

# Can Canada Kick Taliban ASS ?

RLRead 2007.12.20

## Preface:

When democratically elected member of the Afghan Parliament, **Malalai Joya** was in Vancouver, I had the opportunity to speak briefly with her about Canada's involvement in Afghanistan. She and her two Canadian / Afghani companions told me that Afghans have always respected Canada's role on the world stage. They are now sad and disconcerted that Canada is covering the backdoor ass of the over-extended U.S. Military's aggressive stance to control their position in the world. They want Canada and everyone to withdraw their military. All Canadians should be ashamed Canada's troops are no longer proud peacekeepers in the international community.

please READ her remarkable bio at:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malalai\\_Joya](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malalai_Joya)

**Afghanistan** is a landlocked country with a struggling economy because she has suffered many centuries of foreign aggression so of course it needs foreign aid now to get back on it's feet. Having witnessed first hand the use of opiates for cancer pain relief for too many friends, I cannot help but agree with the concept of the world community importing all the opium we need for medicinal use from Afghanistan. This alone would go a long way towards healing their economy. This in turn would take money away from the warlords helping to eliminate Afghanistan as a base of anti-Western aggression. It's time to bring our troops home and assist with massive reconstruction instead.

## Introduction:

I am not a skilled military tactician, but I can read history and I can put dos y dos together and so can you if you read extracts below - **Problem 1: Warrior Culture** etcetera.

Those Canadians who have actually been in the army will understand the mentality involved in military training and would also have some understanding of how the Canadian Military "brain train" our troops to act as a cohesive group versus the enemy "opposition". Repeatedly, when Canadian troops are asked in the media if the death of their "teammates" is worth it... they respond enthusiastically, "Yes! **We're making a difference**".

Each and every one of our well trained Canadian soldiers respond positively and here is why – "bootcamp attitude adjustment" or military "brainwashing" to wit:

## What is Basic Training?

(Army recruitment brochure)

"It's an intensive course designed to teach the skills you will need in your career and build strength of character. It will help to make you physically and mentally prepared for any challenge. It is an obstacle you must overcome to earn your spot on the Army Team.

This 10-week course will develop the attitudes and skills which will assist you in making the transition from

civilian to Army life.

Here you will learn the fundamental skills of being a soldier. Not only will you learn the basics of how to look and act like a soldier, you will slowly but surely become a soldier. You will become physically fit, self-confident and willing and able to tackle anything that comes your way! You will become intimately familiar with your assigned weapon and everything it does, as well as fire a machine gun, a grenade launcher and a host of other weapons. You will learn to become quick on your feet by participating in hand to hand combat and a bayonet assault course. You will learn how to be quick mentally and overcome your fear by tackling challenging obstacles, some over 15 metres high! You will gain confidence in your equipment by entering the gas chamber. Mentally, your brain will be challenged every day with new skills and tasks, inducting you into "the Army of one". Lastly, you'll make lifelong friends who can share in the trials and tribulations of army basic training and join the life-long club of being a basic training graduate...certainly something to be proud of!"

Generally, all military training involves a set of **Core Values**. These are **Loyalty**- to country, constitution, Army, unit and fellow soldiers, **Duty**- fulfill your obligations; **Respect**- treat people as they should be treated; **Selfless-Service** – put the welfare of the country, the army and your subordinates before your own; **Honor**- live up to the Army values; **Integrity**- do what is right, legally and morally; **Personal Courage**- face down fear, danger or adversity.

Here's a quick review of the "attitude adjustment" components of a typical induction programme:

- \* restricted communication with family and friends
- \* detachment: sleeping away from home
- \* fatigue and discomfort
- \* ritual
- \* communal eating
- \* communal travel
- \* programme details not available to delegates in advance
- \* activities that recruits have not previously experienced

These situations expose a **delegate** to be more likely to accept a new set of values if these are offered. Ready availability of the socially acceptable drug alcohol also assists in lowering inhibitions and promoting bonding.

Group pressure is integral and important in giving approval to the process and isolating recalcitrant individuals.

The desired result of a successful induction course is a group of individuals with common values and knowledge. Downsides are a loss of independence, individuality and creativity; the abilities of a recruit to question the aims of the group are diminished; de-stabilization of identity may be dangerous.

## Never Been Through Military Training?

For those who have never undergone military training I offer the **team** analogy, because everyone at some time has been a member of a team in a competition, whether athletic sports

or other. The mentality of **us** versus **them**, especially when you are the home team, can be summarized this way:

Coach/captain/leader:

*"No one comes into our house and pushes us around. Whose house is it?"* Team response: *"Our house."*

On that note, Canadian soldiers are currently the **Away Team** versus the Taliban **Home Team**. See **"Problem 3"** of 2007 Canadian government report attached below.

## Canada Is the Away Team

The Roman Emperor Agricola was recalled from Britain after the battle of Mons Graupius, "Humped Hill"... a name applied to the Grampian Range, 17 km NW of Aberdeen. Though the losses on both sides were substantial, it is generally believed they were thought too high for an over-extended Roman Empire. This is what is happening with the USA today and we've been suckered in with them.

We are all familiar with Hadrian's Wall, approximately separating N. England from the Scottish Lowlands. Some will know the Antonine Wall which starts near Inverness on the Moray Firth running West to Stromeferry. It was built to keep the Picts out because the Romans were getting their ass kicked in the rocky terrain.

The Romans also built a wall earlier from Firth of Clyde in the West to Stonehaven near Aberdeen in the East, following the Grampians or Gask Ridge because their troops kept getting their asses kicked by Scots guerilla action.

Above this point it was deemed impossible to militarily subdue the people due to geography and the hit and run warfare tactics of the Pictish warriors. When one uses Google Earth to compare this area with that of Afghanistan, it looks like a nice hiking area in our local mountains compared to an impassible hell... besides, the locals had the "home team advantage".

## Sierra Maestra - Master Mountains

Prior to the Revolutionary assault on Cuba, Che Guevara had studied guerilla warfare extensively including that of the Scottish in Roman Britain and the 14<sup>th</sup> Century. He is credited with finalizing plans for occupation of Fidel and Raul's choice of the mountainous south coast of Cuba, and for developing modern guerilla warfare. Batista's 35,000+ troops called the small group of 15 guerrillas "cowards" and dared them to come out in the open and fight like men. The results are a history of the defeat of brute mechanized strength and weaponry by small arms strike and retreat.

## Can Canada Kick the Taliban's ASS

Canada can continue to use superior firepower to bomb the crap out of Afghanistan but the Taliban will keep on coming for generations AND we will always be responsible for countless innocent civilian deaths and destruction of homes, "collateral damage". Why? Because they're the home team.

I quote here from our own Canadian government report:

"The Taliban have time and geography on their side.

Invading armies can only spend so much time on foreign soil before patience and money run out at home. The Taliban

have forever. Are Canadians willing to commit themselves to decades of involvement in Afghanistan, which could cost hundreds of Canadian lives and billions of dollars with no guarantee of ending up with anything like the kind of society that makes sense to us?"

**Extract from Report - Part 6 attached below.**

## Home Field advantage:

The geography is of the most difficult and challenging type that the Canadian military has ever fought in, while the Taliban have always lived there, it's da Taliban's "hood".

## Afghanistan Geography:

Population: 31,000,000 = app. to Canada's 32 million

Area=Saskatchewan - only squared, not tall

Land use: forest 3%; meadow / pastures 46.0%; agricultural / permanent cultivation 12%; non-arable / mountainous 39%.

Landbase- sited between 1,027m / 3,400' & 7,485m / 24,557'

For a Canadian comparison:

- Manning Park below Blackwall Peak 2,063-m (6,768-ft)
  - C-Wack Valley Post Creek / Garibaldi- 1,000 m (3030 ft)
  - Rocky Mountains- Mt. Robson = 4,000 m above sea level
- NB - Mount Everest = 8,848 m (29,000 ft)**

High plateau interlaced with thousands of deep cross connected dry rivers wadis, impassible by road vehicles.

Afghanistan is currently facing a serious environmental crisis. In the last two decades, Afghanistan has lost over 70% of its forests throughout the country. "More than 80% of [Afghanistan's] land could be subject to soil erosion... soil fertility is declining, salinization is on the increase, water tables have dramatically fallen, de-vegetation is extensive and soil erosion by water and wind is widespread.

## Afghanistan History 101

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_Afghanistan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Afghanistan)

- Afghanistan has been described as the "roundabout of the ancient world"- which left behind a mosaic of ethnic and linguistic groups.
- pre 2000 BCE scattered pockets of nomadic herding and settled agrarian tribes
- 2000 BCE - Aryan invasion / expansion / settlement followed by centuries of subsequent conquering / assimilation by Persian, Median, Greek (Alexander the Great), Mauryan, Bactrian peoples.
- The region that is now Afghanistan was for much of its history part of various Persian dynasties, such as the Achaemenid Empire (559-330 BCE)
- 600 - 1200 - heavily armed Arab Islamic occupation
- the early thirteenth century Mongol invasion of what is today Afghanistan has been described as resembling "more some brute cataclysm of the blind forces of nature than a phenomenon of human history," the invasion resulted in massive genocidal slaughter of the population, destruction of many cities AND even a warrior as formidable as Genghis Khan did not uproot the Islamic Afghani civilization
- 1500 - 1800 country dived into many parts individually

controlled by Mediaeval tribal war lords.

• 1850 to Feb. 15, 1989 - British and Russian Empires fought at various times to control the area supporting which ever War Lord they chose. Both Empires took a shite-kicking. During their eleven year occupation 1978 – 1989 the Russians spent Can\$6 billion (in 2005 \$\$\$), lost 14,000 dead / 52,000 wounded. Afghani civilian casualties – 1 million. In the end the Soviets withdrew licking the wounds of the "greatest military power of it's day".

Are we Canadians so egotistic to believe we have the power to be the first to change Afghanistan when no one else ever has?

## EXTRACTS

From

### **Canadian Troops in Afghanistan: Taking a Hard Look at a Hard Mission**

**An Interim Report of the Standing Senate Committee  
on National Security and Defence  
February 2007**

<http://www.parl.gc.ca/39/1/parlbus/commbus/senate/com-e/defe-e/rep-e/repfeb07-e.pdf>

#### **The Committee's Perception (excerpt) p.13**

The Committee was impressed by the optimism of Canadian troops and their leaders to bring about positive change in Afghanistan. But when Committee members listened closely to both military people and diplomats, both Afghan and Canadian, we found it hard to square that with reality. Huge and complex set problems confront any foreign interests attempting to give ordinary Afghans access to an even perfunctory combination of peace, democracy, justice and prosperity.

It is in our view doubtful that this mission can be accomplished given the limited resources that NATO is currently investing in Afghanistan. The kind of collateral damage and lack of developmental progress that has marked NATO's effort in the Kandahar region to date, and the Taliban's ability to retreat to and redeploy from the mountains of Pakistan makes success even more doubtful.

#### **Full extract from pages 4 to 7**

**The Challenges** The word "challenges" is widely used by politicians, bureaucrats and other sleight-of-hand artists as a euphemism for "problems." There are all kinds of problems to be solved if the Canadian deployment to Afghanistan is to achieve what any reasonable person would define as "success." Allow us to list some of these problems first, and wrestle later in this Report with what might constitute a successful outcome.

**Problem 1: Warrior Culture** Afghans have, over centuries, proven themselves to be fierce fighters particularly when confronting invaders from outside cultures. They repeatedly defeated the British during the 19th century "Afghan Wars"

when Britain was the world's dominant military power, and they routed the Soviets during the 1980s when the Soviet Union was the world's second most dominant military power. Superior military technology does not always win the day, particularly in an era when suicide bombing and **Improvised Explosive Devices** have proven themselves to be very effective tools in this kind of war. Afghans are used to killing and being killed. Their society has been in a state of war for most of the last two centuries.

**Problem 2: Home Team Advantage** NATO troops see themselves as defenders of the majority of Afghans versus powerful minority groups – the Taliban and regional warlords – who are the true enemies of the Afghan people. But how do Afghans see us? Do residents of Kandahar province – home of the Taliban – see the situation our way? The harsh and sadistic Taliban government was repugnant to westerners, and to many Afghans. But are the Taliban more repugnant than foreign troops, who have been despised each and every time they have come to Afghanistan over the past two centuries? We think we're the good guys. What do Afghans think?

**Problem 3: Away Team Disadvantage** The Taliban have no trouble identifying village elders and other influential Afghans. Identifying those people is far more difficult for a foreign army, including ours. We were informed that there have been cases when Canadian authorities thought they were talking to impartial "elders," when they were actually talking to members of the Taliban. Furthermore, the Taliban are far more capable of finding out who they can trust in any given location – they have eyes and ears everywhere. Some Canadians we talked to strongly suggested that Afghans will always tell foreigners what they want to hear, which may have nothing to do with reality. Put simply, the side that speaks the language and knows the culture will always have the advantage when it comes to knowing what's really going on.

**Problem 4: Geography and Time** The Taliban have time and geography on their side. Invading armies can only spend so much time on foreign soil before patience and money run out at home. The Taliban have forever. Are Canadians willing to commit themselves to decades of involvement in Afghanistan, which could cost hundreds of Canadian lives and billions of dollars with no guarantee of ending up with anything like the kind of society that makes sense to us? If we aren't willing to hang in for the long haul, what will have been the point of five years of Canadian lives and Canadian money disappearing? [3] If one were to look at this problem in strictly military terms (which one obviously cannot), tying up so many of the personnel and resources of the Canadian Forces in Afghanistan is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, Canada's combat role is hardening troops on the battlefield – a painful and perilous experience, but an important one for any military. On the other hand, the Forces' involvement in Afghanistan not only precludes other missions at home and abroad that may prove to be important, it ties up resources that the Forces could be using to transform and grow after years of neglect.

**Problem 5: Can we win, given how the map is drawn?** In the 1890s, the British Empire arbitrarily demarcated the border between Afghanistan and then British India (Pakistan since 1947), known as the Durand Line, taking into account physical geography not human geography. Tribes, including the Pashtun, therefore have roots on both sides of the Afghanistan and Pakistan border. Local Taliban members have found ways to gain virtually free passage across the border and have used this to their advantage - hiding out in Pakistan. This is a wild and independently-minded region over which Pakistan has little control. Most analysts believe that even if it actually wanted to (a prospect that many believe is wishful thinking) the Government of Pakistan would find it nearly impossible to exert meaningful control in this unruly border region. This gives the Taliban a safe haven in which to hide and plan their attacks on our troops; and to plan their return to oppression of the Afghan people.

**Problem 6: Change Comes Slowly in Medieval Societies** Some Canadians may think of all Middle East countries in similar terms, but countries like Iraq and Iran are far more sophisticated than Afghanistan. Afghanistan is only remotely connected to the modern world. Only one out of three Afghans is literate, and the country's economy is almost entirely dependent on the growth of poppies and the sale of opium. The country's only brief experience with democracy ended in a coup in 1973. The three primary forces in Afghan politics are armed power, tribal loyalties and corruption. Anyone expecting to see the emergence in Afghanistan within the next several decades of a recognizable modern democracy capable of delivering justice and amenities to its people is dreaming in Technicolor. Chris Alexander, when he was Canada's Ambassador to Afghanistan, told members of the Committee in his living room in Kabul that it would take 5 generations of effort to make a difference in Afghanistan. Lieutenant-General Andrew Leslie, currently Commander of Land Forces said on a number of occasions, that the mission would take two decades to complete. People outside Kabul are generally far more dependent on their traditional Sharia courts and systems of government than they are on the central government. Not only is the government's justice system as corrupt as other components of the government, most police are untrained, illiterate, and don't even know what the law is. This makes the law difficult to enforce. While NATO is proud of the fact that national elections have taken place, these elections have proven to be all but irrelevant to Afghans in places like Kandahar.

**Problem 7: The Enemy is Rich** Much of the lucrative opium trade is controlled by the Taliban. Villagers who join the Taliban's fighting forces earn a significantly larger amount of money than Afghan police officers, who earn \$70 a month. Cutting down poppies isn't the answer - unless we offer alternatives to the abject poverty that would only get worse without the poppy crop. Unless that situation changes, most Afghans won't have much trouble deciding which side to snuggle up to: the rich guys who aren't foreigners, who can hide in the mountains for years or decades or centuries if need be, and who pay big bucks; versus the foreign guys who can't hide, who will eventually run out of time and

patience, and who don't pay big bucks.

**Problem 8: The Society We are Trying to Rebuild is Corrupt** Afghan government officials are notoriously corrupt at all levels, including those within the police and many regional governments. Since police and bureaucrats earn relatively low salaries and some state governors (all of whom are appointed by the President) are notorious for skimming those salaries, the police and other officials are known for shaking down ordinary citizens on a regular basis. The Taliban were known for their excessive moral indignation when in power. There were often brutal consequences. The good news is that the current government is not known for moral excess. The bad news is that the word moral is probably the last word that comes to an ordinary Afghan's mind when describing the new government. Nearly everyone we talked to in Afghanistan - Canadians and Afghans - mentioned the high degree of corruption as a problem. It would be much easier to win hearts and minds if ordinary Afghans had respect for public officials. Higher salaries for police and other officials would undoubtedly help lessen corruption. But it is a pipe dream to believe that this deep-seated tradition will go away overnight.

**Problem 9: Too Many Innocent People Killed** Collateral damage does not win the hearts and minds of Afghans. See much more in the complete document ...>

<http://www.parl.gc.ca/39/1/parlbus/commbus/senate/comm-e/defe-e/rep-e/repfeb07-e.pdf>

Canada does not belong in Afghanistan, anymore than China belongs in Darfur.

Every time politicians, military leaders, and soldiers whether Canadian or American tell you

**" We Are making a difference! "**

Contemplate what you now know, ask yourself why our Canadian media has not reported this all extensively to you the public and

**Tell Harper to Bring Our Troops Home**

PM Harper - [pm@pm.gc.ca](mailto:pm@pm.gc.ca)

Maxime Bernier Foreign Affairs- [bernier.m@parl.gc.ca](mailto:bernier.m@parl.gc.ca)

**For maps, and links to supporting details including the entire document**

**go to**

**[Can Canada Kick Taliban Ass?](#)**

