



THE ROYAL CANADIAN
MILITARY INSTITUTE

FOUNDED 1890

*The General
Sir William Otter
Papers*

No. 1/08

AFGHANISTAN:
CHALLENGES AND
OPPORTUNITIES FOR
CANADA'S FOREIGN POLICY

*by the Hon. William C.
Graham, P.C., Q.C.*

May 25, 2008

426 University Avenue
Toronto M5G 1S9
416 597 0286
www.rcmi.org

THE GENERAL SIR WILLIAM OTTER PAPERS

Commissioned as a Military Officer in Toronto in the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada, Lieutenant Colonel William Otter was the founding President of the Royal Canadian Military Institute.

His distinguished career included operational experience in the Battle of Ridgeway during the Fenian Raids, command of the Battleford Column in the North West campaign, and command of the 2nd (Special Service) Battalion The Royal Canadian Regiment during the South African Campaign. He finished his career as General Sir William Otter KCB CMG CVO, Inspector-General of Militia of Canada.

The General Sir William Otter Papers are specially selected from those presented at events organized by the Defence Studies Committee of the Institute as best representing Otter's objective for the Institute, of "the promotion and Fostering of Military Art, Science and Literature in Canada."

This paper was presented to the Membership of the RCMI on March 19, 2008.

ROYAL CANADIAN MILITARY INSTITUTE

The Royal Canadian Military Institute is a century-old, independent, member supported organization which:

- strives to be Canada's premier independent Institute for the study of military strategy, arts and literature;
- and which promotes pride in a strong, unified and independent Canada by enhancing public understanding of our
- political and military history;
- by means of maintaining, expanding, and opening to scholars our Museum, Archive, Library and Art Collections;
- and by conducting educational conferences, seminars and open forums as well as preparing and publishing original
- papers, studies and journals;

centred on our historical headquarters in Toronto, which houses our collections, conference facilities and amenities for our members; maintained by the fees and donations and the volunteer services of private members.

For further information on the RCMI, please contact:

Royal Canadian Military Institute
426 University Avenue
Toronto, Ontario M5G 1S9
Phone: 416-597-0286/1-800-585-1072
Fax: 416-597-6919
E-Mail: susan.cook@rcmi.org
www.rcmi.org

Copyright © 2008 RCMI The Gen Sir William Otter Papers may be freely reproduced in whole or in part for academic research or instructional purposes, provided that the author's and the Institute's copyright is acknowledged. The views expressed are those of the author, and do not necessarily represent the views of the Institute or its members.

Designed by David S. McDonough/Eric S. Morse

AFGHANISTAN: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR CANADA'S FOREIGN POLICY

by The Honourable William C. Graham, P.C., Q.C

Introduction

The last time this illustrious body was kind enough (or perhaps foolish enough) to invite me to speak was on the occasion of my first major speech following my appointment as Minister of National Defence in 2004. It followed upon an important conference organized by this Institute, The Atlantic Council of Canada, and the Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies, which continue to play major roles in developing Canadian solutions to foreign policy and security challenges to our country.

And I would like to take this opportunity to salute Julie Lindhout and Atlantic Council for the excellent conference they organized in Ottawa this fall.

At that time, fresh from my experience as Foreign Minister, I reminded this audience of the maxim that while Defence Policy beyond our borders is derivative of foreign policy, the effectiveness of our foreign policy is very much dependent on the quality and strength of our Defence capacity. Or as put more pithily by Frederick the Great "Diplomacy without armaments is like music without instruments".

Today, as we discuss Afghanistan the importance of the link between Foreign and Defence policies is clear. Indeed, Jennifer Welsh recently commented "that the sum total of our foreign policy is the Mission in Afghanistan". I certainly don't subscribe to that view, but I do believe that the way in which we resolve the issues that arise from this Mission will define the credibility of the foreign policy of this country at this time and well into our future. And we are not alone in facing this challenge. Paddy Ashdown was recently quoted as saying the West is "losing in Afghanistan and a defeat there will have worse consequences than Iraq."

Background to the Mission

Janice Stein and Gene Lang have written an excellent book about the background to our engagement

in Afghanistan called "The Unexpected War" (and I understand that Gene Lang will be addressing a luncheon with you here on April 10). They successfully used that theme to review the objectives of Canadian foreign policy, what tools we have to achieve them and the politics which inevitably surround making such decisions. In the book they state: "The debate about Afghanistan in Canada is part of a much larger conversation, a conversation about the shape of the world, its cracks and fault lines, about what is possible".

To which we might add: what role do Canadians want to play in that world; what capacity do we have, or should we seek to develop, to correspond to our obligations and our ambitions; and finally what is the international framework in which we must operate?

Afghanistan is having a profound impact on Canadian foreign policy and, I would submit, on the some 36 nations engaged there. How could it be otherwise when we are engaged in open combat in a region of the world where the very modern threat of Islamic fundamentalism is intertwined with ancient tribal customs, where the great powers, the United States, China, Russia and India seek to influence outcomes; where the neighbouring state of Pakistan unstable and nuclear armed, serves as a safe haven for our enemy; where the neighbour to the west, Iran, exerts a murky but troubling influence with its nuclear ambitions and bellicose posture; where terrorist tactics learned in Iraq are imported into Afghanistan? Indeed, we have chosen to take a significant stand in one of the most unstable and unsafe parts of the globe.

It would be inconceivable that, in these circumstances, there would not be important lessons for our foreign policy, our military capabilities and our development assistance objectives.

In my view one of the great benefits of the Manley Report has been its effect in forcing an engagement by the Canadian public in an informed debate around the

complexities and realities of this Afghan Mission. In so doing it has focused our minds on the importance of that Mission to our foreign policy, what is at stake, what challenges we face there, what resources we require, and the consequences of failure. It also clearly made an important contribution to the outcome of the Parliamentary vote taken last week.

Tonight, I would like to discuss some of those issues with you. This is an after-dinner speech, it is in an atmosphere where we have a limited amount of time and I hope leave some time to answer questions. So I cannot deal with each and every issue. I hope you will forgive me if my consideration of some of the important issues here seems somewhat superficial but I am sure that you will understand the context.

When the Martin government engaged in foreign policy and defence reviews in 2005, Canada was already engaged in Afghanistan, we were in Kabul and our Navy was still actively engaged in the Persian Gulf. The Foreign Policy Review called for a more robust presence of Canada on all fronts: military, aid, diplomacy and trade. It considered the problems arising from “failed and failing states” as being a major global challenge problem that would have to be addressed by the international community and in which Canada would inevitably be called upon to play a part. Some such as Haiti are in our own hemisphere and present domestic as well as foreign considerations; others, Afghanistan & Sudan, to give two examples, are not so nearly within reach but carry consequences for Canada nonetheless.

Foreign Policy Review

The Foreign Policy Review drew heavily on Canada’s experience in developing the concept of the Responsibility to Protect, an international doctrine which was originally advanced at the U.N. with the strong support of Canada and which turned the Westphalian notion of the sanctity of national sovereignty on its head and emphasized the obligation of the international community to intervene in the internal affairs of states if they failed to exercise sovereignty on their own territory in a way that provides basic protections to their own people.

It recognized that interventions of this nature to be acceptable would require the sanction of appropriate international institutions; also they could not be exclusively military, but would require the skills of diplomacy, defence and development, working in close coordination.

The authors of the Foreign Policy Review drew upon Canada’s substantial experience around the globe since the Second World War as showing an obligation and a willingness of Canadians to help frame a safer and more equitable world, while recognizing as well that our place in North America naturally makes us the closest ally and economic partner of our neighbour the United States.

Defence Review

The Defence Review, which was significantly inspired by General Hillier, and drew upon the experience of a talented group of Canadian Forces personnel in a myriad of complex and dangerous operations, complemented the Foreign Policy document and emphasized the rebuilding and changes to the culture of the Canadian Forces that was necessary if they were to be able to meet their obligations: firstly, in defending Canadian territory from new asymmetric threats and, secondly, in being an effective instrument of Canada’s Foreign Policy in operations around the globe.

These two Reviews were complemented by a CIDA Review and all three were tied together by the concept that successful interventions abroad would have to be on a “3D” approach where diplomacy, defence and development assistance would work together in a coherent fashion. Unfortunately, one of the earliest casualties of the increased violence met by our troops in Kandahar was this important principle: so easy to articulate in a Review but so difficult to apply in a combat situation.

And while the present government has obviously introduced variations on the themes announced in those policies, it has not departed substantially from them. I would suggest that no Canadian government can, given our geographic location, our responsibilities as a G-8 Nation, our history, and ultimately the expectations of our population, which, with its multicultural base, expects Canada to be engaged in constructive ways in parts of the world which they know intimately because they are from there, their families and friends are there and they bring those very cultures to enrich the fabric of our society.

The New Nature of Peacekeeping

One of the things that I learned when I became Defence Minister from General Hillier, from General D’Allaire, from General Leslie, from Major General Louis MacKenzie and so many experienced and talented members of our armed forces, was that the concept that many Canadians held, and some still hold, of a Canadian role as peacekeepers in the classical peacekeeping situation (the

Cyprus-type mission) is a thing of the past, or perhaps, was always a thing more of myth than of substance, confined to rare circumstances where warring parties wished to stop fighting but needed impartial help in doing so.

I learned that the type of troops that are required in today's environment are troops that are combat-ready, well and appropriately equipped for their task, given the training and the leadership which will enable them to accomplish their goals, and furnished with rules of engagement that enable them to engage actively with those who are out to destroy the society which they are there to protect.

General Romeo D'Allaire told us of the tragedy in Rwanda that had occurred because he lacked such troops and such instructions. Major General Lewis MacKenzie and others told us of our experience in Bosnia, of the engagement at the Medak pocket and how we narrowly missed the terrible quandary that brought such tragedy to decent Dutch soldiers abandoned to deal with Srebrenica.

In his fascinating book, "The Utility of Force", General Rupert Smith laid out requirements for these modern multinational complex operations: what he called "War amongst the people", a war which cannot be fought by means of previous battle strategies, precisely because one is operating amongst the very people one is seeking to protect, the enemy is only sometimes clearly identified and engaged; traditional battle strategies would kill civilians and destroy their livelihood thus undermining the political goal of the mission itself.

In these circumstances, air power, even with so-called 'precision' weapons, and so necessary for force protection, often does more harm than good. Some of my most heated moments with President Karzai were precisely around his resentment of the havoc created by air strikes; reports from the field regularly witness how the resulting death of villagers can turn whole communities against us. Indeed Janice Stein and Gene Lang state that its use runs counter to the culture of Afghan tribal warfare itself where customary conduct, centuries old tribal "rules of engagement" if you like, would never tolerate the level of the death and destruction associated with air strikes.

Much has now been said about the nature of such missions and much has been learned from Bosnia, from places like Iraq, East Timor and Afghanistan itself. In Iraq, the U.S., under General Petraeus has changed course, recognizing that successful counter-insurgency needs to build local support. It also recognizes that insurgents are

intelligent human beings whose operations adjust and change to take account of new tactics adopted by ourselves as we have seen in Afghanistan and Iraq. In the end, like all conflicts, the asymmetric war is not static.

Unique Capabilities of our Troops

Tonight is not the night to discuss each and every one of those tactics and how to respond to them. Indeed many in this audience know far more than I about such things. But tonight it is appropriate to emphasize the quality and capability of our troops to meet the challenges of such operations. It was my privilege to work with those troops. It was my privilege to visit them for all too short a time in Afghanistan and other theatres, I came away from my visits with a sense of what makes our troops special and how they approach their task in a way that makes them natural experts in these types of operations. In Kabul I heard the admiration from officers of other nations about how our troops would always go the extra mile. I heard from Afghan citizens themselves of how they appreciated the fact that Canadians were always there to support them, building relations with the local community. And in Kandahar I heard from the local governor and village elders how our troops would go out into the villages and work with them as much as the security situation would allow. Some paid dearly for that experience, such as young Captain Trevor Green who I had the opportunity of visiting in his hospital in Langley and who will spend his life recovering from an axe wound to his head because he chose to sit down and engage the local village elders.

Our troops are superb in combat, but they can also relate to other people; I believe this is a natural consequence of our ability to bring peoples and viewpoints together into an accepting Canadian society. Admiral McFadden, when he was in Northern Ireland, was asked why there were so many Canadians effectively contributing there. His reply was:

"Canadians have a particular expertise in being able always to see the other guy's side of the story. It's a natural fit for the kind of country Canada is."

This "constructive" attitude, this "sense of the other", I suggest, is what contributes to their success in international missions. I know from my Dutch and British Defence Minister colleagues that is why they were drawn to work with us and why our forces are sought for time and again whenever an international crisis arises.

This is not to say that improvements cannot be made and the Manley Report has identified them: the lack of appropriate helicopters and more troops has been a serious concern from the beginning and the Manley Report is right to insist on their being a precondition to their continued operation.

But we also have to recognize that these operations change and evolve – nothing could be truer of the Kandahar mission itself. When we first went to Kandahar all of us believed that the LAV III vehicle was ideally suited for the task. That the last thing we would require would be tanks on that terrain what we needed were light, highly mobile vehicles allowing rapid intervention and the LAV III was ideal for that.

As I said earlier one cannot assume that one's enemy is stupid and the insurgents adopted the tactic, cowardly perhaps, but effective, of the IED, and now we see the tanks that were once rejected as being out-moded in this type of operation are called upon again because they are suited to the evolving operational need.

Perhaps I should have listened to the Corporal in the Strathcona Horse in Edmonton when he told me that LAV IIIs and the mobile gun would never replace the tank.

My point is that we must be prepared to provide the military with what is needed to meet an evolving situation if we are going to ask them to do these missions. Mr. Manley has identified those needs. Whatever our view of this mission, let us all support them.

Our Presence in Kandahar

When we are speaking of our presence in Kandahar, let us not forget that it is at the urging of the Afghan government itself that we are in Kandahar. President Karzai himself in our frequent meetings repeatedly urged Canada to take a more active role and carry the NATO flag to the Kandahar region to replace the American flag precisely for the very important political reason that Afghans more would readily embrace an international intervention authorized by the United Nations with NATO as its instrument.

The S.A.T.

While I am speaking of the role of our troops, I think that debate around the role played by the S.A.T. in Kabul has neglected some important points. In fact, this team has been extraordinarily successful. President Karzai

on many occasions mentioned to me when I was in Kabul, as did Dr. Abdullah, my friend, the former Foreign Minister, the appreciation that their government has for what these Canadian Forces men and women bring to the various ministries they advise.

Some critics complain that these should not be military personnel; this is a matter for civilians. What they ignore, or more likely are ignorant of, is the fact that the Canadian Forces have a great variety of skill sets, including the managerial and policy-advisory ones that are needed at the high levels of the Afghan government where they operate.

The debate reminds me of the debate around deploying the DART. It may be the most effective instrument to do the job, precisely because it has military organization, but it's criticized because of the uniform that makes it so effective in the first place.

The same people that are criticizing our Mission for being too militarily weighted are in fact failing to recognize that in this case it may be members of our forces that are providing this advice, but they are providing the very elements of political and aid expertise which the critics claim the mission is short on.

Frankly, I am far less concerned about which organization is providing this advice and what colour of shirt they are wearing than that the task is being done well – and it IS being done well by SAT. I think we should also remember that SAT is the result of a close and trusting relationship between General Hillier and President Karzai, and that if Canada dismantles SAT as it now is, there is no guarantee that Canadians will be invited to participate in whatever replaces it and even less certainty that other Canadian departments will be able to provide the qualified personnel willing to accept the risks!

NATO's Credibility

Mr. Manley in his Report rightly identified the importance of this Mission to the credibility of NATO.

We just cannot ignore the fact that if NATO fails in this Mission its credibility as a global security institution in which Canada has invested enormous energy and blood over the years will be weakened, if not fatally impacted. This cannot be lightly disregarded as a consideration about what we should do in respect of the Mission, but the corollary of that proposition is that NATO itself must find the additional troops called for or it will be perceived as

failing. Signs that NATO will resolve this issue are very encouraging.

And while the House Resolution seems to re-establish balance, I frankly do not believe that Canada can simply retreat to a non-combatant role. As realistic as such proposals may sound on paper, the reality of any conflict zone makes it impossible to impose artificial restrictions on limits of engagement. In the worst case, that way lies Srebrenica. The “constructive” ambiguity of the House resolution in this respect will necessarily have to be interpreted in favour of action.

Public Information about our Role

That said, we cannot neglect the Manley Commission’s advice, recognized in the House resolution, in respect of the need for a better understanding among Canadians. When I read the results of polls that say that a significant proportion of our population think we are there fighting a war on behalf of President Bush, I can’t help but shake my head with amazement. Some even conflate Afghanistan with Iraq, completely oblivious to the fact that I.S.A.F.’s role in Afghanistan is directly authorized by the United Nations and by our presence there we are defending and enforcing the principles of international law which have been developed and advocated by Canada for generations.

We joined with the international community after the Bonn Accords to promise Afghan a brighter future after generations of devastation. We are there to help Afghanistan get on its feet and become a productive member of the global community. This is becoming even more important as we look at the instability of the region, recognize the dangers that are now coming from a destabilized Pakistan and the need for order to be maintained in that volatile region.

Not all is negative as far as our citizen engagement is concerned. Many people here were at the Garrison Ball last month where money was raised and pledged for hospitals and education in Afghanistan.

The Role of Parliament

One thing this Mission has revealed is the difficulty in defining an appropriate role for Parliament, a role that has been exacerbated by the complicated political environment of a minority government.

I have great respect, even love, for the House of Commons; it is, with all its faults, where our nation’s de-

mocracy is exercised and preserved. But I think the House of Commons does some things well and other things less well. I am not, for example, a great fan of parliamentary votes on the deployment of military forces abroad. This is not a reflection on the capability of M.P.s to make such decisions but rather a belief that that is the responsibility of the government of the day which possesses the full range of diplomatic and military advice to allow it to make an informed decision. A government should not abdicate that responsibility to the House, particularly when there is so great a risk from all sides and parties that short-term considerations of political tactics may prevail over the key issues of national interest.

The risks of a parliamentary vote were illustrated when we voted on the extension of this Mission in 2007. I know from bitter experience that there were many people in my party that voted against this extension, because members felt they had been denied the opportunity to have a more lengthy debate and have more information. Theirs was not a vote against the Mission; theirs was a protest vote against the process. And the Bloc Quebecois, which might not have opposed an extension point-blank, found itself forced to vote against the motion because of the parliamentary conditions imposed on it. This rankled many members and rightly so. Many wondered why our ally, the Dutch, were having debates that lasted many months, not hours, before taking such a crucial decision.

In my view, it is much more appropriate for such matters to be considered in Committee where members who have developed expertise on issues and have a certain relationship with one another built up over time working in the Committees, can seek to bridge partisan divides.

I think of the example we had during the Kosovo campaign, where the Foreign Affairs and the Defence Committees met jointly once a week to be briefed by the military as to what was going on in Kosovo. That way parliament was informed and the Committee proceedings were held in front of the television cameras which allowed the Canadian public to be fully informed as well. Wouldn’t that be a much better way to be dealing with this issue today? Imagine if in the last 6 months we had had regular televised hearings of the House of Commons around the issue of what is taking place in Afghanistan. How much better the Canadian public would be informed, how much better our parliamentarians would be informed and how much better we would be placed to arrive at a solution which is in the true interest of Canada and of Canadians and not partisan decisions based on political exigencies of the moment.

Advisability of an Election

The resolution's solution of a special House Committee is a welcome one in these circumstances. And, Government and the Official Opposition are to be congratulated for finding a way to move forward on this issue without the terrible risk of fighting an election on a war issue – an issue that, as previous wars and wartime elections have amply shown, can only become a “wedge issue” that divides Canadians more than ever.

The Manley Report and the Issues

One thing I cannot help but reflect upon when thinking back about that previous debate in the House of Commons, and the atmosphere in which it took place, is the degree to which the Manley Report calls upon the Government to do many of the very things that we called upon it to do in that debate. On behalf of the Liberal Party I said that support for the mission would depend a great deal upon recognizing the political nature of the Mission, the need for the Mission's military dimension of providing security to be associated with a coherent aid policy which would back it up by providing concrete successes in the Kandahar region itself so that the lives of the ordinary people would be improved and they in turn would support our presence there. We also called upon the government to make sure that the troops were properly equipped, going to the very issue of helicopters and U.A.V.s that Mr. Manley and his other colleagues so appropriately raised as conditions for continued support for an extension of the Mission at this time.

An examination of Hansard of the day will show that the government at that time gave those very assurances. It was precisely upon those satisfactory answers that those of us who voted in favour of extending the Mission gave our vote and gave our support.

In that context it is with some regret that one now reads much the same issues raised in the Manley Report, the same concerns, the same conditions which should have been addressed at the very beginning but are now being addressed as necessary components of any successful extension of the Mission.

Conclusion

That said, the Manley report is based upon factors which were not known when the first debate was held in the house: the insurgency has intensified considerably since that time, and we have all a better appreciation of the complexity of Afghan society and its requirements.

The Report is a very thorough, comprehensive and frank analysis of the challenges facing Afghanistan. Challenges which include regional instability, slow progress on reconstruction and development, mounting insecurity and violence, corruption, criminality and increasing poppy production. It recognizes improvements made in the life of the average Afghan in the recent five years, the economic development achieved and the establishment of an imperfect but functioning democracy. These findings have been supported by many international institutions, including panels of international experts at the Conference of Defence Associations Institute seminar in Ottawa and the Atlantic Council meeting last September.

The safe haven that the insurgents continue to find in Pakistan remains a major threat to eventual success in a struggle in which NATO remains under-equipped and under-staffed. The outcome of the recent elections in Pakistan, the formation of a coalition Government there, and especially the bravery of the voters in the frontier provinces in throwing out their radical Islamist provincial governments, are all very encouraging for the effort against the insurgents. However at the moment, they are all still straws in the winds of a very volatile political climate.

We also cannot forget that Afghanistan is not the only issue in the world today where troops may be called for. After all, there are some who believe that we should not be in Afghanistan but in Darfur where the political and military challenges would be every bit as difficult and challenging as Afghanistan. Indeed, perhaps more so, It is too easily forgotten that we were invited and welcomed into Afghanistan whereas it has been made clear that we are not wanted in Darfur, and that an attempt to intervene uninvited might unleash a situation far worse in every way than now prevails in Afghanistan. It is too easy to lose sight of things like that in the face of genuine humanitarian need. What I would say to those who would wish us out of Afghanistan and into Darfur is that – as much as I respect their humanitarian concern for Darfur and its people – in the course of this century, we are not likely to encounter challenges any less daunting than Afghanistan anywhere in the world, and many perhaps more so. Canadians will do neither ourselves nor anyone else any service if we abandon one cause only to take up another no less difficult to fulfill.

So the lessons from Afghanistan as reviewed by the Manley Report will have future application. Some are worth repeating tonight:

The need for better information for the public, after all, if there is an election between now and 2011, it is certain to be an issue.

Don't muzzle foreign service officers. Let their diverse voices can add texture to the information;

We must reach out to and involve our Canadian communities, the Afghani, the Pakistani, the Ismaili and others who have local knowledge and intelligence to share;

We cannot ignore very difficult human rights issues like the treatment of detainees. This goes to the very credibility of our presence there.

Make "3D" work:

The appointment of David Mulroney is a good step but the Department of Foreign Affairs as a whole has been seriously debilitated in recent years. It was with great pride that I stood beside Dr. Abdullah in Kabul and we raised the Canadian flag together beside Chris Alexander our talented young ambassador. What would we be doing in Afghanistan without that representation and the representation in neighbouring states of Pakistan and others? We learned a bitter lesson from Iraq: human intelligence gathered by embassies can often be more accurate than information from the intelligence services themselves, and "Sigint" must be supplemented by "Humint".

CIDA

Clearly the mandate and operating culture of CIDA require significant modifications beyond anything I could discuss in my speech tonight. Perhaps CIDA should look at some of its past roles abroad. At the moment seems like it is a group of several thousand bureaucrats located in Hull who send cheques to bureaucrats in other jurisdictions. Obviously when bullets start flying it is a serious problem as to where the aid workers will go but if "3D" is to work solutions must be found.

I imagine it is clear from my remarks that I passionately believe in this mission: its origins and its importance to us. In 1960 I drove with a friend from England to Lahore and back. We spent a month in Afghanistan driving from Herat to Kandahar, then Kabul, Bamiyan and down the Khyber Pass into Pakistan and back to Iran through Quetta and Baluchistan. We knew enough history to know that this had been the route of rival armies from the time when Alexander's troops had marched through in 400 B.C., from Babur the Mogul onwards to the times

our great-grandfathers would have known, when the British marched north into Afghanistan and Kipling was writing Kim.

Most tribesmen carried a gun but nonetheless the towns were peaceful; life was hard but there were signs of prosperity and agricultural lushness. Wherever we went we were invited into people's homes and were objects of some curiosity and great hospitality. People then wanted what we all want: a better life for themselves and their children, education, a possibility of progress. Since then they have experienced little but war and devastation. Kandahar was worse off when I visited it in 2005! Today they dream of peace and a better life and we, from our privileged vantage point must decide what risks we will take to help them achieve that. Our values clearly indicate what should be our responsibility; our interests are perhaps less clear to many Canadians.

One thing I do know is that if we were to ask our troops if they believe that their sacrifices and their efforts are worth it they would answer affirmatively and encourage us to stay the course. And in the end we know that the respect that Canada has today, our global stature and influence, has been obtained through their willingness to help, their combat courage and ultimately, for some, their sacrifice in this and in previous missions around the world.

Afghanistan is this generation's experience of the nexus between foreign-policy and defence capability and the performance of our troops is proof to the Canadian population that they are more than capable of playing their part. They have the right to expect that the rest of us, Canadian population and politicians, will play ours. 🍁

The views expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Institute or its members.

The Honourable William C. (Bill) Graham

First elected as Member of Parliament for Toronto-Centre-Rosedale in 1993, Bill Graham served as Minister of Foreign Affairs from January 2002 until July 2004 when he was appointed Minister of National Defence. In February 2006, He was appointed Leader of the Official Opposition and Interim Leader of the Liberal Party of Canada, positions he served until December 2006.

From 1995 to 2002, Mr. Graham served as Chairman of the Standing Committee of the House of Commons on Foreign Affairs and International Trade. Under his Chairmanship, the Committee produced important reports on issues including Canada's

interests in the World Trade Organization, Canada's role in Kosovo, the implementation of legislation for the International Criminal Court, and the Summit of the Americas in Quebec City.

Before entering politics, Mr. Graham practised law at Fasken & Calvin, specializing in civil litigation and international business transactions. Subsequently, he taught International Trade Law, Public International Law, and the Law of the European Community at the University of Toronto Faculty of Law. He also served as Director of the Centre of International Studies at the University of Toronto. Mr. Graham has been a visiting lecturer in law at McGill University and the Université de Montréal, and is an honorary life member of the Canadian Council of International Law. In recognition of Mr. Graham's commitment to public life and cooperation among peoples and nations, the William C. Graham

Chair in International Law and Development has been established at the University of Toronto Faculty of Law.

A past president of the Alliance française de Toronto, Mr. Graham has been recognized for his contributions to French language and culture in Ontario by being granted the Prix Jean-Baptiste Rousseaux, the Médaille d'argent de la ville de Paris, the Médaille d'or de l'Alliance française, and the Ordre du mérite de l'Association des juristes de l'Ontario. He has been made Chevalier de la Légion d'honneur and Chevalier de l'Ordre de la Pléiade.

Currently Mr. Graham holds the posts of Chancellor of Trinity College, at The University of Toronto, Chair of The Atlantic Council of Canada and Vice-Chair of The Canadian International Council.

