPTAIN (RETD)

CEM, CEP, CRM

MSC, CD

(As she should be remembered)

COLUMN WAS VISCERAL

Mike Strobel's column (May 26) was not really a column at all. A column about women in the military would have advanced arguments about why women are different. Are they different from men in their responsibility to their country? Are they different from men in their ability to bring focused violence as ordered, with discipline? Because Strobel didn't address those questions, his "column" amounted to a written flinch -- one man's visceral reaction to seeing a dead body. We should all flinch, true enough. Then we should get back to doing the right thing as best we can. The Taliban believe women are made of different, less sturdy stuff than men. Capt. Nichola Goddard proved them wrong, and if Canadians are proud of her achievements, they will come to see that we are ready for women in combat.

TAI VIINIKKA

(Strobel said what a lot of people are thinking)

DRIVERS' LIVELIHOODS AT RISK

I was shocked to learn that TTC drivers who are assaulted on the job and disabled as a result of trying to enforce fares are financially penalized for it. What kind of a society are we living in that after being attacked for doing their job, TTC employees would be forced to suffer further consequences. I sincerely hope that Howard Moscoe and David Miller rectify this atrocious situation immediately.

SHANNON MCCARTHY

TORONTO

(We agree it's unfair)

IT'S JUST A NOVEL

Re "Da Vinci Code a disgrace" (Michael Coren, May 20: Are you kidding me? Is Mr. Coren suggesting we are not to question history but are to follow it blindly? I am a Christian and I enjoyed The Da Vinci Code very much as a well written "fiction" novel. I wasn't offended and don't think Dan Brown should be hung for writing his novel. Does Coren really think that this fiction novel could be the downfall of Christianity? Everybody should take a deep breath and realize there are more serious matters happening in the world today.

STEVE LIND

RICHMOND HILL

(Coren objected to fiction being portrayed as fact)

WOMEN HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE WARRIORS

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DATE: 2006.05.26

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SECTION: Editorial/Opinion

PAGE: 22

COLUMN: Editorial

WORD COUNT: 344

Today, a funeral will be held in Calgary for Capt. Nichola Goddard, the first Canadian woman to die in battle while serving in a combat role in our armed forces .

In one sense, she is no different from her 15 male comrades-in-arms who have died defending our freedom in Afghanistan. They were all soldiers — all Canadians. We owe them all an equal debt of gratitude.

But in another sense, Capt. Goddard's death is different and it would be foolish to pretend otherwise. Simply put, her death has added significance because she is a woman.

In the military family, Capt. Goddard may well be remembered as being no different from the men she served with. Those men may feel, and we understand that feeling, that to single her out on the basis of gender is to dishonour her.

But for the rest of us, the death of a female soldier serving in a combat role is different, precisely because she is the first.

Even here, we must define our terms, since there were many brave women who died in our armed forces in the service of their country in World War I and World War II. But not in a combat role, because back then it was not allowed.

Now it is and Capt. Goddard is the first to fall in that role. She won't be the last. And so the question begs: Are we ready for this? Today on Page 6, columnist Mike Strobel makes an eloquent case for why women should not serve in combat.

We respect that view. It speaks to the noble and ancient ideal of chivalry — that women and children should always be the first saved, the last sacrificed.

But while it is an eloquent argument, it is the wrong one. It's wrong because the issue has long been moot for the women who today choose to join our armed forces and to train in combat roles alongside men.

As a nation, we chose to allow women to enter combat roles. We will betray them if we now have second thoughts about what the inevitable consequence of that decision was.

Capt. Goddard made that choice, freely, not because she was a woman but because she was a Canadian who cared about her country and her world. To those who loved her most, she will always be a beloved wife, a wonderful daughter.

For the rest of us, let us remember her, and all those who come after her, as they would want us to. As soldiers. KEYWORDS=WOMEN; CANADA; MILITARY

ARE WE REALLY READY FOR THIS? WOMEN ARE NOT SUITED TO COMBAT ROLE, MIKE STROBEL ARGUES

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SECTION: News

PAGE: 6

ILLUSTRATION: photospread U.S. FEMALE COMBAT SOLDIERS KILLED BY ENEMY FIRE IN IRAQ CONFLICT 1. photo of JUANA NAVARRO 2. photo of AMANDA PINSON 3. photo of NICHOLE FRYE 4. photo of ISELA RUBALCAVA 5. photo of KIMBERLY VOELZ 6. photo of ALEINA RAMIREZ 7. photo of KARINA LAU 8. photo of RACHEL BOSVELD 9. photo of ANALAURA GUTIERREZ 10. photo of RAMONA VALDEZ 11. photo of MYLA MIRAVILLOSA 12. photo of MICHELLE WITMER 13. photo of CARI ANNE GASIEWICZ 14. photo of HOLLY CHARETTE 15. photo of LESLIE JACKSON 16. photo of FRANCES VEGA 17. photo of REGINA CLARK 18. photo of HOLLY MCGEOGH 19. photo of SAM HUFF 20. photo of REGINA REALI 21. photo of LORI PIESTEWA 22. photo of CARRIE FRENCH 23. photo of JULIA ATKINS 24. photo of TOCCARA GREEN 25. photo of JESSICA HOUSBY 26. photo of PAMELA OSBOURNE 27. photo of SHAWNA MORRISON 28. photo of JESSICA CAWVEY 29. photo of LINDA TARANGO 30. photo of TRICIA JAMESON 31. photo of TATJANA REED 32. photo of KIMBERLY HAMPTON 33. photo of ELIZABETH JACOBSON 34. photo of SHARON SWARTWORTH 35. photo of TYANNA FELDER 36. photo by Mike Drew, Sun Media CANADIAN FEMALE COMBAT SOLDIER KILLED BY ENEMY FIRE IN IRAQ CONFLICT The coffin of Capt. Nichola Goddard lies in a Calgary funeral home for viewing yesterday. A memorial will be held today.

SOURCE: BY MIKE STROBEL

WORD COUNT: 329

What a shame our armies are not manned, so to speak, by women.

The world would be at peace. Imagine all the people ...

You're dreaming, man.

Which leaves us with the thorny question of women serving in armies that are hellbent on slaughtering each other.

To me the answer is simple: Do not send women into combat.

Today, in Calgary, is the funeral of Capt. Nichola Goddard. She died last week in a Taliban ambush in Afghanistan. She was the first Canadian woman ever killed in combat.

"A soldier is a soldier," the DND tells me.

Hero-general Lew MacKenzie tells The Canadian Press: "The greatest respect I can pay to (her) is to treat it just like the death of another soldier — with great respect and certainly no differently."

Fine. Capt. Goddard served and died, aged 26, for her country. She did it willingly and bravely. Nothing can diminish that.

GUT REACTION

But do not tell me your reaction to her face on our front page was the same as it was to the faces of the 16 brave Canadian men killed over there.

If you are human, you had an extra catch in your throat. You were uneasy, disbelieving.

Then, Len Fortune, a colleague and air force vet, shows me a page of photographs.

They are of American women killed in action in Iraq. The youngest is 19, the oldest 43. They are moms, wives, girlfriends, sisters, daughters.

There are 35, all killed by the enemy. Another dozen died in accidents. Four hundred have been wounded, many maimed.

It would be terrible if those faces were of young men.

I'm sorry, but it is even worse that they are of young women.

True, they are little more than 2% of the U.S. toll in Iraq.

But, I am surprised to learn, American women aren't even supposed to be in direct land combat roles.

Their deaths have come in mortar attacks on camps and ambushes of supply convoys.

Not what they call "combat arms" roles, though, of course, dead is dead.

"Should women go into a combat situation? We're already there. It's a moot point," a captain named Carmen tells the Philadelphia Inquirer.

This is new ground for the Yanks, too.

In Vietnam, eight female nurses died, one from hostile gunfire.

In the 1990s, distaff pilots and sailors were allowed. Only after 1994 could army women serve anywhere that put them in danger of capture.

Thus, Jessica Lynch's famous turn as PoW. And she was an unarmed clerk.

But Canada's is the only military in the world that puts females right up front, such as the observation post where Nicky Goddard died.

We can do so because a 1989 human rights ruling opened up all military roles to women.

"Through the '90s, we encouraged them to join 'combat arms,'" says DND spokesman Jay Paxton.

"The introduction of women increases the potential recruiting pool by 100% and provides opportunities for all people to serve their country to the best of their abilities.

"DND does not give any significance to gender in the armed forces."

Good for you. But the rest of us do.

NOT ABOUT EQUALITY

Even some feminists, at least those who are not knee-jerk on gender rights issues.

"We're adamantly opposed," says Janis Alton, co-chairman of Canadian Voice of Women for Peace.

"It gets mixed up with issues of equality, but it is not an enlightened step forward."

No. Women coming home draped in flags is hardly a sign of social enlightenment.

Yet there are 230 women among our troops in Afghanistan.

They aren't all in "combat arms," but they are all surely in harm's way.

Why our gut reaction to those photos of Capt. Goddard and her American comrades-in-arms?

This has naught to do with equal pay or equal rights or equal access or equal anything.

It has to do with the female of our species being kinder, gentler. The nurturer. Mom, for crying out loud.

It doesn't sit right.

We are used to men Killed In Action (KIA) in wars both hated and heroic.

We are not used to women KIA.

Why the hell do we want to get used to that? KEYWORDS=WOMEN; CANADA; MILITARY

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR COLUMN

PUBLICATION: The Ottawa Sun
DATE: 2006.05.27
EDITION: Final
SECTION: Comment
PAGE: 8
SOURCE: BY OTTAWA SUN
COLUMN: Letters to the Editor
WORD COUNT: 275

WHY DOES the death of Nichola Goddard, the most recent casualty to come out of Afghanistan -- on the premise of gender -- receive any more attention than the other 15 male casualties to come out of Afghanistan since 2002?

While we all know that playing on the emotional responses of the general public is essential to the principles of media, is it really morally sound to a lot more -- and potentially overdo -- media coverage on one casualty of war over another fighting in the same line of fire?

Kelly Charlebois

Ottawa

(The death of the first woman serving in a combat role was bound to be controversial)

I feel that it would be a good time for the Sun to speak up about Kyoto agreement and what other large industrial countries are doing.

I read a story in the April 29 London Times that the U.K. has decided to go with new technology instead of paying for carbon credits.

It would appear by the silence of the media in Canada that they would prefer we send millions of dollars to a country like Russia for carbon credits instead of inventing new technology in Canada to combat CO2 emissions and then export it to help other countries, e.g., China and India.

Gerry Colburne

(Come again? It goes without saying that Canada is going to have to invest in new technology, and that it's better than buying carbon credits)

Re "The Kiss" (May 22): Under the Nibbles Kissing trivia section, the longest movie kiss is listed as "Three Minutes and five seconds... in You're In the Army Now." This was previously the record until 2005.

Kids in America shattered this record with approximately six minutes locked at the lips. The kiss is between Stephanie Sherrin and Gregory Smith and takes place during the entirety of the closing credits and more.

I hate to correct this error but as Roger Ebert said in his review of Kids in America, "only a kid who works in a video store would know that."

Jeff Bowers

(That's some boo-boo)

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CANUCKS CAPTURE MILITANTS SOLDIERS ROOT OUT TALIBAN SUPPORTERS FOLLOWING 2 DAYS OF HEAVY FIGHTING

PUBLICATION: The Ottawa Sun

DATE: 2006.05.27

EDITION: Final

SECTION: News

PAGE: 7

ILLUSTRATION: photo by Bob Weber, CP CANADIAN BOMBARDIER Jim Clark surveys the village of Banzya, Afghanistan on Thursday while waiting for the return of a Canadian platoon engaged in rooting out Taliban militants.

SOURCE: BY BOB WEBER, CP

DATELINE: BANZYA, AFGHANISTAN

WORD COUNT: 381

Eight suspected Taliban prisoners squatted in the old crater left by a long-ago Russian bomb, handcuffed, blindfolded with duct tape. A Canadian soldier stood over them, rifle ready, and summed up the last 48 hours of what will become known as the Battle of Panjwai in two terse sentences.

"Last night we were fighting for our lives. Today we're taking them prisoner."

For nearly two weeks, hundreds of Canadians have been fighting in the mud-walled villages of the Panjwai district west of Kandahar, facing large groups of Taliban militants who — unusually — have chosen to fight rather than fade away.

The battle, a hide-and-seek affair of house-to-house searches and sudden, ferocious ambushes, has killed both Afghans and Canadians.

40 TALIBAN DEAD

Forty Taliban fighters were reported killed and 40 others captured in Panjwai last week in a battle that also took the life of Capt. Nichola Goddard, whose funeral was held in Calgary yesterday.

And still the fighting continues.

"We're not 100% sure why (the Taliban) are fighting so hard for this area," said Capt. Dave Johnston of Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry.

"But this is definitely the main event now."

On Wednesday and Thursday, the big action came to Banzya in the Panjwai district west of Kandahar. A long convoy of LAV IIIs and G-Wagon patrol vehicles pulled into an adjacent field the previous night, its soldiers bedding down on the flat plain of dust and goat droppings.

Working with the Afghan police and army, the Canadians set up a blocking cordon along one side of Banzya. They started searching homes and questioning villagers, moving along methodically.

The Afghans took the lead. They understood the tribal differences that allowed them to recognize someone out of place. They could spot the signs that suggest a man habitually carries an AK-47.

"We've got a lot of technology that they don't," said Johnston. "We've got more firepower, we can see better and we can call in artillery."

'SPIDEY SENSE'

"But they've got a spidey sense."

But later in the day, as the Canadians were working through a narrow choke point of road, the Taliban sprung an ambush.

"There was a lot of rounds, a lot of (rocket-propelled grenades)," said Pte. Paul Carey.

The Canadians returned fire with rifles and grenade launchers.

Usually, such attacks last for 15 minutes or so then fade before the Canadians can call in air or artillery support. But this time, using a vineyard as a network of trenches and a nearby building for cover, the Taliban kept up fire for an hour.

It took an artillery barrage — a 900 kg bomb dropped from a B1 bomber — to flatten the Taliban position. The Afghans and Canadians then swept through Banzya and arrested 10 people.

By the end of the day, women and children began returning to the village.

Banzya is one of a dozen tiny communities in Panjwai. Each operation in the area will be different.

"With the Afghan National Army taking the lead," said Johnston, "Canadians are going into compounds and making sure there are no bad guys around."

PM CONSIDERS ABOUT-FACE ON TARMAC CEREMONIES

PUBLICATION: The Ottawa Sun
DATE: 2006.05.27
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: 3
ILLUSTRATION: photo of STEPHEN HARPER
SOURCE: BY CP
WORD COUNT: 121

The stinging words of Capt. Nichola Goddard's grieving father have moved Prime Minister Stephen Harper to take another look at one of his controversial new media policies.

In his eulogy in Calgary yesterday, Dr. Tim Goddard criticized the Tory government for banning the media from the tarmac at CFB Trenton when his daughter's body came home.

"I would like to think that Nichola died to protect our freedoms, not to restrict them," Goddard said.

Yesterday in Victoria, Harper suggested a communication problem led to the media being banned again from covering a repatriation ceremony.

He added he would try to figure out what went wrong.

"Obviously I'll look into it and find out if the family's wishes were different from what was done, why that was the case and we'll correct it in the future."

Goddard suggested for future repatriation ceremonies involve a "shared feed arrangement" with one television camera and one press photographer allowed at the ceremony.

DAD'S POIGNANT FAREWELL SOLDIER'S LAST LETTER HOME SPOKE OF MAKING THE WORLD 'A BETTER PLACE'

PUBLICATION: The Ottawa Sun

DATE: 2006.05.27

EDITION: Final

SECTION: News

PAGE: 3

ILLUSTRATION: 2 photos 1. photo by Jim Wells, Sun TIM GODDARD pauses by the casket of his daughter, Capt. Nichola Goddard, during her funeral service in Calgary yesterday. The 26-year-old soldier was killed in Afghanistan May 17. 2. photo of NICHOLA GODDARD "Responsibility"

SOURCE: BY PABLO FERNANDEZ

DATELINE: CALGARY

WORD COUNT: 319

Moments after he finished eulogizing his eldest daughter, Dr. Tim Goddard ran his hand across Capt. Nichola Goddard's flag-draped coffin.

"Yours was a short life but a good one. You had so much promise, so much potential, and the world is a far lesser place with your passing," he said in a speech that moved many of the 600 mourners at the young artillery captain's funeral to tears yesterday.

Nichola, 26, was killed in an ambush by Taliban militants on May 17 while serving as a forward observation officer with the Canadian task force in Afghanistan. She was the 17th Canadian soldier to die in Afghanistan.

Tim Goddard was to have met his daughter in Kabul yesterday. Two months ago, the university professor accepted an invitation from the UN to go to Afghanistan to help with a development program. He then e-mailed his daughter to say he was visiting and they arranged to meet.

GRIM COINCIDENCE

"Today is Friday, we were going to meet for coffee," he said.

Instead, in another grim coincidence, Nichola Goddard died on her father's birthday. Tim read from a letter she wrote to her parents on her own birthday, May 2. It arrived after her death.

"I have been thinking a lot about fate lately," she wrote in the letter.

"It seems to me that we have such a responsibility to make the world a better place for those who were born into far worse circumstances. It is more than donating money to charities.

"It is taking action and trying to make things better. You have both shown me that throughout my life, but here, I realize it more than ever before."

MORE PRIDE THAN SORROW

Showing more pride for his daughter than sorrow for his loss, Tim told how his wife Sally gave birth to Nichola in Papua, New Guinea. She weighed less than 5 lb. at birth. A sort of meat locker made of insect screening was her first crib.

"Nichola lived more in her lifetime than many of much longer years," Tim said.

The family's grief, including that of Nichola's husband, Jason Beam, has been public but also profound, Tim said. The couple met at Royal Military College in Kingston.

Nichola offered a simple introduction, Beam recalled.

"I never thought that two-second conversation would lead ... to the life we shared," he said.

"I'm going to miss you so much, Nic. I still can't believe you're gone."

Goddard, who was dubbed Care Bear for her compassion, is also survived by two younger sisters, Kate and Victoria. She will be interred at the National Military Cemetery in Ottawa next month.

FRONTPAGE 'A GOOD LIFE'

PUBLICATION: The Ottawa Sun

DATE: 2006.05.27

EDITION: Final

SECTION: News

PAGE: 1

ILLUSTRATION: 2 PHOTOS 1. Pool photo SLAIN CANADIAN soldier Capt. Nichola Goddard's flag-draped coffin is carried into church in Calgary yesterday. 2. photo of NICHOLA GODDARD

SOURCE: BY OTTAWA SUN

WORD COUNT: 0

PM VOWS TO LOOK INTO FATHER'S CONCERNS

PUBLICATION: The London Free Press

DATE: 2006.05.27

EDITION: Final

SECTION: News

PAGE: A4

SOURCE: BY CP

DATELINE: VICTORIA

WORD COUNT: 89

Prime Minister Stephen Harper says he'll look into criticism levelled by the father of a dead soldier that his government is barring the news media from covering repatriation ceremonies for fallen soldiers.

Harper says he had given instructions that when bodies were to come home that families should be consulted as to whether the ceremony should be public.

Tim Goddard said at his daughter's funeral that he would like to think Nichola died to protect Canadians' freedoms, not to restrict them.

Harper says he spoke with Goddard this week and he didn't raise the issue with him, so he didn't realize there was a problem. KEYWORDS=PRIME MINISTER

FALLEN SOLDIER'S DAD CRITICAL OF HARPER NICHOLA GODDARD'S FATHER SAYS SHE FOUGHT TO PROTECT FREEDOMS, NOT RESTRICT THEM.

PUBLICATION: The London Free Press

DATE: 2006.05.27

EDITION: Final

SECTION: News

PAGE: A4

ILLUSTRATION: 3 photos 2 Photos by Jeff Mcintosh CP 1. ABOVE: Members of the Royal Canadian Horse Artillery carry the coffin of Capt. Nichola Goddard into the church for her funeral service in Calgary yesterday. Goddard was killed by enemy fire in Afghanistan May 17. 2. RIGHT: Jason Beam, left, Goddard's husband, and her parents -- Sally and Tim Goddard -- stand together after the funeral. 3. photo of CAPT. NICHOLA GODDARD

SOURCE: BY BILL GRAVELAND, CP

DATELINE: CALGARY

WORD COUNT: 237

On a day usually celebrated by the military as Artillery Day, friends, family and comrades gathered yesterday for the funeral of Capt. Nichola Goddard, a young artillery officer killed May 17 in Afghanistan.

Goddard, 26, was a forward observation officer in a light-armoured vehicle and died after Taliban insurgents fired rocket-propelled grenades at it. She was Canada's first female combat soldier to die in battle and the 17th Canadian soldier to die in Afghanistan.

Goddard's flag-draped coffin arrived at St. Barnabas Anglican Church on an artillery gun carriage pulled by a Second World War gun tractor.

In his eulogy, her father criticized Prime Minister Stephen Harper's government for its new policy of barring the news media from covering repatriation ceremonies for fallen soldiers.

"I find it troubling the privacy decision means we are keeping the press outside the wire," Tim Goddard told mourners. "I would like to think Nichola died to protect our freedoms, not to restrict them."

Goddard drew laughter from mourners as he told anecdotes about his daughter's mischievous childhood.

Jason Beam, Nichola's widower, recounted how the couple met at military college and fell in love between such mundane army chores as shining their boots.

Beam said he has cherished memories of their time together, including camping trips.

"We had so many excellent adventures and good times together. I remember all our long walks with our dogs, Sam and Bill, just the four of us, miles away from civilization, chatting for hours," Beam said in the same church where the couple wed in 2002.

"I'm going to miss you so much, Nic. I still can't believe you're gone. I'm going to miss your smile, your laugh and your company." **KEYWORDS=FUNERALS**

TAKING THE BATTLE TO THE STREETS CANUCKS CONFRONT THE ENEMY

PUBLICATION: The Edmonton Sun

DATE: 2006.05.27

EDITION: Final

SECTION: News

PAGE: 29

ILLUSTRATION: photo by CP Capt. Dave Johnston of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry keeps in touch with soldiers conducting a sweep operation in the village of Banzya, Afghanistan, on Thursday, one of several villages in the Panjwai area that have seen heavy fighting in the last two weeks.

SOURCE: BY BOB WEBER, CP

DATELINE: BANZYA, Afghanistan

WORD COUNT: 427

Eight suspected Taliban prisoners squatted in the crater left by a long-ago Russian bomb, handcuffed, blindfolded with duct tape. A Canadian soldier stood over them, rifle ready, and summed up the last 48 hours in two terse sentences.

"Last night we were fighting for our lives. Today we're taking them prisoner."

For nearly two weeks, hundreds of Canadians have been fighting in the mud-walled villages of the Panjwai district west of Kandahar, facing large concentrations of Taliban militants who – unusually – have chosen to fight rather than fade away.

The battle, a hide-and-seek of house-to-house searches and sudden, ferocious ambushes, has cost both Afghan and Canadian lives. Forty Taliban fighters were reported killed and 40 others captured in Panjwai last week. The battle also killed Capt. Nichola Goddard, whose funeral was in Calgary yesterday.

"We're not 100% sure why (the Taliban) are fighting so hard for this area," said Capt. Dave Johnston of Second Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry. "But this is definitely the main event now."

On Wednesday and Thursday, the big action came to Banzya – one of many villages in the desert along the Arghandab River.

A long convoy of light armoured vehicles – or LAV IIIs – and G-Wagon patrol vehicles had pulled into an adjacent field the previous night.

By 8 a.m., the Canadians set up a blocking cordon on one side of the town. Working with the Afghan police and army, they methodically searched homes and alleyways and questioned villagers.

The Afghans took the lead. They understand the tribal differences that allowed them to recognize someone out of place or the signs that suggest a man habitually carries an AK-47.

"We've got a lot of technology that they don't," said Johnston. "We've got more firepower, we can see better and we can call in artillery. But they've got a spidey sense."

For hours, work went smoothly, and they took a break from the mid-40s C heat. After days of fighting in the area, it seemed deserted. But about 3:20 p.m., as the Canadians worked through a narrow choke point of road, the Taliban sprung an ambush.

"There was a lot of rounds, a lot of (rocket-propelled grenades)," said Pte. Paul Carey. He watched one rocket bounce across a road, hopping over a soldier who had dived into a ditch.

Such attacks usually last 15 minutes or so, then fade before air or artillery support can arrive. This time, the Taliban kept up for an hour.

The Canadians often escape an ambush by going around it. Suspecting that's what the Taliban anticipated, they changed tactics.

"We decided to power through the attack," said Master Cpl. Chris Alden.

Under cover of the big Canadian howitzers, the platoon gradually worked out of the trap the Taliban had tried to close on them. But as they edged forward, they discovered their enemy had one more surprise in store – an IED, or improvised explosive device, blocked the road.

This time, the soldiers zigged, blowing a hole through a wall to open an egress.

Meanwhile, air support arrived – a 900-kilogram bomb fell on a Taliban position.

The platoon finally arrived back inside the defensive perimeter late that night, their interpreter the only casualty. During the skirmish, they had fired at least 7,000 rounds.

A FIGHT FOR FREEDOM

PUBLICATION: The Edmonton Sun

DATE: 2006.05.27

EDITION: Final

SECTION: Editorial/Opinion

PAGE: 10

COLUMN: Editorial

WORD COUNT: 278

In letters made available in a binder in the foyer of St. Barnabas Church in Calgary yesterday, Capt. Nichola Goddard often wrote of living either inside or outside of "the wire."

Inside the wire referred to the safety of the military camp near Kandahar. Outside the wire meant, essentially, danger – where the oppressive Taliban lie in wait to kill our soldiers.

During her moving funeral yesterday, her father, Dr. Tim Goddard, used the same term.

In a kindly tone, Goddard criticized the federal Conservative government's policy of disallowing media from filming the homecoming – or so-called ramp ceremony – of dead soldiers at CFB Trenton.

"I cannot support the privacy decision," said Dr. Goddard, a professor at the University of Calgary. "I find it troubling that the privacy decision means we are keeping the press outside the wire, where the bad guys are. I would like to think Nichola died to protect our freedoms, not to restrict them."

It was a poignant moment in what was a moving funeral – attended by soldiers, RCMP officers, dignitaries, family, friends and media.

The media made it possible for far more than the 600 people who crammed into St. Barnabas Anglican Church, to learn of the remarkable life and death of Capt. Goddard, the first Canadian woman ever to die in combat.

Her life story is the stuff that builds nations by building pride.

To his credit, Prime Minister Stephen Harper, when questioned in Victoria, B.C., about the grieving father's comments, indicated his government will allow grieving families to decide from now on.

"I had given fairly clear instructions that when bodies were to come home, that families should be consulted and if all families agreed on making that particular ceremony public, then I thought our government should have no difficulty with that."

Indeed, the assumption should be that media be allowed unless requested otherwise by family members.

A free media is as essential to democracy as the age-old sacrifice of our brave soldiers.

Clearly Harper and his government got their wires crossed on this.

It has caused grief to an outstanding family as a result – a family that has sacrificed a great deal for their country.

They deserve much better than this.

SOLDIER'S DAD TARGETS PM HARPER CRITICIZED AT FUNERAL FOR NICHOLA GODDARD

PUBLICATION: The Edmonton Sun

DATE: 2006.05.27

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SECTION: News

PAGE: 3

ILLUSTRATION: 1. photo by Darren Makowichuk, Sun Media Mourners watch as Goddard's casket is carried away after the service. 2. photo by Jim Wells, Sun Media Jason Beam speaks during the funeral for his wife, Capt. Nichola Goddard, at St. Barnabas Church in Calgary yesterday. Goddard was killed in battle while serving in Afghanistan.

SOURCE: BY PABLO FERNANDEZ, SUN MEDIA

DATELINE: CALGARY

WORD COUNT: 343

Prime Minister Stephen Harper's decision to keep the media away from flag-draped caskets returning from wartorn Afghanistan flies in the face of what his daughter died for, Tim Goddard said yesterday.

In front of the more than 600 mourners who attended Capt. Nichola Goddard's funeral in Calgary, Tim Goddard criticized Harper's decision to keep the media out of CFB Trenton when caskets of fallen soldiers return home from Afghanistan.

Nichola was killed on May 17, while serving as a forward observation officer with the Canadian task force in Afghanistan.

She died in an ambush following a daylong operation launched against Taliban fighters by coalition forces.

"The prime minister has decreed that the ramp ceremony at CFB Trenton should be a private, family-only affair, with the media banned from the base and being forced to watch from behind the fence," Goddard said.

Waiting for his daughter's casket to be taken off the military aircraft at the Ontario Air Force base was a heartwrenching one, but a limited number of press representatives would not have intruded in his family's grief, he said.

"I would like to think that Nichola died to protect our freedoms, not to restrict them."

Last month, the Harper government announced it would no longer permit pictures to be taken of flag-draped coffins when fallen soldiers are returned home. The policy is permanent, government officials said at the time.

But yesterday, following Goddard's eulogy, Harper backpedalled and suggested the situation was the result of miscommunication.

"I had given fairly clear instructions that when bodies were to come home, that families should be consulted and if all families agreed on making that particular ceremony public, then I thought our government should have no difficulty with that," he said.

"I'm not sure what happened in this case."

"Obviously I'll look into it and find out if the family's wishes were different from what was done, why that was the case and we'll correct it in the future."

At the funeral, Tim Goddard told mourners Nichola believed that in trouble spots, military power is necessary for peace and order to take root.

"You have to have peace and good government for the rest to happen," he recalled his daughter saying.

A few times during his tribute, Goddard addressed the nation, which he said embraced his family and showed more support than he had expected.

The grief of the family, including that of Nichola's husband, Jason Beam, has been public and profound, he said.

He is now alone in a life built for two, said Beam.

The two were together from the day they arrived at the Royal Military College, he said.

"I'm going to miss my best friend to share my life with."

Lt.-Cmdr. Rev. Douglas Ohs said the price paid by Nichola is a heavy one, but one soldiers are prepared to make to bring peace to a troubled world.

"This world is filled with guided missiles and misguided men," he said.

TALIBAN CLASH HITS FEVER PITCH CANUCKS 'FIGHT FOR THEIR LIVES'

PUBLICATION: The Calgary Sun

DATE: 2006.05.27

EDITION: Final

SECTION: News

PAGE: 35

ILLUSTRATION: photo by Bob Weber, CP ON GUARD ... Bombardier Jim Clark of the Royal Canadian Horse Artillery surveys the village of Banzya, Afghanistan, looking for the return Thursday of a platoon of soldiers rooting out Taliban from the community.

SOURCE: BY CP

DATELINE: BANZYA, Afghanistan

WORD COUNT: 241

Eight suspected Taliban prisoners squatted in the old crater left by a long-ago Russian bomb, handcuffed, blindfolded with duct tape. A Canadian soldier stood over them, rifle ready, and summed up the last 48 hours of what will become known as the Battle of Panjwai in two terse sentences.

"Last night, we were fighting for our lives. Today, we're taking them prisoner."

For nearly two weeks, hundreds of Canadians have been fighting in the mud-walled villages of the Panjwai district west of Kandahar, facing large concentrations of Taliban militants who — unusually — have chosen to fight rather than fade away.

The battle, a hide-and-seek affair of house-to-house searches and sudden, ferocious ambushes, has cost lives both Afghan and Canadian.

Forty Taliban fighters were reported killed and 40 others captured in Panjwai last week in a battle that also took the life of Capt. Nichola Goddard, whose funeral was held in Calgary yesterday.

And still the fighting continues.

"We're not 100 percent sure why (the Taliban) are fighting so hard for this area," said Capt. Dave Johnston of Second Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry.

"But this is definitely the main event now."

On Wednesday and Thursday, the big action came to Banzya — one of many villages in the desert along the Arghandab River that contain within its drab ramparts irrigated vineyards, tiny wheat fields, pomegranate or-chards, a little marijuana and poppy and a maze of lanes and compounds.

Banzya is only one of a dozen tiny communities in Panjwai — and operations in the area are continuing. Each one will be different, and each will be the same.

"With the Afghan National Army taking the lead," said Johnston, "Canadians are going into compounds and making sure there are no bad guys around."

LAST WORDS TO FAMILY FROM CAPT. NICHOLA GODDARD

PUBLICATION: The Calgary Sun

DATE: 2006.05.27

EDITION: Final

SECTION: News

PAGE: 34

ILLUSTRATION: photo by Jim Wells, Calgary Sun FAMILY SUPPORT ... Tim and Sally Goddard trade glances yesterday during the funeral for their daughter, Capt. Nichola Goddard.

WORD COUNT: 311

This is a letter written by Nichola on May 2, the day of her birthday. Her parents, Tim and Sally Goddard, received it exactly one week after she was killed.

The days seem to move along at their own pace. Some days fly by and others creep along. We are officially at the half-way point now, though. I can't believe that I've been here for three months. In some ways, It feels like I've been here forever. In others, as if I just got here. I am sort of getting used to things, I guess. I try to remind myself to appreciate every experience -- even the ones I don't really enjoy.

I have been thinking a lot about fate lately. It was such an accident of birth that we ended up where we did when we did. That we are where we are now, with the choices that we have available to us. It seems to me that we have such a burden of responsibility to make the world a better place for those who were born into far worse circumstances. It is more than donating money to charities -- it is taking action and trying to make things better. You have both shown me that through my life -- but here, I realize it more than ever before.

My current job and role in Afghanistan is part of that -- but it is more the non-governmental organizations that come later. They are the ones that really make the difference. I like to think that my being here means they will be able to come that much sooner and operate that more freely. I will be looking for more opportunities to volunteer in Wainright and to really try to make a difference. It is very humbling to be here, part of something so much bigger than myself.

OUTSIDE THE WIRE

PUBLICATION: The Calgary Sun

DATE: 2006.05.27

EDITION: Final

SECTION: Editorial/Opinion

PAGE: 14

COLUMN: Editorial

WORD COUNT: 274

In letters made available in a binder in the foyer of St. Barnabas Church yesterday, Capt. Nichola Goddard often wrote of living either inside or outside of "the wire."

Inside the wire referred to the safety of the military camp near Kandahar. Outside the wire meant, essentially, danger — where the oppressive Taliban lie in wait to kill our soldiers.

During her moving funeral yesterday, her father, Dr. Tim Goddard, also used the same term.

In a kindly tone, Goddard criticized the federal Conservative government's policy of disallowing media from filming the home coming — or so called ramp ceremony — of dead soldiers at CFB Trenton.

"I cannot support the privacy decision," said Dr. Goddard, a U of C professor. "I find it troubling that the privacy decision means we are keeping the press outside the wire, where the bad guys are. I would like to think Nichola died to protect our freedoms, not to restrict them."

It was a poignant moment in what was a moving funeral — attended by soldiers, RCMP officers, dignitaries, family, friends and media.

The media made it possible for far more than the 600 people who crammed into Calgary's St. Barnabas Anglican Church, to learn of the remarkable life and death of Capt. Goddard, the first Canadian woman ever to die in combat.

Her life story is the stuff that builds nations by building pride.

To his credit, Prime Minister Stephen Harper, when questioned in Victoria about the grieving father's comments, indicated his government will allow grieving families to decide from now on.

"I had given fairly clear instructions that when bodies were to come home, that families should be consulted and if all families agreed on making that particular ceremony public, then I thought our government should have no difficulty with that."

Indeed, the assumption should be that media be allowed unless requested otherwise by family members.

A free media is as essential to democracy as the age-old sacrifice of our brave soldiers.

Clearly, Harper and his government got their wires crossed on this.

It has caused grief to an outstanding family as a result — a family that has sacrificed a great deal for their country.

They deserve much better than this.

DAD CRITICIZES PM'S MEDIA BAN

PUBLICATION: The Calgary Sun
DATE: 2006.05.27
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: 5
SOURCE: BY PABLO FERNANDEZ
WORD COUNT: 220

Prime Minister Stephen Harper's decision to keep the media away from flag-draped caskets returning from war-torn Afghanistan flies in the face of what his daughter died for, said Tim Goddard yesterday.

At Capt. Nichola Goddard's funeral in Calgary, Tim criticized Harper's decision to keep the media out of CFB Trenton when caskets of fallen soldiers return from Afghanistan.

"The prime minister has decreed that the ramp ceremony at CFB Trenton should be a private, family-only affair, with the media banned from the base and being forced to watch from behind the fence," Tim said.

Waiting for his daughter's casket to be taken off the military aircraft at the Ontario air force base was a heart-wrenching one, but a limited number of press representatives would not have intruded on his family's grief, he said.

"I find it troubling that the privacy decision means that we are keeping the press outside the wire, where the bad guys are," he said.

"I would like to think that Nichola died to protect our freedoms, not to restrict them."

Last month, the Harper government announced it would no longer permit pictures be taken of flag-draped coffins when fallen soldiers are returned home.

The policy is permanent, said government officials at the time. Following Goddard's eulogy, Harper back-pedalled and suggested the situation was the result of miscommunication.

"I had given fairly clear instructions that when bodies were to come home, that families should be consulted and if all families agreed on making that particular ceremony public, then I thought our government should have no difficulty with that," he said.

"I'm not sure what happened in this case."

FATHER LAUDS TROOPS' SPIRITED RESPONSE

PUBLICATION: The Calgary Sun
DATE: 2006.05.27
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: 5
SOURCE: BY PABLO FERNANDEZ
WORD COUNT: 142

Moved by her death, Capt. Nichola Goddard's comrades unleashed all the military might they could muster against those who took her life, her father Tim said at his daughter's funeral yesterday.

In a heartfelt tribute to his daughter, Tim thanked her unit, A Battery of the 1st regiment Royal Canadian Artillery, the rest of the Canadian battle group and the Afghan security forces that took part in the May 17 battle for their actions the day Nichola was killed.

They "responded to her death with great vigour and imposed almost biblical wrath on those who were responsible for it," he said.

"We thank you for that."

The Canadians returned fire while an air strike by a U.S. bomber dropped a 225-kg bomb on a compound sheltering enemy forces.

It's estimated 40 Taliban were killed in that firefight.

Battles involving hundreds of Canadians have been raging in the area ever since her death.

Nichola, along with other Canadian troops, were regrouping after a heavy day of fighting, when her light-armoured vehicle was ambushed with rocket-propelled grenades.

His daughter did not suffer, Tim told mourners attending Nichola's funeral.

"Yes, she died instantly," he said.

"And yes, her face was unmarked.

"That beautiful smile is going to her grave."

WIFE, DAUGHTER DIED 'SOLDIER'S DEATH'

PUBLICATION: The Calgary Sun

DATE: 2006.05.27

EDITION: Final

SECTION: News

PAGE: 4

ILLUSTRATION: 1. photo by Kevin Udahl, Calgary Sun GRIEVING FAMILY ... Capt. Nichola Goddard's husband, Jason Beam, and her parents, Sally and Tim Goddard, watch a procession outside St. Barnabas Anglican Church, where friends and family said goodbye yesterday. 2. photo by Jim Wells, Calgary Sun EULOGY ... Tim Goddard delivers his eulogy at his daughter's funeral yesterday. 3. photo of NICHOLA GODDARD 4. photo by Jim Wells, Calgary Sun FULL HONOURS ... Capt. Nichola Goddard's casket leaves church yesterday after her funeral. She will be buried next month at the military cemetery in Ottawa.

SOURCE: BY PABLO FERNANDEZ, CALGARY SUN

WORD COUNT: 541

Tim Goddard and his eldest daughter Nichola had agreed to meet yesterday — instead he said goodbye.

The meeting was to have taken place in Kabul, as the University of Calgary professor and his artillery officer daughter had planned.

Instead, Tim and Nichola found themselves together outside St. Barnabas Anglican Church in northwest Calgary, in the rain.

Tim and his wife Sally walked under umbrellas and behind their daughter's casket as it was carried slowly on the shoulders of soldiers from her second family, the 1st regiment of the Royal Canadian Horse Artillery.

Bells rang as eight gunners and bombardiers, in slow march, their cheeks pressed against the wood and with downward stares, carried the flag-draped casket past an honour guard and into the church.

Upon the flag that adorned the vessel sat a wreath, the captain's green beret, a sword and her campaign medal.

More than 600 people — family, friends, soldiers, dignitaries and perfect strangers — looked on as Nichola's loved ones said farewell to a young woman who, at 26, had already lived a lifetime.

At times humorous, sometimes insightful, but always poignant, Tim gave a heart-wrenching eulogy to his fallen daughter, at the end of which he stood by her casket, tapped it once, choked up slightly and said, "farewell Nichola.

"Farewell, Nichola, first born of three beloved daughters.

"Farewell, Nichola, much loved wife.

"Farewell, Nichola, sorely missed cousin, grand-daughter, niece.

"Farewell, Nichola, grieved by so many family, friends, colleagues, and strangers around the world."

Showing more pride for his daughter than sorrow for his loss, Tim told how Nichola was born in Papua New Guinea, weighing less than 4 lb., at a time and place where medicine was rudimentary.

"Yours was a short life but a good one," he said.

"You had so much promise, so much potential, and the world is a far lesser place with your passing.

"Nichola lived more in her lifetime than many of much longer years."

Nichola was killed on May 17, while serving as a forward observation officer with the Canadian task force in Afghanistan.

She died in an ambush following a day-long operation launched against Taliban fighters by coalition forces in which Nichola distinguished herself, her commanders have since said.

Two months ago, Tim, who specializes in post-conflict education development, received a request from the UN to go to Afghanistan and help with a government development program.

Tim accepted and his first action was to e-mail his daughter in Kandahar and set up a date to meet her in Kabul on May 26.

"Today is Friday, we were going to meet for coffee," he said.

Tim told mourners yesterday that over Christmas he and his daughter had discussed how he believed education was the key to helping the marginalized people in the world.

Nichola believed military power was necessary before education could take root in trouble spots.

"You have to have peace and good government in order for the rest to happen," he recalled his daughter saying.

Her point was poignantly made when she "was killed by people who were apparently hiding in or near a school," he said.

A few times during his tribute, Tim addressed the nation, which he said embraced his family and showed more support than anyone could fathom.

The grief of the family, including that of Nichola's husband, Jason Beam, has been public but also profound, he said.

Beam said he is now alone in a life built for two.

The two were together from the day they arrived at the Royal Military College, he said.

Nichola offered a simple introduction, Beam recalled.

"I never thought that two-second conversation would lead ... to the life we shared," he said. "I'm going to miss you so much, Nic, I still can't believe you're gone.

"Most of all, I'm going to miss my best friend to share my life with."

Lt.-Cmdr. Rev. Douglas Ohs said the price paid by Nichola is a heavy one, but one soldiers are prepared to

make to bring peace to a troubled world.

"This world is filled with guided missiles and misguided men," he said. "We train as an instrument of war — not to conquer people, not to possess land, not to steal their valuables.

"But to bring peace and stability and democracy to whatever region in the world calls out for help ... but we cannot bring Nichola back."

In death, Nichola made history as the first Canadian woman soldier killed in combat.

She was a soldier who could at one moment expertly guide artillery shells and air munitions on a determined enemy and, at another, compassionately lead her soldiers and tenderly embrace the children of Afghanistan.

She believed change comes not by donating, but by acting, said her father.

She had convictions, a strong set of values, knew the world needed help and could not sit idly by, he said.

"Nichola loved her work," said Tim. "She was a soldier and she died a soldier's death.

"And now she's home."

Goddard will be interred at the National Military Cemetery of the Canadian Forces in Ottawa in early June.

NICHOLA LIVED WITH AMAZING GRACE

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DATE: 2006.05.27
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SECTION: News
PAGE: 4
SOURCE: BY LICIA CORBELLA, EDITOR
WORD COUNT: 621

Fate and responsibility. They're not exactly the kinds of ideas your average young Canadian woman ponders on her birthday.

But Capt. Nichola Kathleen Sarah Goddard was certainly not typical — not in life and not in death.

Capt. Goddard is, and forever will be, the first Canadian woman killed in combat. She died May 17 — her father's birthday — when her armoured vehicle was ambushed by Taliban fighters on a dusty road in the Panjway district of Afghanistan, outside of Kandahar.

In a letter dated May 2 — her 26th birthday — that arrived exactly one week after her death and just two days before yesterday's extraordinarily beautiful funeral, Capt. Goddard wrote how she didn't take for granted the life of blessing she was born into and the deep sense of duty she felt as a result.

"I have been thinking a lot about fate lately," she wrote to her beloved parents Tim and Sally and her younger sisters Victoria and Kate.

"It seems to me that we have such a burden of responsibility to make the world a better place for those who were born into far worse circumstances," she wrote in the letter her father Tim, a University of Calgary education professor, read with such poise and grace in his 20-minute eulogy, that moved the more than 600 mourners at St. Barnabas Anglican Church to tears and even laughter.

"It is more than donating money to charities — it is taking action and trying to make things better. You have both shown me that throughout my life — but here, I realize it more than ever before," wrote Goddard, who was nicknamed Care Bear for her compassionate heart.

Taking action — and doing so with passion, enthusiasm, integrity and a great sense of adventure — seems to be the thread that ran throughout her life. That and a fighting spirit.

She was born in Papua New Guinea, at just under 4 lb. "Sally and I both knew that if she survived, it would be because she was resilient and strong. And she was ... resilient, strong, funny, smart, caring, compassionate — she had so many strengths, and lived seriously the motto of the Royal Military College: Truth, Duty, Valour," said her father.

From selling raffle tickets to determine who got to shave her head in order to raise money for cancer research, to hugging and handing out candies and small toys to young children in Afghanistan, to "praying and kneeling with such intensity" as she attended church services wherever she happened to be, Nichola Goddard was a doer.

Even when it came to finding a life mate, it was Nichola who took action. She met her husband Jason Beam within the first few days of basic training at Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu in Quebec. After their first three

weeks, everyone was given the weekend off, except Beam, thanks to his name starting near the beginning of the alphabet. Only Nichola hung back.

"After quite a number of subtle hints all day," said Beam, standing near the altar where he and Nichola were married four years ago, and just feet from the flag-draped maple casket where his wife lay, "none of which I picked up on, Nichola finally sat me down before dinner and very directly brought up the idea of us dating. We've been together ever since," said Beam.

She was a proud Canadian — having lived in every mainland province of the country. Her first school was in Black Lake, Sask., where Tim and Sally taught.

"One day Sally walked past Nichola's classroom. All the children were standing there, proudly beating their chests and proclaiming, 'I am a Chipewyan Indian!' including Nic," said her father.

And so even as her too-short life has made history and has improved the world, so will her death.

A U of C scholarship was started in her name and will be open to three groups Nichola felt a love and responsibility for: Citizens of Papua New Guinea, the place of her birth; Canada's First Nations, in whose company she spent so many of her formative years; or citizens of Afghanistan, the place of her death.

Like the hymn that closed her funeral it was a gesture of Amazing Grace and Christian love.

It's fitting that even in death Capt. Nichola Kathleen Sarah Goddard's fate is to keep on giving.

FRONTPAGE/FAREWELL, NICHOLA CITY DAD'S TOUCHING TRIBUTE TO OUR SOLDIER, HIS GIRL

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DATE: 2006.05.27

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SECTION: News

PAGE: 1

ILLUSTRATION: photo by Jim Wells, Calgary Sun Tim Goddard pauses at daughter Nichola's casket following his moving eulogy to the Armed Forces captain yesterday. Capt. Nichola Goddard was killed in action in Afghanistan last week.

WORD COUNT: 0

MPs deserted troops

PUBLICATION: The Windsor Star
DATE: 2006.05.27
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PAGE: A8
COLUMN: Claire Hoy
BYLINE: Claire Hoy
SOURCE: Special to The Windsor Star
WORD COUNT: 739

Question: A year ago, when then Liberal prime minister Paul Martin decided to dispatch Canadian armed forces to join the ongoing war against the brutal Taliban in Afghanistan, what was it we heard from either Liberal cabinet ministers or the opposition?

Answer: Nothing. Nada. Zip.

So fast-forward to late last week, and suddenly many of the same Liberals who were part of the decision to send the troops in the first place — current leadership candidates Ken Dryden, Joe Volpe, Stephane Dion, Hedy Fry, Maurizio Bevilacqua and Carolyn Bennett (both Bob Rae and Gerard Kennedy said later they would have voted against it) had the gall to vote against our troops.

But at least they showed up for the vote. Paul Martin didn't bother.

And what of the Bloc Quebecois and the NDP?

Well, just five weeks ago they were screaming that Prime Minister Stephen Harper — whose first trip in office was a quick visit to the troops in Afghanistan — was refusing to allow a debate and/or vote in the Commons to settle the issue about whether our men and women should be risking their lives over there.

Then, when Harper called for a debate and a vote last week, these same hypocrites screamed that it was foisted on them, they had no time to prepare, and while they voted to bring the troops home, they claimed, they were really only voting against the way Harper brought the matter to the floor of the Commons.

And while NDP Leader Jack Layton made it abundantly clear he believes our troops should not be in the field in Afghanistan — he whined about the process and, like Pavlov's dogs, blamed it all on George Bush (who has nothing to do with this particular decision at all) — and, speaking from the other side of his mouth, said our troops should intervene to stop the ongoing civil war and genocide in Darfur.

Which is it, Jack?

Should Canadians be demonstrating an admirable international commitment against tyranny — even at the inevitable cost of Canadian lives — or should we just talk the talk, turn our collective backs on our brave soldiers, and find new, petty partisan excuses every time a new trouble spot pops up?

The hypocrisy of those who voted against our troops is stunning, even by the gutter-level standards of regular political discourse.

The two-year extension squeaked through only because 24 Liberals — including leadership contenders Michael Ignatieff and Scott Brison — recognizing the correctness of their initial decision to get involved in Afghanistan, actually were principled enough to get beyond their partisan blinkers and join the Conservatives in supporting Harper's motion.

Good for them. Shame on their colleagues.

The vote occurred the same day that Capt. Nichola Goddard became the first Canadian combat woman soldier to be killed, making her the 17th casualty of the Afghanistan mission.

One has only to read the e-mail she sent home to her sister to understand how proud she was to be serving for Canada and how outraged she would be at knowing so many of our elected representatives voted to end the mission prematurely.

Many Liberal, NDP and Bloc Quebecois opponents desperately attempted to justify their slap in the face against our brave men and women on the ground in Afghanistan by claiming that it was meant to be a peacekeeping effort but has now escalated into open war.

That's a baldfaced lie. It was war from the outset. It was — is — also a mission designed to help rebuild Afghan society, but it should be clear to anyone — as it was from the outset — that in order to accomplish a lasting peace, the war against the Taliban first had to be waged and won.

Opponents — either wilfully ignorant or just unaware of our military history — also like to trot out the old chestnut that Canada is a country of peacekeeping.

To believe that is to ignore the contributions Canada made in the two world wars of the last century — in the Second World War, for example, Canada had more troops in combat on a per-capita basis than any of the allied countries.

Then, of course, there is Korea and the first Gulf War — and other foreign wars too — where Canadian troops served with distinction in combat.

Yes, the concept of United Nations peacekeeping forces began in Canada, but that has never restricted this country from doing its duty when the need arose.

To suggest otherwise is a grave insult to all those Canadian heroes who put their lives on the line — many of whom gave their lives — to fight under the Canadian flag.

It should have been a unanimous vote of approval for our troops. Instead, it won by just four votes. That's disgraceful.

Claire Hoy is a Toronto-based political commentator.

Father rebukes PM in eulogy: Fallen soldier fought for freedom, not media ban

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SECTION: News

PAGE: A1 / Front

BYLINE: Kerry Williamson

SOURCE: CanWest News Service

DATELINE: CALGARY

ILLUSTRATION: Photo: CP Photo: Jim Wells / FINAL GOODBYE: Tim Goddard, father of Capt. Nichola Goddard, pauses beside her coffin during her funeral service in Calgary Friday. Goddard, Canada's first female combat soldier killed in battle, died by enemy fire in Afghanistan on May 17.

WORD COUNT: 702

CALGARY – In an emotional eulogy for his daughter, the father of the first Canadian woman to die in combat issued a stern rebuke to Prime Minister Stephen Harper Friday, criticizing him for barring the media from his child's homecoming.

Tim Goddard, father of Capt. Nichola Goddard, said he could "see no reason" why media should be kept away from the ramp ceremonies at Canadian Forces Base Trenton.

"I find it troubling that the privacy decision means that we are keeping the press outside the wire, where the bad guys are," he said during her funeral in the same church where he gave the 26-year-old away as a bride just four years ago.

"I would like to think that Nichola died to protect our freedoms, not to restrict them."

The Harper government has a policy of not allowing media onto the Trenton base when the bodies of Canadian soldiers return from Afghanistan. The policy was implemented last month, when the remains of four soldiers -- Cpl. Matthew Dinning, Bombardier Myles Mansell, Lieut. William Turner, and Cpl. Randy Payne -- arrived.

Reporters were also kept outside the gates of the base last week, when Goddard's body arrived back in Canada.

"The prime minister has decreed that the ramp ceremony ... should be a private, family-only affair with the media banned from the base and being forced to watch from behind a fence," said Goddard. "It certainly was a very emotional time for us, the family ... However, I cannot support the privacy decision."

Harper, who has consistently defended the policy, said for the first time Friday that there was no hard and fast rule banning journalists.

He said that decision belonged to the families, and blamed a miscommunication for the ban at Goddard's ceremony, saying he was "troubled to hear" of Tim Goddard's comments.

Families consulted

"I had given fairly clear instructions that when bodies were to come home, that families should be consulted and if all families agreed on making that particular ceremony public then I thought our government should have no difficulty with that," Harper told reporters Friday during a news conference in Victoria.

"In this case I was not aware there was a problem. If that family wanted that ceremony open, I gave pretty clear instructions that that should proceed."

Harper said he spoke with the family and they hadn't raised the issue with him. He promised to review the case, and perhaps the policy.

"Obviously I will look into it and find out if the family's wishes were different than what was done, why that was the case, and will correct it in the future."

At his daughter's funeral, Tim Goddard said he had hoped to be enjoying a cup of coffee with his daughter in Kabul on Friday, after the University of Calgary professor was invited to the Afghan capital by the United Nations.

But, instead of flying to Afghanistan, he paused by his daughter's maple casket — reaching out to touch the Canadian flag draping the coffin — and did what she loved. He began telling stories.

"We are a family of storytellers," her father told the packed Anglican church, his wife, Sally, and daughters, Victoria and Kate, sitting in the front row.

"As Nichola would say, 'Come on daddy, spit it out.' So I will try."

After delivering a eulogy that brought more laughter than tears, the grieving father paused for a second time at the coffin, brushed some dust off the flag, and spoke his last, private words to the girl he called Care Bear.

"Yours was a short life, but a good one. You had so much promise, so much potential, and the world is a far lesser place with your passing.

"You wore your uniform so proudly."

Her remains were carried to the church on an artillery gun carriage and then into the church by eight of her fellow soldiers.

More than 1,000 mourners packed the church for the service. Outside on the street, many others stood in light rain, some waving Canadian flags, most with poppies pinned to their lapels.

Beside the Goddard family sat Goddard's husband, Jason Beam, a Silver Cross pinned to his chest. The couple met during basic training at Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu near Montreal.

"She introduced herself as Goddard, and I responded with 'I'm Beam,'" her husband said, recalling the day they met, eight years ago.

"I never thought that a two-second conversation would develop into such a fabulous relationship.... I could never get her name straight. I kept on asking her, 'it's God something, right?'"

Maj. Liam McGarry, commanding officer of the 1st Regiment, Royal Canadian Horse Artillery based in Shilo, Man., said she'll never be forgotten by her regiment.

"Capt. Goddard was an outstanding leader and soldier. Her dedication to the soldiers under her command was unwavering," said McGarry.

"Capt. Nichola Goddard was highly respected by officers and soldiers alike, throughout the regiment and across the Canadian forces.

"Nich, end of mission, stand down."

Excerpts from the eulogies

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SECTION: News

PAGE: A4

WORD COUNT: 179

Jason Beam

Nichola Goddard's husband

... I thought long and hard about what Nichola would want me to be saying here today. There have been so many good times and so many good memories. ...

I'm going to miss you so much, Nic. I still can't believe you're gone. I'm going to miss your smile, your laugh and your company. Most of all, I'm going to miss having my best friend to share life with. I love you Nic.

Dr. Tim Goddard

Nichola Goddard's father

... She had so many strengths and she lived seriously the motto of the Royal Military College Truth, Duty, Valour. She was a ball of energy, always on the go, packing everything in. Nichola lived more in her lifetime than many of much longer years. ... Ours has become a very public grief, I don't think there's much we can do about that. But I would urge you to remember our beautiful girl, not just as a soldier, not just as the first Canadian woman killed in combat, but as a person with passion, one with a great enthusiasm for life.

Source Canadian Press

Privacy policy 'troubles' father; Eulogy puts Harper on the defensive PM says media coverage up to families

PUBLICATION: The Toronto Star
DATE: 2006.05.27
EDITION: ONT
SECTION: News
PAGE: A4
BYLINE: Bruce Campion-Smith
SOURCE: Toronto Star With files from CANADIAN PRESS
DATELINE: VICTORIA
WORD COUNT: 411

Criticism from the grieving father of a fallen soldier has put Prime Minister Stephen Harper on the defensive over government policy on Canada's returning dead heroes.

Harper now says decisions on whether the media can be present when caskets are returned to Canada will stay with the families, an apparent change in existing policy.

He was caught off-guard by questions about the funeral yesterday of Capt. Nichola Goddard in Calgary.

Tim Goddard used his eulogy at his daughter's funeral to criticize the new policy of Harper's Conservatives that bars the news media from covering repatriation ceremonies for fallen soldiers.

"I find it troubling that the privacy decision means that we are keeping the press outside the wire," Tim Goddard told mourners in a Calgary church.

"I would like to think Nichola died to protect our freedoms, not to restrict them."

In fact, Harper says he left "clear" instructions that media be allowed to attend the return of Goddard's body, if the family wished.

However, the media were barred from CFB Trenton a week ago, prompting the father's criticism.

"I'm troubled to hear that," Harper said, after a speech to a business audience in Victoria. "I had given fairly clear instructions that when bodies were to come home that families should be consulted and if all families were agreed on making that particular ceremony public, I thought our government should have no difficulty with that.

"I'm not sure what happened in this case."

Harper said the decision to permit the media to attend the ceremonies – portrayed as a government policy until now – would rest with the families.

"If this family wanted that ceremony open, I'd given pretty clear instructions that that should proceed," he said.

That's at odds with recent statements with Defence Minister Gordon O'Connor, who has said a media ban would remain in place.

"What we are doing is insisting that at Trenton, when the bodies return, the first time the families meet their fallen members that there be a time of personal grieving," he told the Commons last month.

O'Connor banned all media from CFB Trenton to cover the repatriation on April 25 of four slain soldiers. That reversed the department's long-standing policy of allowing reporters to cover the ceremonies.

The move has sparked widespread criticism that the government is deliberately trying to shield Canadians from the mounting toll in Afghanistan. Goddard was the 16th Canadian soldier killed there since 2002.

Federal officials have told the Star that O'Connor simply wanted the families shielded from the media during repatriation ceremonies at Trenton. However, the Prime Minister's Office went further and issued the edict that they be banned altogether from the base.

Harper said he spoke with Goddard this week and nothing was said about the repatriation ceremony.

"I didn't realize there was a problem," Harper said.

"Obviously I'll look into it and find out if the family's wishes were different than what was done, why that was the case and correct that in the future," Harper said.

With files from CANADIAN PRESS

In a tearful farewell to his daughter, Tim Goddard criticizes Ottawa for keeping the return of fallen soldiers private; So much more than a soldier

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SECTION: News

PAGE: A1

BYLINE: Rosie DiManno

SOURCE: Toronto Star

DATELINE: CALGARY

Nichola Goddard was always a fighter, her dad said. Jeff McIntosh the star A member of the Royal Canadian Horse Artillery salutes the coffin of Capt. Nichola Goddard as it passes by on a gun carriage following her funeral service in Calgary, yesterday. Jeff McIntosh The Star Jason Beam, left, husband of Capt. Nichola Goddard, with in-laws Tim and Sally Goddard following funeral services for the slain captain. Goddard was

ILLUSTRATION: killed by enemy fire in Afghanistan on May 17. Jeff McIntosh the star A member of the Royal Canadian Horse Artillery salutes the coffin of Capt. Nichola Goddard as it passes by on a gun carriage following her funeral service in Calgary, yesterday. Jeff McIntosh The Star Jason Beam, left, husband of Capt. Nichola Goddard, with in-laws Tim and Sally Goddard following funeral services for the slain captain. Goddard was killed by enemy fire in Afghanistan on May 17.;

WORD COUNT: 1400

A country has seen her in battle fatigues, rifle hoisted.

That's the photograph published and broadcast coast to coast after Captain Nichola Goddard was slain in combat on May 17.

But she was proud enough of the uniform that she wore it – at least the ceremonial dress version – on her wedding day three years ago, her groom similarly attired. They were Mr. & Mrs. Canadian Forces, proudly so, though Jason Beam's military career would be halted by a sports injury.

It is as a soldier that we know her now, Canada's first female combat casualty since World War II, killed – in an ambush – dying instantly on the field during a protracted firefight in Kandahar. Yet there was so much more to her. There was an entire life packed into 26 years.

Images of that life brought mourners to tears here yesterday, as a montage of photos showing "Nic" (never "Nicky", she hated that diminutive) from babyhood to officer in Afghanistan was played in a moving visual prologue to her full military honours funeral at St. Barnabas Anglican Church.

Nichola as an infant in her father's arms, playing with a younger sister in a wading pool; a bare-chested toddler in Papua, New Guinea, where she was born when her parents were teaching there in the '80s; cuddling a black cat, kibitzing with friends as an adolescent, all glammed up for what appeared to be a prom and mischievously hiking up her gown to flash a bit of thigh; laughing in a cowboy hat, petting her two beloved mastiffs, humping it hard at basic training; skiing, marathon running, camping.

Only four pounds at birth, her immediate survival had been no sure thing. But survive she did, and thrive she did, throwing herself with gusto into every chapter of her life, a source of endless wonder and joy to her parents.

"She was always a fighter," said her father, Tim. "Sally and I knew that if she survived, it would be because she was resilient and strong. And she was. Resilient, strong, funny, smart, caring, compassionate. She had so many strengths and lived seriously the motto of the Royal Military College Truth, Duty, Valour."

Not strong enough, though – never even had a chance – to withstand the rocket-propelled grenade that struck her as she stood in the open hatch of her light armoured vehicle that fateful night, calling in co-ordinates for an artillery barrage, because that was her job in Afghanistan and one at which she excelled, the only female artillery captain among Canada's 2,300 troops in-country.

Her lovely face, with its gap-toothed grin, was untouched, undamaged.

"That beautiful smile is going to her grave," said her father.

In lengthy emails to family and friends, in the dozens of photographs she sent home – many of them bound in a book that rested on a table in the church vestibule yesterday – Goddard had described and depicted the Afghan mission, endlessly fascinated by the alien environment and ever more assured about the rightness of the cause that had taken her overseas.

There had been, as Tim Goddard frankly recalled, philosophical differences between father and daughter over Canada's military engagement in Afghanistan. He, the teacher by profession, specializing in post-conflict educational development, arguing that might was not necessarily right and she, the soldier by profession, countering that force was sometimes required to permit the reconstruction of a civil society.

"Quick as a flash, she punctured my professorial balloon," he recalled, of her response to his argument that education was the key to alleviating oppression, an army of teachers and community workers preferable to an army of troops.

The captain had retorted "You can't do that when the bad guys run things, dad, they just shoot you. You have to have peace and good government in order for the rest to happen.

"I do what I do so you can do what you do."

Yesterday, the father conceded that the daughter knew best.

"As always, she was right. But through her death in combat, killed by people who were apparently hiding in or near a school, perhaps we can bring these two elements together, and make some meaningful tribute to her life and death."

It was in that spirit that he announced the establishment of the Captain Nichola Kathleen Sarah Goddard Memorial Scholarship, endowed and matched at the University of Calgary – where both parents are professors – open to citizens of Papua, New Guinea, to First Nations, Inuit or Metis people of Canada, and to citizens of Afghanistan.

A fine legacy, it is.

Among all the images yesterday, in the compressed storyboard of Nichola Goddard's time on Earth, one snapshot was strikingly absent, however. Never captured, a tableau withheld from the public – the soldier's repatriated remains arriving at CFB Trenton. Tim Goddard made notable reference to this, objecting to an

apparent federal government policy that no longer permits what it characterizes as unwarranted media intrusion on private grief.

"I find it troubling that the privacy decision means that we are keeping the press outside the wire, where the bad guys are. I would like to think that Nichola died to protect our freedoms, not to restrict them."

But that was, however significant, very much an aside in a tender, poignant eulogy, one that fleshed out the character of a beloved daughter, touching with both sorrow and humour on this family's profound loss. And still, from the abyss of their grief, the Goddard family thanked everybody – from a prime minister who made several calls of condolence, to Gen. Rick Hillier and other senior commanders, to the Governor–General, to the larger military family that has embraced this one in their bereavement, to the letters of condolence that have arrived from across Canada and around the world, from long–lost friends and complete strangers.

The kindnesses have been something to lean on, for those who knew and loved Nichola Goddard best. Parents, sisters Victoria and Kate, and, so achingly, a husband rendered now a military widower, and wearing yesterday the Memorial Cross – known more familiarly as the Silver Cross – which only two other men, fathers of dead soldiers, have been granted in Canadian history.

This was the church where they were married.

Capt. Goddard called her husband "J". They met eight years ago, at basic training, brushing past each other in the corridor. She'd said, "I'm Goddard"; he'd said, "I'm Beam."

"I never thought that two–second conversation would turn into the fantastic relationship we had," Beam told the over–flowing church yesterday. It hadn't taken long before Goddard made it clear that Beam was the man for her, though he was not so quick on the uptake. She had to sit him down one night and put it bluntly "She very directly brought up the idea of us dating. I finally caught on."

A big, cuddly bear of a man, Beam – like the rest of Goddard's family – has been so remarkably gracious this last fortnight, as he was in eulogizing his wife. "We've been blown away by how many people were affected by her life."

It's a life he can't fathom proceeding without his wife in it.

"I can't believe you're gone."

Funerals, they say, are supposed to help by impressing the finality of loss. And this one was most certainly impressive in its ritual – the flag–draped coffin borne first on a gun carriage and then the pallbearers, the honour guard, the reversing – as is military tradition – of weapons. Atop Goddard's maple casket was her beret and sabre.

There was no internment. That will happen later – the date not yet revealed – at the National Military Cemetery of the Canadian Forces in Ottawa.

Yesterday, as chance would have it, was Artillery Day in Canada, an annual celebration of The Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery, though few outside the military would have known of the occasion. Ours is not a country that makes a fuss over its soldiers. Even the mission to Afghanistan, for many, is less about the soldiers than it is about the ideological divide over soldiering.

Capt. Goddard knew what she was doing and believed in it, passionately.

So, leave the final words to her

"The more we are in theatre and the more we actually interact with the Afghan people, the more I feel that we are serving a purpose here. The Afghan people have chosen who will lead them. Their new government is striving to make Afghanistan a better place. I have never truly appreciated the awesome power of a democratic government before.

"We're here to assist that legitimate and democratically elected government. It is easy to poke holes in that statement and say that the system is corrupt and that violence and poverty make people easy targets for their own agendas. Those statements are true; however, we have to start somewhere. With the best of intentions we have started in Afghanistan.

"There is nowhere else that I would rather be right now."

'That beautiful smile is going to her grave'

PUBLICATION: The Toronto Star

DATE: 2006.05.27

EDITION: MET

SECTION: News

PAGE: A1

ILLUSTRATION: Jim Wells cp Tim Goddard, father of Capt. Nichola Goddard, pauses beside her coffin during her funeral service in Calgary yesterday. The service was held at St. Barnabas Anglican Church, where she was married three years earlier. Goddard was killed in Afghanistan May 17. She was 26.

WORD COUNT: 2

Captain's father assails media ban: Nichola Goddard funeral

PUBLICATION: National Post

DATE: 2006.05.27

EDITION: All but Toronto

SECTION: News

PAGE: A1 / Front

BYLINE: Kerry Williamson

SOURCE: CanWest News Service

DATELINE: CALGARY

ILLUSTRATION: Black & White Photo: Jim Wells, Reuters / Tim Goddard pauses beside the casket of his daughter, Captain Nichola Goddard, at her funeral service in Calgary yesterday.

WORD COUNT: 689

CALGARY – In an emotional eulogy for his daughter, the father of slain Canadian soldier Captain Nichola Goddard issued a stern rebuke to the Prime Minister for barring the media from his child's homecoming.

Tim Goddard said he could "see no reason" why the media should be kept away from ramp ceremonies at Canadian Forces Base Trenton.

"I find it troubling that the privacy decision means that we are keeping the press outside the wire, where the bad guys are," he said during his daughter's funeral, held in the same church where he gave the 26-year-old away as a bride just four years ago.

"I would like to think that Nichola died to protect our freedoms, not to restrict them," he told mourners.

The Harper government has introduced a policy of not allowing media on to the Trenton base, near Belleville, Ont., when the bodies of Canadian soldiers are returned from Afghanistan.

The policy was implemented last month when the remains of four soldiers — Corporal Matthew Dinning, Bombardier Myles Mansell, Lieutenant William Turner and Corporal Randy Payne — arrived.

Reporters were also kept outside the gates of the base last week, when Capt. Goddard's body arrived back in Canada.

"The Prime Minister has decreed that the ramp ceremony ... should be a private, family-only affair with the media banned from the base and being forced to watch from behind a fence," Mr. Goddard said. "It certainly was a very emotional time for us, the family.... However, I cannot support the privacy decision."

Stephen Harper, who has consistently defended the policy, said for the first time yesterday that there was no hard and fast rule banning journalists.

He said that decision belonged to the families, and blamed a miscommunication for the ban at Capt. Goddard's ceremony, saying he was "troubled to hear" of Mr. Goddard's comments.

"I had given fairly clear instructions that when bodies were to come home, that families should be consulted and if all families agreed on making that particular ceremony public then I thought our government should

have no difficulty with that," Mr. Harper told reporters yesterday during a news conference in Victoria.

"In this case I was not aware there was a problem. If that family wanted that ceremony open, I gave pretty clear instructions that that should proceed."

Mr. Harper said he spoke with the family, and they hadn't raised the issue with him. He promised to review the case and perhaps the policy.

"Obviously, I will look into it and find out if the family's wishes were different than what was done, why that was the case, and will correct it in the future."

At his daughter's funeral, Mr. Goddard said he had hoped to be enjoying a cup of coffee with his daughter in Kabul on Friday, after the University of Calgary professor was invited to the Afghan capital by the United Nations.

But instead of flying to Afghanistan, he paused by his daughter's maple casket — reaching out to touch the Canadian flag draping the coffin — and did what she loved. He began telling stories.

"We are a family of storytellers," her father told the packed Anglican church, his wife, Sally, and daughters, Victoria and Kate, sitting in the front row.

"As Nichola would say, 'Come on, daddy, spit it out.' So I will try."

After delivering a eulogy that brought more laughter than tears, the grieving father paused for a second time at the coffin, brushed some dust off the flag, and spoke his last, private words to the girl he called Care Bear.

"Yours was a short life, but a good one. You had so much promise, so much potential, and the world is a far lesser place with your passing.

"You wore your uniform so proudly."

Her remains were carried to the church on an artillery gun carriage and into the church by eight of her fellow soldiers.

More than 1,000 mourners packed the church. Outside on the street, many others stood in light rain, some waving Canadian flags, most with poppies pinned to their lapels.

Beside the Goddard family sat Jason Beam, a Silver Cross pinned to his chest. The couple met during basic training at Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, near Montreal.

"She introduced herself as Goddard, and I responded with 'I'm Beam,' " her husband said, recalling the day they met, eight years ago.

"I never thought that a two-second conversation would develop into such a fabulous relationship ...I could never get her name straight. I kept on asking her, 'It's God something, right?' "

Major Liam McGarry, commanding officer of the 1st Regiment, Royal Canadian Horse Artillery based in Shilo, Man., said she'll never be forgotten by her regiment.

"Capt. Goddard was an outstanding leader and soldier. Her dedication to the soldiers under her command was unwavering," Maj. McGarry said.

"Capt. Nichola Goddard was highly respected by officers and soldiers alike, throughout the regiment and across the Canadian forces.

"Nich, end of mission, stand down."

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PUBLICATION: National Post

DATE: 2006.05.27

EDITION: National

SECTION: News

PAGE: A1 / Front

BYLINE: Kerry Williamson

SOURCE: CanWest News Service

DATELINE: CALGARY

ILLUSTRATION: Black & White Photo: Jim Wells, Reuters / Tim Goddard pauses beside the casket of his daughter, Captain Nichola Goddard, at her funeral service in Calgary yesterday.

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'Short life, but a good one'; Dad wants Goddard remembered not just as soldier, but as 'person with passion'

PUBLICATION: The Hamilton Spectator

DATE: 2006.05.27

EDITION: Final

SECTION: Local

PAGE: A7

BYLINE: Bill Graveland

SOURCE: The Canadian Press

DATELINE: CALGARY

ILLUSTRATION: Photo: Mikael Kjellstrom, Reuters / The flag-draped casket of Captain Nichola Goddard is brought into St. Barnabas Church yesterday in Calgary. Goddard was killed May 17 while serving in Afghanistan.

WORD COUNT: 379

In his final act as her father, Tim Goddard lovingly ran his hand over the length of the flag-draped coffin of his daughter Nichola — just moments after delivering a heart-rending eulogy for the young artillery captain.

"Yours was a short life but a good one. You had so much promise, so much potential, and the world is a far lesser place with your passing," Goddard said in a speech that moved many of the 600 mourners at her funeral yesterday to tears.

Captain Nichola Goddard, 26, died May 17 in a grenade attack by Taliban insurgents. She was Canada's first female combat soldier to die in battle and the 17th Canadian soldier to die in Afghanistan.

"Ours has become a very public grief, but I would urge you to remember our beautiful girl not just as a soldier, not just as the first Canadian woman killed in combat," he said. "But as a person with passion — one with a great enthusiasm for life."

Goddard also used his eulogy to criticize the Conservative government for its new policy of barring the news media from covering repatriation ceremonies for fallen soldiers.

"I find it troubling that the privacy decision means that we are keeping the press outside the wire," he told mourners. "I would like to think Nichola died to protect our freedoms, not to restrict them."

In Victoria, Harper said the policy was never meant to go against any family's wishes and he would re-examine it.

Nichola Goddard died on her father's birthday, and he read from a letter she had written to her parents on her own birthday, May 2. The letter arrived after her death.

"I have been thinking a lot about fate lately," she wrote.

"It seems to me that we have such a responsibility to make the world a better place for those who were born into far worse circumstances. It is more than donating money to charities.

"It is taking action and trying to make things better. You have both shown me that throughout my life, but here, I realize it more than ever before."

Goddard's flag-draped coffin arrived at the church on an artillery gun carriage pulled by a Second World War gun tractor. Mourners were given a red poppy, Canada's symbol of war remembrance, as they entered the church and miniature Canadian flags once the service was over.

Goddard will be interred at the National Military Cemetery of the Canadian Forces in Ottawa in early June.

Major Liam McGarry, acting commanding officer of her regiment, praised the young officer's leadership skills and character.

"She was a true comrade, a friend and will never be forgotten by her regimental family," he said.

"Nic, end of mission. Stand easy."

Daughter of Canada swaddled in the flag for her last journey

PUBLICATION: GLOBE AND MAIL
IDN: 061470254
DATE: 2006.05.27
PAGE: A7 (ILLUS)
BYLINE: CHRISTIE BLATCHFORD
SECTION: Column
EDITION: Metro
DATELINE: Calgary AB
WORDS: 1241
WORD COUNT: 1295

CHRISTIE BLATCHFORD CALGARY Captain Nichola Goddard was always a child of the great outdoors, and in so many of the pictures that were part of the video tribute played at her funeral yesterday, she was shown by shining lakes, in vast fields of snow, dwarfed under one slice of big northern sky or another and necessarily often squinting into the sun or wearing dark glasses.

Until she was killed in action last week — on her 105th day in Afghanistan as a FOO, or Forward Observation Officer, with the 1st Regiment of the Royal Canadian Horse Artillery — it was only her intimates who knew that the young woman herself was as luminous as all that.

But as one of Capt. Goddard's friends recently told her father Tim, "Canada has now been divided into two groups of people — those who knew you, and those who wish they had. There could be no better epitaph." Dr. Goddard, an associate dean in the faculty of education at the University of Calgary, made the remark in a tender eulogy to the first born of his and Sally Goddard's three daughters before an overflow crowd of about 800 at St. Barnabas Anglican Church here.

Just three Christmases ago, Capt. Goddard walked down the same worn red-and-cream tile aisle of the pretty church for her marriage to Jason (Jay) Beam, her sweet-faced young husband.

They met, a composed but tremulous Mr. Beam remembered in his tribute, eight years ago in their first week of basic training at Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu near Montreal.

Part of the ritual had the recruits learning how to assemble the bits of their army kit; for instance, they would be sent running down the long halls to retrieve their boots and then be shown how to lace them, and it was in the course of these mad dashes that Capt. Goddard introduced herself.

"Goddard," she said.

"I'm Beam," he replied, never dreaming that in those few words they were launching "the fabulous relationship we had." Indeed, had it been left to Mr. Beam, obtuse in the way of young men to the clues that a woman was interested in him, there might have been no relationship.

When the rookies finally got a weekend off, and he was unlucky enough to have pulled duty on the base, everyone but Capt. Goddard went off to the mall. She stayed behind; hmmm, he thought. She dropped several other unsubtle clues, "none of which I picked up on." Finally, Capt. Goddard, with trademark forthrightness,

sat Mr.

Beam down and "brought up the idea of us dating." As Dr. Goddard put it, "Dear Jay . . . she knew right away he was the one. Jay was her choice . . . And in Jason she saw the poised, thoughtful, supportive and articulate young man the whole world has seen these last few terrible days. She loved you so much Jay." When Mr. Beam finished his eulogy, he put two fingers to his lips and then placed the kiss on Capt. Goddard's casket; when her father finished speaking, he put a hand on the same spot; when the acting commanding officer of IRCHA, Major Liam McGarry, finished his, he said, "Nic, end of mission. Stand easy." When she died instantly in an ambush near Kandahar, she was but 15 days into her 27th year on the planet, a good many corners of which she had explored either as a child with her itinerant family or as an officer.

If, as with many of her fellow soldiers, Capt. Goddard was as steadfast and settled as someone twice her age on the big life questions — sure of herself in family, marriage, church, duty and her own beliefs — she remained playful, spontaneous and remarkably open to the people and experiences that Afghanistan offered her.

She wrote lengthy, near-poetic letters home, to her family, of course, and friends, and to the St. Barnabas congregation, who had them compiled in a book yesterday inside the front doors.

"The longer that we are in theatre and the more that we interact with the Afghan people, the more I feel that we are really serving a purpose here," she wrote on March 4. "I think these people, through the Afghan National Army and the Afghan National Police, are trying to achieve something that we in Canada have long since taken for granted . . . They lay down their lives daily to try to seize something that is so idealistic it is almost impossible to define. . ." That something was what Capt. Goddard called "the awesome power of a democratic government," and while she agreed that "it is easy to poke holes in that statement, and say that the system is corrupt or that violence and poverty make people easy targets for our own agendas . . . we have to start somewhere." She was a thinking soldier. When, for instance, shortly after her unit arrived at Kandahar Air Field, there was talk of moving the few women to a separate tent. Capt. Goddard disagreed, thought they'd "taken a benign situation and created a fantasy," and wrote to her CO, Lieutenant-Colonel Ian Hope.

He replied, with an explanation (the segregation was meant mostly to accommodate female members of the press) and a compromise — the women would stay in the same tent, but in an area sectioned off by a tarp. Capt. Goddard was happy with that: "Girls generally smell better than guys" anyway.

In this family of storytellers, it was plain that father and daughter had heated discussions. Just last Christmas, he said, they discussed the role of the military in places like Afghanistan, Iraq and Darfur.

Capt. Goddard subscribed to the view that military force is required to permit the reconstruction of civil society; Dr. Goddard argued that education is the key to development for the poor and oppressed.

"Quick as a flash," he said, "she punctured my professorial balloon.

'You can't do that when the bad guys run things, Dad,' she said, 'they just shoot you. You have to have peace and good government in order for the rest to happen. I do what I do so you can do what you do.' "As always," Dr. Goddard said with his enormous smile, so like his girl's, "she was right. But through her death in combat, killed by people who were apparently hiding in or near a school, perhaps we can bring these two elements together." In Capt. Goddard's name, the family has established an endowed scholarship at the University of Calgary open to applicants from three groups — citizens of Papua New Guinea, where Capt. Goddard came into the world as a scrawny, less-than-four-pound baby; Indian, Inuit or Metis peoples of Canada, in whose company she spent her formative years, and citizens of Afghanistan, the place of her death.

Among the last words the gentle, intellectual Dr. Goddard offered were for his child's Canadian and Afghan

comrades overseas, "who responded to her death with great vigour and imposed an almost biblical wrath on those who were responsible for it. We thank you for that." Then he quoted, rather fiercely, the words on the cap badge of the Artillery beret: Quo fas et gloria ducunt , Latin for "Whither right and glory lead." Capt. Goddard left that church as she entered it, her casket all wrapped up tight in the Canadian flag, swaddled as only a daughter of Canada should be.

cblatchford@globeandmail.ca

ADDED SEARCH TERMS:

GEOGRAPHIC NAME: Canada; Afghanistan

SUBJECT TERM:funerals; war; deaths; strife; biography

PERSONAL NAME: Nichola Goddard

ORGANIZATION NAME: Armed Forces

THE AFGHAN MISSION PM backs down on policy for fallen Hours after funeral, Harper lets families decide whether public can see arrival of bodies

PUBLICATION: GLOBE AND MAIL

IDN: 061470202

DATE: 2006.05.27

PAGE: A1

BYLINE: GLORIA GALLOWAY AND MICHAEL DEN TANDT

SECTION: National News

EDITION: Metro

DATELINE: VICTORIA AND OTTAWA

WORDS: 743

WORD COUNT: 778

GLORIA GALLOWAY AND MICHAEL DEN TANDT VICTORIA AND OTTAWA Families of soldiers killed overseas will decide whether the country can watch their loved ones return home, Prime Minister Stephen Harper said yesterday, reversing his government's policy hours after a grieving father said his daughter died to defend freedoms not restrict them.

Mr. Harper said he was troubled to learn that Tim Goddard, the father of Captain Nichola Goddard, said during a eulogy at her funeral that he disagreed with the government's decision to keep reporters away from the airfield when bodies arrive back in Canada.

"I had given fairly clear instructions that, when bodies were to come home, families were to be consulted," Mr. Harper said at a news conference in Victoria. "And if all families were agreed on making that particular ceremony public, that our government should have no difficulty with that. I'm not sure what happened in this case." Mr. Harper said he spoke with Dr. Goddard this week. "He didn't raise the issue with me so I didn't realize there was a problem, but obviously I'll look into it and find out if the family's wishes were different to what was done and why that was the case and we'll correct it in the future." Long-standing Canadian military policy has been to consult with families to determine whether they want the media on the tarmac at CFB Trenton when coffins are removed from the planes bringing them home. The overwhelming majority have agreed.

That changed this winter after the Conservatives took office.

Reporters were told they were no longer welcome and defence staff said the decision came from the government.

"I find it troubling that the privacy decision means we are keeping the press outside the wire, where the bad guys are," Dr. Goddard said at his daughter's funeral in Calgary yesterday. "I would like to think that Nichola died to protect our freedoms, not to restrict them." The ramp ceremony was an emotional time, Dr. Goddard said, adding that he appreciated being surrounded by Defence Minister Gordon O'Connor, Chief of the Defence Staff General Rick Hillier and so many other military personnel, many of whom had known his daughter before she died in combat in Afghanistan.

Families of soldiers killed overseas will decide whether the country can watch their loved ones return home, Prime Minister Stephen Harper said yesterday, reversing his government's policy hours after a grieving father

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"I had given fairly clear instructions that, when bodies were to come home, families were to be consulted," Mr. Harper said at a news conference in Victoria. "And if all families were agreed on making that particular ceremony public, that our government should have no difficulty with that. I'm not sure what happened in this case." Mr. Harper said he spoke with Dr. Goddard this week. "He didn't raise the issue with me so I didn't realize there was a problem, but obviously I'll look into it and find out if the family's wishes were different to what was done and why that was the case and we'll correct it in the future." Long-standing Canadian military policy has been to consult with families to determine whether they want the media on the tarmac at CFB Trenton when coffins are removed from the planes bringing them home. The overwhelming majority have agreed.

That changed this winter after the Conservatives took office.

Reporters were told they were no longer welcome and defence staff said the decision came from the government.

"I find it troubling that the privacy decision means we are keeping the press outside the wire, where the bad guys are," Dr. Goddard said at his daughter's funeral in Calgary yesterday. "I would like to think that Nichola died to protect our freedoms, not to restrict them." The ramp ceremony was an emotional time, Dr. Goddard said, adding that he appreciated being surrounded by Defence Minister Gordon O'Connor, Chief of Defence Staff General Rick Hillier and so many other military personnel, many of whom had known his daughter before she died in combat in Afghanistan.

ADDED SEARCH TERMS:

GEOGRAPHIC NAME: Canada; Afghanistan

SUBJECT TERM:funerals; war; deaths; privacy; media; political; statements

PERSONAL NAME: Stephen Harper; Tim Goddard; Nichola Goddard

ORGANIZATION NAME: Armed Forces

Father chastises PM in eulogy: Harper blames miscommunication; Policy barring media from ramp ceremonies not a hard rule; families have final say

PUBLICATION: Montreal Gazette
DATE: 2006.05.27
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: A12
BYLINE: KERRY WILLIAMSON
SOURCE: CanWest News Service
DATELINE: CALGARY

ILLUSTRATION: Colour Photo: TODD KOROL, REUTERS / The casket of Capt. Nichola Goddard is carried by members of the Royal Canadian Horse Artillery into St. Barnabas Church in Calgary yesterday. Goddard was killed May 17 in a battle with Taliban fighters in the volatile Afghan province of Kandahar.; Colour Photo: JEFF MCINTOSH, CP / Tim and Sally Goddard, parents of Capt. Nichola Goddard, arrive at their daughter's funeral in Calgary yesterday.

WORD COUNT: 374

In an emotional eulogy for his daughter, the father of the first Canadian woman to die in combat issued a stern rebuke to Prime Minister Stephen Harper yesterday criticizing him for barring the media from his child's homecoming.

Tim Goddard, father of Capt. Nichola Goddard, said he could "see no reason" why media should be kept away from the ramp ceremonies at Canadian Forces Base Trenton.

"I find it troubling that the privacy decision means that we are keeping the press outside the wire, where the bad guys are," he said during her funeral in the same church where he gave the 26-year-old away as a bride just four years ago.

"I would like to think that Nichola died to protect our freedoms, not to restrict them."

The Harper government has a policy of not allowing media onto the Trenton base when the bodies of Canadian soldiers return from Afghanistan. The policy was implemented last month, when the remains of four soldiers – Cpl. Matthew Dinning, Bombardier Myles Mansell, Lt. William Turner, and Cpl. Randy Payne – arrived.

Reporters were also kept outside the gates of the base last week, when Goddard's body arrived back in Canada.

Harper, who has consistently defended the policy, said for the first time yesterday that there was no hard and fast rule barring journalists.

He said that decision belonged to the families, and blamed a miscommunication for the ban at Goddard's ceremony, saying he was "troubled to hear" of Tim Goddard's comments.

At his daughter's funeral, Tim Goddard said he had hoped to be enjoying a cup of coffee with his daughter in Kabul yesterday, after the University of Calgary professor was invited to the Afghan capital by the United Nations.

But, instead of flying to Kabul, he paused by his daughter's casket and did what she loved. He began telling stories.

"We are a family of storytellers," her father told the packed Anglican church, his wife, Sally, and daughters, Victoria and Kate, sitting in the front row.

"As Nichola would say, 'come on daddy, spit it out.' So I will try."

After delivering a eulogy that brought more laughter than tears, the grieving father paused for a second time at the coffin and spoke his last, private words to the girl he called Care Bear.

Beside the Goddard family sat Goddard's husband, Jason Beam, a Silver Cross pinned to his chest. The couple met during basic training in St. Jean sur Richelieu.

"She introduced herself as Goddard, and I responded with 'I'm Beam,'" her husband said, recalling the day they met, eight years ago.

"I never thought that a two second conversation would develop into such a fabulous relationship."

Goddard's father chastises Harper in eulogy

PUBLICATION: The Ottawa Citizen

DATE: 2006.05.27

EDITION: Final

SECTION: News

PAGE: A5

SOURCE: The Ottawa Citizen

DATELINE: CALGARY

NOTE: Ran with main story "'The world is a far lesser place'" onpage A5.

WORD COUNT: 194

CALGARY – The father of the first Canadian woman to die in combat issued a stern rebuke to Prime Minister Stephen Harper yesterday, criticizing him for barring the media from his child's homecoming.

Tim Goddard, father of Capt. Nichola Goddard, said he could "see no reason" why media should be kept away from the ramp ceremonies at Canadian Forces Base Trenton.

"I would like to think that Nichola died to protect our freedoms, not to restrict them."

Mr. Harper, who has consistently defended the policy, said for the first time yesterday that there was no hard and fast rule banning journalists. He said that decision belonged to the families, and blamed a miscommunication for the ban at Capt. Goddard's ceremony, saying he was "troubled to hear" of Mr. Goddard's comments.

"I had given fairly clear instructions that when bodies were to come home, that families should be consulted and if all families agreed on making that particular ceremony public, then I thought our government should have no difficulty with that," Mr. Harper told reporters yesterday during a news conference in Victoria.

Mr. Harper said he spoke with the family and they hadn't raised the issue with him. He promised to review the case, and perhaps the policy.

'The world is a far lesser place': Funeral held for Capt. Nichola Goddard in Calgary

PUBLICATION: The Ottawa Citizen

DATE: 2006.05.27

EDITION: Final

SECTION: News

PAGE: A5

BYLINE: Kerry Williamson

SOURCE: The Calgary Herald; with files from The Canadian Press

DATELINE: CALGARY

ILLUSTRATION: Photo: Jeff Mcintosh, The Canadian Press / Tim Goddard, right, follows the coffin of his daughter, Capt. Nichola Goddard. During the service, Mr. Goddard eulogized his daughter. 'Yours was a short life, but a good one.'

NOTE: Ran with sidebar "Goddard's father chastises Harper ineology" on page A5.

WORD COUNT: 475

CALGARY – In an emotional eulogy for his daughter, the father of the first Canadian woman to die in combat said he had hoped to be enjoying a cup of coffee with her in Kabul yesterday, after the University of Calgary professor was invited to the Afghan capital by the United Nations.

Capt. Nichola Goddard, 26, died May 17 in a grenade attack by Taliban insurgents. She was the 17th Canadian soldier to die in Afghanistan.

But, instead of flying to Afghanistan, Tim Goddard paused by his daughter's maple casket — reaching out to touch the Canadian flag draping the coffin — and did what she loved. He began telling stories.

"We are a family of storytellers," her father told the packed Anglican church in Calgary, his wife, Sally, and daughters, Victoria and Kate, sitting in the front row.

"As Nichola would say, 'come on daddy, spit it out.' So I will try."

Capt. Goddard died on her father's birthday, and he read from a letter she had written to her parents on her own birthday, May 2. The letter arrived after her death.

"I have been thinking a lot about fate lately," she wrote.

"It seems to me that we have such a responsibility to make the world a better place for those who were born into far worse circumstances. It is more than donating money to charities.

"It is taking action and trying to make things better. You have both shown me that throughout my life, but here, I realize it more than ever before."

After delivering a eulogy that brought more laughter than tears, the grieving father paused for a second time at the coffin, brushed some dust off the flag, and spoke his last, private words to the girl he called Care Bear.

"Yours was a short life, but a good one. You had so much promise, so much potential, and the world is a far lesser place with your passing.

"You wore your uniform so proudly."

Capt. Goddard's coffin was accompanied by a guard of honour and a group of honorary pallbearers made up of her comrades and friends at CFB Shilo, the Manitoba base where she was stationed before being deployed to Afghanistan.

More than 1,000 mourners packed the church for the service. Outside on the street, many others stood in light rain, some waving Canadian flags, most with poppies pinned to their lapels.

Beside the Goddard family sat Capt. Goddard's widower, Jason Beam, a Silver Cross pinned to his chest. The couple met during basic training at Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu near Montreal.

"She introduced herself as Goddard, and I responded with 'I'm Beam'," her husband said, recalling the day they met, eight years ago.

"I never thought that a two second conversation would develop into such a fabulous relationship. ... I could never get her name straight. I kept on asking her, 'it's God something, right?' "

Maj. Liam McGarry, commanding officer of the 1st Regiment, Royal Canadian Horse Artillery based in Shilo, said she'll never be forgotten by her regiment.

"Capt. Goddard was an outstanding leader and soldier. Her dedication to the soldiers under her command was unwavering," said Capt. McGarry.

"Capt. Nichola Goddard was highly respected by officers and soldiers alike, throughout the regiment and across the Canadian forces.

"Nic, end of mission, stand down."

Capt. Goddard will be interred at the National Military Cemetery of the Canadian Forces in Ottawa in early June.

Another Afghan battle won This time, the Taliban stood, fought

PUBLICATION: WINNIPEG FREE PRESS

DATE: 2006.05.27

PAGE: A13

SECTION: World Wire

WORD COUNT: 604

CP Wire Bob Weber BANZYA, Afghanistan — Eight suspected Taliban prisoners squatted in the old crater left by a long-ago Russian bomb, handcuffed, blindfolded with duct tape. A Canadian soldier stood over them, rifle ready, and summed up the last 48 hours of what will become known as the Battle of Panjwai in two terse sentences.

"Last night we were fighting for our lives. Today we're taking them prisoner." For nearly two weeks, hundreds of Canadians have been fighting in the mud-walled villages of the Panjwai district west of Kandahar, facing large concentrations of Taliban militants who — unusually — have chosen to fight rather than fade away.

The battle, a hide-and-seek affair of house-to-house searches and sudden, ferocious ambushes, has cost lives both Afghan and Canadian.

Forty Taliban fighters were reported killed and 40 others captured in Panjwai last week in a battle that also took the life of Capt.

Nichola Goddard, whose funeral was held in Calgary yesterdat.

And still the fighting continues.

"We're not 100 per cent sure why (the Taliban) are fighting so hard for this area," said Capt. Dave Johnston of Second Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry.

"But this is definitely the main event now." On Wednesday and Thursday, the big action came to Banzya — one of many villages in the desert along the Arghandab River that contain within its drab ramparts irrigated vineyards, tiny wheat fields, pomegranate orchards, a little marijuana and poppy and a maze of lanes and compounds.

A long convoy of light armoured vehicles — or LAV IIIs — and G-Wagon patrol vehicles had pulled into an adjacent field the previous night, its soldiers bedding down on the flat plain of dust and goat droppings.

By 8 a.m., about a dozen soldiers had filed through Banzya's main gate to begin the operation.

The Canadians set up a blocking cordon along one side of the town.

Then, working with the Afghan police and army, they formed a line at right angles to the cordon. They started from one end of the cordon, searching homes, poking down alleyways and questioning villagers, moving along methodically like a squeegee cleaning a window.

The Afghans took the lead. They understood the tribal differences that allowed them to recognize someone out of place. They could spot the signs that suggest a man habitually carries an AK-47.

"We've got a lot of technology that they don't," said Johnston.

"We've got more firepower, we can see better and we can call in artillery." "But they've got a spidey sense."

About 3:20, as the Canadians were working through a narrow choke point of road near the vineyards, the Taliban sprung an ambush.

"There was a lot of rounds, a lot of (rocket-propelled grenades)," said Pte. Paul Carey — at least 15 of them. Carey watched one of the rockets bounce across a road like a stone over a pond, hopping over a soldier who had dived into a ditch.

Usually, such attacks last for 15 minutes or so then fade before the Canadians can call in air or artillery support. But this time, using the vineyard as a network of trenches and a nearby building for cover, the Taliban kept up fire for an hour.

One Taliban round rammed through a mud wall and the armour of a G-Wagon, setting its interior alight and badly wounding the platoon's interpreter.

The Canadians often escape an ambush by going around it. Suspecting that's what the Taliban anticipated, they changed tactics.

"We decided to power through the attack," said Master Cpl. Chris Alden.

Under cover of the big Canadian howitzers, landing punches from kilometres away as the soldiers cheered, the platoon gradually worked out of the trap the Taliban had tried to close on them.

Meanwhile, air support arrived. A U.S. B1 bomber unloaded a 900-kilogram bomb, flattening a Taliban position with a concussion that could be felt inside LAVs two kilometres away.

The platoon finally arrived back inside the defensive perimeter late that night, their interpreter the only casualty. During the skirmish, they had fired at least 7,000 rounds.

Banzya is only one of a dozen tiny communities in Panjwai and operations in the area are ongoing. Each one will be different, and each will be the same.

— Canadian Press

Slain soldier's father chides PM in eulogy Banning media from ceremony is 'troubling'

PUBLICATION: WINNIPEG FREE PRESS

DATE: 2006.05.27

PAGE: A1

SECTION: Canada Wire

WORD COUNT: 546

CP Wire Kerry Williamson CALGARY — In a eulogy to his slain soldier daughter, Tim Goddard criticized Prime Minister Stephen Harper yesterday for refusing to allow journalists to cover the return of Canadian soldiers killed in Afghanistan.

"I find it troubling that the privacy decision means that we are keeping the press outside the wire," Tim Goddard said during a service in the same church where he gave his 26-year-old daughter, Capt.

Nichola Goddard, away as a bride just four years ago.

"I would like to think Nichola died to protect our freedoms," he added, "not to restrict them." Capt. Goddard was killed May 17 when the light-armoured vehicle she was commanding was attacked by Taliban insurgents armed with rocket-propelled grenades. Goddard was struck by shrapnel.

In response to Goddard's criticism, Harper said yesterday that he'd spoken with the family earlier in the week and the issue had not been raised.

"I have given fairly clear instructions that when bodies were to come home, that families should be consulted, and if all families were agreed on making that particular ceremony public, then I thought our government should have no difficulty with that," Harper said during a news conference in Victoria.

"I spoke with Mr. Goddard this week. He didn't raise the issue with me, so I didn't realize there was a problem, but obviously I will look into it." At his daughter's funeral, Tim Goddard said he had hoped to be visiting his daughter in Kabul yesterday, after the University of Calgary professor was invited to the Afghan capital by the United Nations.

But instead of flying to Afghanistan, he paused by his daughter's maple casket and did what she loved. He began telling stories.

"We are a family of storytellers," her father told the packed Anglican church, his wife, Sally, and daughters, Victoria and Kate, sitting in the front row.

"As Nichola would say, 'come on daddy, spit it out.' So I will try." Nichola Goddard died on her father's birthday, and he read from a letter she had written to her parents on her own birthday, May 2. The letter arrived after her death.

"I have been thinking a lot about fate lately," she wrote.

"It seems to me that we have such a responsibility to make the world a better place for those who were born into far worse circumstances.

It is more than donating money to charities.

"It is taking action and trying to make things better. You have both shown me that throughout my life, but here, I realize it more than ever before." The remains of the first Canadian woman to die in combat were carried to the church on an artillery gun carriage and then into the church by eight of her fellow soldiers.

More than 1,000 mourners packed the church for the service. Outside on the street, many others stood in light rain, most with poppies pinned to their lapels.

Beside the Goddard family sat her husband, Jason Beam, a Silver Cross pinned to his chest. The couple met during basic training at Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Que.

"She introduced herself as Goddard, and I responded with 'I'm Beam,'" he said, recalling the day they met, eight years ago.

"I never thought that a two-second conversation would develop into such a fabulous relationship." Maj. Liam McGarry, commanding officer of the 1st Regiment, Royal Canadian Horse Artillery based in Shilo, said she'll never be forgotten by her regiment.

"Capt. Goddard was an outstanding leader and soldier. Her dedication to the soldiers under her command was unwavering," he said. "Nic, end of mission, stand down." — CanWest News Service, Canadian Press