


CANADA'S BLOODY WAR IN AFGHANISTAN

Introduction

Focus

As the combat death toll rose to 43, including 10 deaths in September alone, Canadians once again questioned the mission in Afghanistan. This *News in Review* story examines the Canadian battle to win the hearts and minds of the people of Kandahar province as well as the intense debate at home regarding Canada's military involvement in Afghanistan.

 Sections marked with this symbol indicate content suitable for younger viewers.

The Killing Fields of Kandahar

Canadian soldiers were on foot patrol through Pashmul, a cluster of villages in the former Taliban stronghold of Panjwai, just west of Kandahar, Afghanistan. They were on a new makeshift road designed to keep the troops off the mine-infested main roads. They were reasonably certain that Operation Medusa, a massive Canadian-led NATO attack to rid the district of Taliban insurgents had been effective. In fact, their superiors had claimed that as many as 1 000 Taliban had been killed by NATO troops in the first two weeks of the campaign. Nonetheless, the Canadians weren't sure what booby-traps the insurgents had left behind. They weaved their way carefully along the road, looking for landmines and improvised explosive devices (IEDs). Corporal Mike Blois was at the tail end of the patrol when a huge IED explosion went off in front of him.

As the dust began to settle he shouted out the names of the men in his patrol. All but one either answered or stumbled toward him. Private Josh Klukie was missing. The soldiers fanned out through the thick foliage, eventually finding Klukie 50 metres away from the blast scene. He was lying on his back, conscious but unable to speak. Blois and a medic from a nearby U.S. patrol started working on him, reassuring him, and urging him to hang on. Blois said, "This is nothing Josh, this is nothing." Klukie just looked at Blois, forced a smile—perhaps a final gift of comfort for a friend—and died. He was the 38th Canadian to die in the conflict in Afghanistan since hostilities began in 2001.

Source: *Globe and Mail*, "The sad smile of a dying soldier," October 2, 2006

Dreams of Peacekeeping

When the preliminary stages of Operation Archer (the new, more aggressive Canadian role) were implemented in fall 2005, Canada's top soldier, General Rick Hillier, warned Canadians that the era of the blue-helmeted peacekeeper was over and that the Canadian Forces were now on a war footing in Afghanistan. Canadians needed to expect casualties because Canada's move from the security of Kabul to the birthplace of the Taliban in Kandahar would entail a great deal more direct contact with the enemy. It took some time but, by the beginning of the summer of 2006, the Canadian public was very much aware of the dangers in Kandahar. The flag-draped coffins of nine soldiers—including four killed in one incident—as well as the death of diplomat Glyn Berry shook Canadians out of their peacekeeping dreams and let the nation know that it was at war.

Summer in Panjwai

Summer tends to be fighting season in Afghanistan, and the summer of 2006 proved to be no exception. A resurgent Taliban took the fight to Canadian troops who were working to bring security to Kandahar province. July saw three Canadians fall: two at the hands of a suicide bomber and one in a firefight. In August eight Canadians died, with four killed in an ambush by the Taliban that saw Canadian troops pounded by rocket propelled grenades (RPGs). This happened in Pashmul, the most dangerous area in the Panjwai district and the reputed spiritual centre of the Taliban during its rule.

Canadian and NATO commanders knew that something needed to be done

Definition

Taliban in Arabic means “seeker of truth” or “student.” It usually refers to the religious zealots who governed Afghanistan until late 2001. In the current fighting it is not always clear whether Canadians are fighting the original Taliban, mercenaries, or even local criminals or warlords. The name has come to represent a broader range of insurgents than the original force that governed Afghanistan before 2001.

Did you know . . .

An EKOS (www.ekos.com) poll conducted in September showed that 49 per cent of Canadians opposed the war, 38 per cent supported the war, and 12 per cent held no opinion. The EKOS poll was indicative of previous polls that showed that Canadians were split when it came to the mission in Afghanistan.

in Panjwai and, on September 2, Canada led an international force in Operation Medusa: a 15-day battle to rid the district of Taliban insurgents. According to NATO, Panjwai was under coalition control by the middle of the month, with as many as 1 000 Taliban killed in the fighting and the rest retreating into the countryside. Most civilians heeded the warnings issued by Canadian forces and left the area before the fighting began. Life appeared to be returning to normal when troops saw local farmers come back to their homes shortly after the heavy fighting had ended. Operation Medusa was arguably the most successful campaign against insurgents since the Anglo-American ousting of the Taliban in 2001. However, Canada paid a heavy price for its leadership role in the battle. During the two weeks of the main battle, Canada lost five soldiers, and in the aftermath stretching into mid-October, another 10 soldiers were killed. That brought the casualty count in the Afghan conflict to 43, with 42 soldiers and one diplomat dying at the hands of Taliban, Al Qaeda, and other insurgent groups.

Should we stay or should we go?

As the combat death count rose during the summer of 2006, Canadian opposi-

tion to the mission began to grow, culminating in NDP leader Jack Layton’s announcement in early September that, if elected, his government would pull Canadian troops out of Afghanistan. This set off a wave of condemnation from the governing Conservatives and the opposition Liberals. Prime Minister Stephen Harper’s Conservatives rallied behind their leader and pointed out that Parliament agreed (albeit by a very narrow margin) to extend the mission to February 2009. Liberal leadership candidates expressed views ranging from the need to honour our commitments in Afghanistan to regular reviews of the mission. The Bloc Québécois put their support in the mission but called for safeguards to ensure the security of the Royal 22nd Regiment (also called the Vandoos) of Valcartier, slated to replace troops in Kandahar in 2007. Government advocates for military involvement contended that too much attention was being spent on the casualty count and not enough on the good that Canada’s Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) was bringing to the people of Afghanistan. In the end, only the NDP came out staunchly against the deployment in Afghanistan.

To Consider

1. What happened to Josh Klukie in Pashmul?
2. How did the mission in Kandahar bring dreams of peacekeeping to an end for most Canadians?
3. Describe what happened in Panjwai in the summer of 2006.
4. How did politicians react to the war in Afghanistan near the end of the summer of 2006?

CANADA'S BLOODY WAR IN AFGHANISTAN

Video Review

Respond carefully to the questions, which should guide your viewing of the video.

Did you know . . .

Canada has pledged to upgrade the equipment of 2 000 Afghan policeman so that they can better carry out their duties.

Update

As of November 2006, leadership of the NATO military campaign in southern Afghanistan passed from Canada to Holland.

1. a) What happened to the Canadian convoy mentioned at the beginning of Chris Brown's report?

b) How common are the types of attacks the Canadians encountered that day?

2. What sobering lessons did Canadians learn early in Operation Medusa?

3. How are the Taliban attracting new recruits to fight in the insurgency?

4. What groups make up the Neo-Taliban?

5. What is delaying the Canadian reconstruction efforts in Kandahar province?

6. What does Prime Minister Harper mean when he says that Canada will not leave Afghanistan until success has been achieved?

7. How did the Canadian Forces wind up getting dispatched to Afghanistan?

8. Were the top brass in the army prepared for a large deployment?

9. How did Major-General Cameron Ross react to the announcement of the Afghanistan mission?

10. What is General Rick Hillier's perspective on serving in Afghanistan?

11. What is your personal opinion of the Canadian mission in Afghanistan? How do you think it will turn out? Explain clearly.

CANADA'S BLOODY WAR IN AFGHANISTAN

Operation Medusa

Did you know . . .

The A-10 Thunderbolt—also called the “Warthog”—specializes in strafing, which involves rapidly firing bullets the size of pop cans at enemy targets on the ground.

The Panjwai Problem

When NATO agreed to form the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF – www.jfcbs.nato.int/ISAF/index.htm) and join the U.S.-led mission in Afghanistan, they had to come up with a strategy to fight the Taliban, Al Qaeda, and other insurgents who were effectively utilizing guerilla warfare tactics against coalition troops. By the beginning of 2006, as Canadian troops began gathering in Kandahar, ISAF commanders were toying with an idea called “the ink-spot theory.” The ink-spot theory maintains that, if troops can expel insurgents from a contested area, and development aid can be infused into the local economy, the community will be reluctant to let the insurgents return to the area. By September 2006, the Canadians were ready to test the ink-spot theory by leading a NATO force that would expel the Taliban from the Panjwai district west of Kandahar city. The mission was called Operation Medusa.

Panjwai had been a thorn in the side of the Canadians since the Kandahar deployment began in earnest in early 2006. Concerned NATO personnel noted that Taliban insurgents roamed freely in the region and were able to deal some pretty deadly blows against coalition forces. Canada knew this firsthand as five soldiers—including Captain Nichola Goddard, Canada’s first female soldier to be killed in action—died in clashes with the Taliban in Panjwai between May and the start of Operation Medusa in September.

The operation got off to a rocky start. While gains were made on the first day, Canada sustained four combat deaths in

firefights with the Taliban. Then, on the second day, as troops prepared to continue their advance into Panjwai, a U.S. A-10 Thunderbolt aircraft, called in for a strafing attack on insurgents, mistakenly fired on Canadian soldiers instead, killing one and wounding 30 others. Nonetheless, the Canadians and their coalition partners persevered, fighting with courageous determination for the next two weeks. They drove the insurgents out of Panjwai and invited local farmers to return to their homes with the promise of reconstruction and development aid. NATO commanders deemed the operation a tremendous success, with estimates of between 500 and 1 000 insurgents killed. The Canadian-led effort to take the region away from the Taliban was seen as one of the most significant victories since the war began in the fall of 2001.

Unfortunately, in the aftermath of open hostilities with the insurgents in Panjwai, 10 more Canadians were killed in action, including four soldiers attacked by a suicide bomber while they were giving out candy and school supplies to children. In all, Canada lost 15 soldiers; five during Operation Medusa and 10 more while securing the area in Medusa’s aftermath.

Rebuilding Panjwai

With the “ink-spot” of Panjwai secured by coalition forces, Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs)—like Canada’s at Camp Nathan Smith in Kandahar—could begin their work at putting phase two of the “ink-spot theory” into effect. The success of the PRTs is the unheralded success story of the Afghan mission. By the fall of 2006, PRTs from

the over 30 NATO nations in Afghanistan had successfully:

- worked with local communities to enroll 4 000 000 more children (one third of them girls) in primary school
- helped administer and finance 135 000 micro-loans to women starting their own businesses so they could earn their own livelihood
- aided in the return of 3 500 000 refugees back to Afghanistan
- decommissioned over 11 000 heavy weapons
- provided food support for 40 000 people

Canada's PRT at Camp Nathan Smith in Kandahar has:

- distributed 6 000 school kits to children
- distributed 100 bicycles to children
- donated computers to local businesses and schools
- built a water distribution system for a local community

- dug wells in and around Kandahar
- purchased an electricity generator for Kandahar University
- employed 100 Afghans at Camp Nathan Smith, home of 220 Canadian soldiers as well as Foreign Affairs, CIDA, and RCMP personnel

Source: *The Globe and Mail*, "On deadly ground," September 30, 2006

Success in Operation Medusa meant that the PRT efforts that had been thwarted by the insurgents dominating Panjwai could now proceed. In an effort to endorse these efforts, the Harper government agreed to double the size of the PRT in Kandahar as well as boost Canada's aid commitment to Afghanistan to \$1-billion. If the "ink spot theory" works, a former Taliban stronghold will become a vibrant farming area, a drastic change from where things stood in the summer of 2006.

Inquiry

1. What is "the ink-spot theory"?
2. Why was Panjwai considered to be a thorn in the side of Canadian forces in Kandahar?
3. What was Operation Medusa? Was it successful?
4. List three examples of how the PRTs are transforming the Afghan mission.
5. How has the Canadian government shown support for PRTs since the victory in Panjwai?

CANADA'S BLOODY WAR IN AFGHANISTAN

Voices

Read the following quotes and complete the activity that follows.

“Canada out of Afghanistan now. [Canada] is endangering the lives of Canadian soldiers to meet objectives that cannot be attained. You know the last one who conquered Afghanistan? Alexander the Great—300 BC.” — Mubin Shaikh, a key informant for CSIS and the RCMP in the arrest of those charged in the Toronto terror plot (*The Globe and Mail*, “Informant says attacks on Canadians are legitimate in Afghanistan,” August 23, 2006) **F** ___ **A** ___

“This is the wrong mission for Canada. . . . It doesn't have light at the end of the tunnel.” — Jack Layton, NDP leader (*The Globe and Mail*, “This is the wrong mission for Canada.” September 4, 2006) **F** ___ **A** ___

“Playing politics with the lives of our soldiers is despicable. We made a decision to go after the Taliban, trying to get Afghanistan back on its feet, so it doesn't make sense for us to call it quits.” — Jim Davis, father of Cpl. Paul Davis, killed while on patrol in Kandahar in March 2006, reacting to Jack Layton's call to pull troops out of Afghanistan (*Toronto Star*, “Fallen soldier's father slams Layton's call for troop pullout,” September 2, 2006) **F** ___ **A** ___

“We knew there were going to be casualties, and it's painful every time there's a casualty or injury to our soldiers. But you cannot—every time there is a serious loss—begin to say ‘Let's pull out.’” — Ujjal Dosanjh, Liberal defence critic, also reacting to Layton's comments (*Toronto Star*, “Soldiers' deaths spur debate,” September 4, 2006) **F** ___ **A** ___

“They are saying that they have killed 200 Taliban but they did not kill even 10 Taliban. They are just destroying civilian homes and agricultural land. They are using the media to do propaganda against the Taliban.” — Mullah Dadullah, Taliban military commander of south and southeastern Afghanistan (*Toronto Star*, “The latest casualty: Confidence in the mission,” September 5, 2006) **F** ___ **A** ___

“My hope is an ever-increasing number of Canadians will step forward and say we really should reconsider the mission. . . . I hope . . . Canadians will talk to their MPs and urge them to revisit the issue. It looks like we're doing politics on the world scene the way [U.S. President] George Bush does.” — Jack Layton, NDP leader (*Toronto Star*, “Friendly fire in Afghanistan,” September 5, 2006) **F** ___ **A** ___

“Certainly the tenacity of the resistance is a little bit of a surprise. And the southern region has turned out to be more than we expected but certainly, by no means, unmanageable.” — Brigadier-General David Fraser, Canadian commander in Kandahar, (*The Globe and Mail*, “Canada needs more help fighting the Taliban, allies told,” September 8, 2006) **F** ___ **A** ___

Update

Poland has promised to send 1 000 soldiers to the southern region to help NATO forces win a clear military victory. The soldiers should arrive by February 2007.

Did you know . . .

During Hamid Karzai's visit to Canada in September 2006, Canadian Governor General, Michaëlle Jean, held a dinner for Karzai and Prime Minister Harper where the role of Canada in Afghanistan was debated fully and frankly.

"I think it's a shock for many people in our country that we're involved in something that is not blue helmets and no rifles. There are very few places you can go where both sides agree to a ceasefire, and you just monitor. . . . It [the mission in Kandahar] also means a more robust response from the military, which, unfortunately, means casualties." — Gordon O'Connor, Defence Minister (*The Globe and Mail*, "Canada needs more help fighting the Taliban, allies told," September 8, 2006) **F** ___ **A** ___

"Casualties are getting way more publicity than should happen. Traffic accidents in Afghanistan and a poor unfortunate soldier being killed—there's national coverage of the funeral in Canada. It's in the face of people on a daily basis. People say we're not winning, you should bring our troops home. If that's the case—we're leaving because it's difficult—then everyone else leaves and the Taliban take over." — Retired Major-General Lewis MacKenzie (*Toronto Star*, "A more nuanced patriotism," September 17, 2006) **F** ___ **A** ___

"The Taliban are a bunch of cowards. . . . They attacked children today. That's not strong. That's just cowardly. They're desperate. If they want a fight, I'm willing to have a fight any time they want. But this is not an honourable fight at all." — Brigadier-General David Fraser, responding to media questions after four Canadian soldiers and a number of Afghan civilians, including a number of children, were killed by a suicide bomber while they were giving out candy, toys, and school supplies to children (*The Globe and Mail*, "Suicide bomber kills four Canadian troops," September 19, 2006) **F** ___ **A** ___

"Terrorists are prepared to cross any boundaries and commit horrific acts of violence to try to derail Afghanistan from its path to success. . . . We will not succeed in eliminating terrorism unless we seek and fight the source of terrorism wherever it might be and dry its roots. . . . Thanks to Canada's contributions, Afghanistan today is profoundly different from the terrified and exhausted country it was five years ago." — Hamid Karzai, President of Afghanistan, during his first official visit to Canada (*The Globe and Mail*, "Visiting Canada, Afghan leader presses Pakistan," September 23, 2006) **F** ___ **A** ___

"Our job in Afghanistan is not done. As Canadians, we will stay the course until our work there is complete." — Steven Harper, Prime Minister of Canada, commenting at the conclusion of Afghan President Hamid Karzai's first official visit to Canada ("Prime Minister Harper concludes meetings with Afghan President Hamid Karzai," September 22, 2006, www.pm.gc.ca/eng/media.asp?id=1332) **F** ___ **A** ___

Activity

1. Beside each quote check off whether the comment is "for the mission" (F) or "against the mission" (A) in Afghanistan.
2. Circle any three (3) quotes that most support the point of view that you have of the mission.
3. In a 75- to 100-word paragraph, explain how one of these quotes supports your point of view.

CANADA'S BLOODY WAR IN AFGHANISTAN

A Soldier's Diary

Quote

"Who's the true Canadian patriot? The person who supports our troops in Afghanistan without question, or the one who demands we bring them home?" — Leslie Scrivener, *Toronto Star*, September 17, 2006

Several Canadian soldiers have been killed or injured in traffic accidents in and around Kandahar. Cpl. Brian Sanders of the Lord Strathcona's Horse (Royal Canadians) regiment explains why driving in Afghanistan can be so treacherous.

Where the streets have no name . . . or rules

April 3, 2006

When you turn 16 in Canada, the first thing on your mind is getting your driver's licence. That little piece of plastic grants you freedom to go and do whatever you want. It's the only test that makes you stay awake at night studying so you can pass with flying colours.

The driving rules are a little different when you're navigating a 13-tonne armoured ambulance along roads in Afghanistan, while constantly watching for suicide bombers and rocket-propelled grenades. And those rules must be followed not only for safe driving, but to save your life.

Let me paint you a little picture. The southern Afghan city of Kandahar, where the bulk of Canadian troops are stationed, has about one million people. There are no highrises, or freeways . . . just dirt, and lots of it. The buildings look like sandcastles made at a beach during summer holidays. The smell of human waste lingers everywhere because there are no sewer systems. To top it all off, the streets are about the size of bike paths.

This brings me back to driving. Let's review a few rules:

Number 1: In Canada, we have lanes.

In fact, some highways have four, eight, 12, even 20 lanes, all paved with those Pac-Man dots separating each one. Speed limits are posted. Intersections have stop signs and lights to ensure safe driving by all. However, Kandahar's streets are equipped with one lane, made of dirt. No dots separate directions of traffic, and intersections are clearly marked—with absolutely nothing.

Number 2: Roads in Canada are designed for vehicles. All vehicles pass various inspections to ensure they are safe for the road, and various checkstops are in place to inspect larger trucks on highways. On Kandahar's roads, though, you'll see much more than cars: donkeys toting carts, bicyclists pedalling aimlessly, flocks of sheep running rampant with shepherds close behind, huge "jingle trucks" transporting very top-heavy loads of cargo through the maze of streets, and little tiny one-seater vehicles that resemble motorized ice-cream carts. Moreover, none of these vehicles are required to pass any sort of inspection. If the vehicle runs, it is fit for the road.

Now let's talk about my personal favourite, Number 3: I waited 16 years to get my freedom card, yes, the driver's licence. I passed on the first time I took the test. I had a little difficulty with parallel parking, but that's what parking lots are for. In Kandahar, there's only one requirement before you can drive a vehicle—you have to be able to reach the pedals. Everything else you learn through "On the Road" training. So kids as young as 13 enjoy the freedom of mobility, with no driving test to endure.

This brings me to rule Number 4:

When I finally did receive my freedom card, and a worthy vehicle for the road, I learned very quickly about insurance. My personal thoughts about the prices of insurance are not relevant here, but the very fact of having insurance in case of damage or injury is comforting. In Kandahar, not only can you drive a vehicle at 13, but you can do so without the heavy burden of monthly insurance payments. Accidents are very common here, but if your vehicle can still drive after the bump—there is no problem.

Finally, Rule Number 5: We have the luxury in Canada of little chunks of spaces called parking spots. They are strategically placed to ensure you are well out of the way of moving traffic. For a small fee, they're yours for an hour. Once again, in Kandahar, this isn't the case. If you can find a spot at the side of the road, middle of the road, or even across the road, go ahead and park. All other vehicles will manage to get around you. Stay there as long as you want, five minutes or even five days—it doesn't matter here.

Now that you have learned the driving rules of Kandahar, let's bring the army back into the picture.

As soldiers in Taliban country, we have to be suspicious about everything. We're always under threat from enemies and, in the past month or so, have seen both suicide bombers and rocket-propelled grenade attacks. Navigating a 13-tonne vehicle while keeping these threats in mind makes it very difficult to be the friendly Canadian drivers we are. (. . . Well, except maybe in Toronto.) Speed is our protection against roadside bombs and grenade attacks, while warning shots are sometimes our protection against suicide bombers. Very specific rules of engagements must be met in order for us to consider a vehicle to be a suicide bomber, and everything is taken into consideration before a single round is shot.

I know one thing for sure. The next time I'm back in Canada and driving down the Yellowhead Trail and a car swerves into my lane and nearly takes out my front bumper—I am just going to smile and wave. Because I will know he is not a suicide bomber. And by looking at my radar detector, I'll also know that the cop ahead is going to give him a speeding ticket.

Source: www.cbc.ca/news/viewpoint/vp_sanders/20060403.html

Analysis

1. How does Sanders describe life in Kandahar early in the diary entry?
2. What are the five driving rules for navigating your vehicle in Kandahar?
3. Why do Canadian soldiers have to be extra-vigilant when it comes to driving in Kandahar?
4. How does driving in Kandahar differ from driving in Canada?

CANADA'S BLOODY WAR IN AFGHANISTAN

Activity: The Statistics of War

Use the "Canadian Combat Deaths" chart on pages 17 and 18 to complete the following activity.

Task 1

Identify the number of Canadian deaths due to each of the following:

Killed in Action

Incident	# of combat deaths
Mortar/artillery/gunfire attacks	
RPG attacks	
IED attacks and/or landmines	
"Friendly fire"	
Suicide attacks	
Accidents	
Other	
Total	

Summary Questions

What tactic has resulted in the most Canadian combat deaths in the war in Afghanistan? Why do you think this tactic has worked? What can Canadians do to defend themselves against this tactic?

Task 2

Identify the number of Canadian deaths suffered in each of the following areas.

Where the incidents occurred	# of combat deaths
Kandahar and surrounding area	
Panjwai	
Kabul	
Shah Wali Kot	
Zhari	
Other	

Summary Questions

Which area in Afghanistan is the most dangerous for Canadian troops? What makes this area so dangerous? How did Canadians die in the region you selected?

Did you know . . .

Democratically elected Afghan President Hamid Karzai has already survived two assassination attempts. As well, in 1999, the Taliban assassinated Karzai's father, Abdul Ahad Karzai.

Task 3

How many Canadians have died during the following military operations?

Canadian Forces – Operation Apollo: October 2001 - October 2003
Canadian Forces – Operation Athena (Kabul): August 2003 - October 2005
Canadian Forces – Operation Archer (Kandahar): July 2005 - present
NATO (ISAF) – Operation Medusa: September 2, 2006 - September 17, 2006
(with elements of the mission extending through mid-October 2006)

Summary Questions

Which military operation proved to be the most costly for Canadian troops?
Where were the troops fighting during these operations?

Task 4

The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives claims that:

- Canada sustained over 40 per cent of military deaths in Afghanistan from February to September 2006.
- Canadian soldiers are three times more likely to be killed in action than their British counterparts and four and a half times more likely to be killed than their U.S. counterparts.*
- Canadian soldiers are six times more likely to die in hostilities in Afghanistan than U.S. soldiers fighting in Iraq.*
- If the current rate of military deaths is not curtailed, Canada could suffer up to 140 fatalities in Afghanistan by the time the mission ends in February 2009.*

* Statistics are based on the size of the troop commitment of each nation. In other words, Canada may not have more military deaths than the U.S. but they would have more deaths in proportion to troop commitment (2 200 Canadians as of November 2006).

Source: *Canada's Fallen* by Steven Staples and Bill Robinson, The Centre for Policy Alternatives. www.policyalternatives.ca/documents/National_Office_Pubs/2006/Canadas_Fallen.pdf

Summary Question

The Canadian soldiers fighting in Afghanistan are hoping to fulfill three objectives:

1. to bring stability to Afghanistan so that it is no longer a haven for terrorism
2. to support the Afghan government so it can meet the needs of its people
3. to help Afghanistan become a fully integrated member of the international community

Based on the knowledge you have gained in completing this assignment, is the mission in Afghanistan worth the casualties Canada will have to take? In other words, is helping Afghanistan become a stable, prosperous, and free nation worth fighting for? Be specific.

Length of answer: 100-200 words

Combat Deaths – April 2002- October 2006

Date	Killed	Incident	Where it happened
October 14, 2006	Sgt. Darcy Tedford Pte. Blake Williamson Two soldiers wounded	Rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs) and gunfire used in ambush on Canadians making road repairs	Highway 1 – the road from Kandahar to the Panjwai district (Canadians call the highway “ambush alley”
October 7, 2006	Trooper Mark Andrew Wilson	Roadside improvised explosive device (IED) explosion	Panjwai district; west of Kandahar
October 3, 2006	Sgt. Craig Paul Gillam Cpl. Robert Thomas James Mitchell Five soldiers wounded	Mortar and small arms attack	Panjwai district; west of Kandahar
September 29, 2006	Pte. Josh Klukie	IED bomb explosion	Near Pashmul; Panjwai district; west of Kandahar
September 18, 2006	Pte. David Byers Cpl. Glen Arnold Cpl. Shane Keating Cpl. Keith Morley Ten soldiers wounded	Killed by suicide bomber while on a security patrol	Panjwai district; west of Kandahar
September 4, 2006	Private Mark Anthony Graham Thirty soldiers wounded	“Friendly fire”; two U.S. A-10 Thunderbolts mistakenly fire on Canadian soldiers	Panjwai district; west of Kandahar
September 3, 2006	Sgt. Shane Stachnik Warrant Officer Frank Robert Mellish Warrant Officer Richard Francis Nolan Pte. William Jonathan James Cushley Nine soldiers wounded	Killed in action during the air and ground offensive against the Taliban	Near Pashmul, Panjwai district; west of Kandahar
August 22, 2006	Cpl. David Braun Three soldiers wounded	Suicide attack; vehicle packed with explosives strikes a Canadian convoy	Zhari district; southwest of Kandahar
August 11, 2006	Cpl. Andrew James Eykelenboom	Suicide bombing	Near Kandahar airfield
August 9, 2006	Master Cpl. Jeffrey Scott Walsh	“Friendly fire”; accidental shooting	West of Kandahar
August 5, 2006	Master Cpl. Raymond Arndt Three soldiers wounded	Traffic accident	Southeast of Kandahar
August 3, 2006	Sgt. Vaughn Ingram Cpl. Bryce Jeffrey Keller Pte. Kevin Dallaire Six soldiers wounded	RPG attack	Near the village of Pashmul, Panjwai district; west of Kandahar
August 3, 2006	Cpl. Christopher Jonathan Reid One soldier wounded	Roadside IED bomb attack	Near Kandahar

Date	Killed	Incident	Where it happened
July 22, 2006	Cpl. Francisco Gomez Cpl. Jason Patrick Warren Eight soldiers wounded	Suicide bomber attack; car bomb	Near Kandahar
July 9, 2006	Cpl. Anthony Boneca	Gun battle with insurgents	Panjwai district; west of Kandahar
May 17, 2006	Capt. Nichola Goddard	Gun battle with Taliban	Panjwai district; west of Kandahar
April 22, 2006	Cpl. Matthew Dinning Bombardier Myles Mansell Lt. William Turner Cpl. Randy Payne	Roadside IED bomb attack	Shah Wali Kot district; near Kandahar
March 29, 2006	Pte. Robert Costall	Gun battle with insurgents	Helmand province, 110 km from Kandahar
March 2, 2006	Cpl. Paul Davis Master Cpl. Timothy Wilson Five soldiers wounded	Vehicle accident	Highway 1; near Kandahar
January 15, 2006	Glyn Berry (Canadian diplomat) Three soldiers wounded	Suicide bomber attack	Near Canadian Camp Nathan Smith; Kandahar
November 24, 2005	Pte. Braun Scott Woodfield Four soldiers wounded	Vehicle rollover	Highway 1; 45 km north-east of Kandahar
January 27, 2004	Cpl. Jamie Brendan Murphy Three soldiers wounded	Suicide bomber attack	Near Canadian Camp Julien in Kabul
October 2, 2003	Sgt. Robert Allen Short Cpl. Robbie Christopher Beerenfenger Three soldiers wounded	IED/landmine explosion	Near Canadian Camp Julien in Kabul
April 18, 2002	Sgt. Marc Leger Cpl. Ainsworth Dyer Pte. Richard Green Pte. Nathan Smith Eight soldiers wounded	"Friendly fire"; U.S. plane drops bombs on Canadians conducting training exercises	Near Kandahar

Source: "In the Line of Duty: Canada's Casualties," www.cbc.ca/news/background/afghanistan/casualties/total.html

Canada's Fallen by Steven Staples and Bill Robinson, The Centre for Policy Alternatives. www.policyalternatives.ca/documents/National_Office_Pubs/2006/Canadas_Fallen.pdf