House of Commons
CANADA

Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development

FAAE • NUMBER 045 • 1st SESSION • 39th PARLIAMENT

EVIDENCE

Thursday, March 22, 2007

Chair

Mr. Kevin Sorenson

Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development

Thursday, March 22, 2007

● (0905)

[*English*]

The Chair (Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, CPC)): Welcome.

This is meeting 45 of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, Tuesday, March 22. In the first hour we're going to continue our study here, and in our second hour we're going to look at a report.

Today, from Queen's University, we have Douglas Bland, chair of the defence management study program, School of Policy Studies. Mr. Bland is a lieutenant colonel in the Canadian armed forces and has served extensively in Europe and in Canada. He is an associate professor at Queen's University and an author and co-author of numerous books and publications commenting on the military establishment. His research is concentrated in the field of defence policy-making and management at national and international levels, the organization and functioning of defence ministries, and civil military relations.

Appearing to testify before us also, as an individual, is Walter Dorn, professor until his sabbatical in 2006. He served as co-chair of the Canadian Forces College department of security studies. He has a long history of economics in the Royal Military College. He's with the department of politics and economics at the Royal Military College and a faculty member of the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre. He is a scientist by training whose doctoral research was aimed at chemical sensing for arms control.

I think we're going to have an interesting morning. We welcome you both.

I'm not certain if you've appeared before this committee before. We will give you time for opening comments, usually 10 or 15 minutes, and then we'll go into the first round of questioning. The questions will be seven minutes each.

Welcome.

Dr. Douglas Bland (Chair, Defence Management Studies Program, School of Policy Studies, Queen's University): Thank you very much.

Thank you, Chair and members, for the invitation to be here. I hope I can make a positive contribution to your deliberations.

I have just a few comments to make, and then I'll be at your disposal. I always liked the question period better than the presentation period.

I've been asked and have participated in numerous public debates about our operations in Afghanistan. One of the questions, a key question, people ask is whether the Canadian deployment to Afghanistan is the right policy for Canada. Let me give you reasons why I think it is.

First, the mission supports four inseparable long-standing objectives of Canadian foreign policy, and these are: first, to keep the defence of Canada and Canadians as far away from our shores as possible; second, to support the United Nations and especially support the authority of the Security Council; third, to maintain NATO and the NATO alliance with like-minded nations, which means, to me, strengthening the alliance of liberal democracies, which is key to our security interests; and, most critically of all, to support the reasonable security interests of the United States in our own interests, by which I mean that America is the source of our economic well-being and our national security.

Let me address one other question that's often raised directly or indirectly at these public meetings, and that is whether we should be doing something other than fighting the Taliban, or—and it's a second or third question, I guess—whether we should be doing something else somewhere else. My answer is this: Canada's diplomatic foreign assistance and military operations today in Afghanistan are fully consistent with Canada's policies and actions in these policy areas over most of Canada's history. Those who believe or choose to believe otherwise ought to heed I think the considered opinion of two prominent Canadians who were there at the birth of the United Nations and of NATO and who set out the fundamental parameters for Canada's foreign policy in the early period, 1947 to 1950.

Paul Martin Sr., then Minister of External Affairs, in remarks in 1964 criticizing the continued decline of Canada's military capabilities and the resulting loss of influence in international affairs generally and in the United Nations in particular, recalled that in the 1950s:

> ...many nations had an appetite for power without teeth, but Canada had developed both the appetite and the teeth for a new international role.

Martin's cabinet colleague, Brooke Claxton, Minister of National Defence from 1947 to 1956, in an address to Parliament shortly after the end of the Second World War, characterized Canada's participation in that great war as "the war of liberation" fought together with people who had the "will to be free". Later in that address he provided the principle that guided Canada's international commitments, or that he hoped would guide Canada's international commitments, in the post-Second World War era. We will maintain, he said, a willingness "to carry out any undertakings which by our own voluntary act we may assume in cooperation with friendly nations or under any effective"—and he emphasized "effective"—"plan of collective action under the united nations." What that principle meant, to paraphrase Mackenzie King, was commitments, if necessary, but not necessary commitments.

● (0910)

The Chair: Excuse me, can I just stop you for one moment?

Madame Lalonde, is there no French translation?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Francine Lalonde (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): There was no interpretation for a moment. I do not know if it is a problem with the sound system.

[*English*]

The Chair: All right. Do you have it now? Can we have some French?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Francine Lalonde: I am getting the interpretation now.

However, I lost you there for a minute.

[*English*]

The Chair: All right.

Please continue. Sorry about that.

Dr. Douglas Bland: What Brooke Claxton was talking about was—to again look to Mackenzie King and that period—that Parliament would decide what would be done in matters of commitments that Canada would make. We were not under any obligation—NATO was hardly formed at that time—and we certainly had no obligation to any idea, such as the idea of the United Nations and collective security. We were not robots in the international arena.

These are the two great traditions of Canadian foreign policy—at least they were when we had the appetite for a significant international role and when we were quick to come to the aid and accept the sacrifices of wars of liberation fought by people with a will to be free. In Afghanistan today, as was the case from 1939 to 1945, young Canadians are engaged in a war of liberation in alliance with and at the request of people who have continuously demonstrated a will to be free. What efforts and sacrifices could be more in accord with Canada's defence and foreign policy traditions?

My worry today, however, is that except for a small cadre of Canadians who are actually serving in the Canadian Forces or in the foreign service or in government or non-governmental humanitarian agencies, Canadians don't have much stomach for an international role much beyond rhetoric, even when we're fighting alongside allies to aid people who wish to be free. If you think otherwise, look at who serves and at the appalling state of the Canadian armed forces—a consequence of government decisions over many years not to properly fund Canada's military capabilities. That decision is reflected by some politicians across the political spectrum who say we are actually not funding armed forces, for instance, because that's what Canadians think is proper.

My point today is that if we have an appetite for an international role, and if we believe that it is in our own interest to aid others who are struggling for freedom and liberal democracy, then we should stand up and provide ourselves with the means, or, in Paul Martin's words, with the teeth to match our appetite or at least part of our rhetoric. I'm not, however, at all confident that Canadians are aware of these traditions that I've mentioned, and I don't think they have much of an appetite for the international role Canada once played in the world.

Afghanistan, ladies and gentlemen, might be our last hurrah.

Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Bland.

Mr. Dorn.

● (0915)

[*Translation*]

Dr. Walter Dorn (Professor and Co-Chair, Department of Security Studies, Canadian Forces College, As an Individual): Mr. Chairman, I thank you for having invited me to present my ideas to the committee.

My friend and colleague, Douglas Bland, and myself have great respect for each other, but our approaches are different.

[*English*]

I will offer you a constructively critical perspective. When I teach officers at the Canadian Forces College, I take this approach, believing that our soldiers should learn to view their work from differing and critical perspectives, weighing the pros and cons of different strategies.

During training, soldiers should learn to think alike. During education, they should learn how to think differently. Unity and diversity—or diversity and unity—is a key principle of our participatory democracy, as you well know here in Parliament.

My research and experience is focused on UN peacekeeping and peace operations, so I will compare our actions in Kandahar and Kabul and our peacekeeping missions, some of which I have experienced first-hand.

The first consequence of our deployment in Afghanistan is that Canada is currently at the historic low in its UN peacekeeping contribution. Ironically, this comes at a time when UN peacekeeping is at a historic high. We currently deploy merely 55 soldiers under the UN blue flag, at a time when the UN has over 70,000 soldiers in the field. The police forces of Canada contribute 50% more than the Canadian Forces. I have drawn this out in graph 1, showing the rank of Canada over the years from 1991, when we were the number one peacekeeper, through the 1990s, when we were in the top 10, to the fall to our low of 59th place in the world today in peacekeeping.

We have often ranked number one since Pearson proposed the first peacekeeping force 60 years ago, a concept that has thrived and evolved internationally as he hoped it would. We have begun a large slide. One of the largest drops—to one-quarter strength—occurred one year ago almost to this day, when we closed our mission in the Golan Heights: 190 logistic specialists left the UN mission, largely because of the need in Kandahar, and we have provided the UN with nothing remotely comparable.

I will point out graph 4, which shows our contributions of troops, observers, and police over the last few years. That large decline in March of last year is the decline I'm currently speaking about.

It is clear that one of the casualties of our large Afghanistan deployment is our contribution to UN peacekeeping, something that Brooke Claxton and Lester Pearson and Paul Martin Sr., whom we've heard reference to, were very much supporting, trying to get Canada to do more. Our contribution is falling not only in the field but also at UN headquarters, which has to supervise over 100,000 military and civilian personnel in the field.

There is not a single Canadian officer serving in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, where I did my sabbatical last year. The department has 70 officers in its military division and not a single Canadian.

The UN is currently experiencing a surge in demand for its peacekeeping services. This I've illustrated in graph 5, which shows you the number of uniformed personnel in the field since 1991. You'll see the surge now reaching a record high of around 80,000 military police in the field.

The UN has stopped coming to Canada for contributions, knowing that the answer will undoubtedly be no, with a finger pointing to Afghanistan. This is doubly tragic because robust peacekeeping, which the UN has evolved over many decades, points the way to a long-term solution in Afghanistan. The time-honoured and tested principles of peacekeeping have led to the resolution of many seemingly intractable conflicts, including intrastate conflicts in Cambodia, Mozambique, Liberia, Sierra Leone, the former Yugoslavia, and East Timor. Former combatants finally relinquished the simplistic labels of “my enemy” or “the terrorist” to adopt a peace agreement, the only thing a lasting peace can be based upon, especially in internal conflicts.

When peacekeeping has deviated from its three central principles, as it did in Somalia in 1993, it has resulted in disaster. The three central principles of peacekeeping are impartiality, consent, and minimum use of force as a last resort.

Now let's see how these principles apply to Kandahar today.

First is impartiality. Impartiality doesn't exist in Kandahar. We have a declared enemy given to us by President George Bush, when he said in September 2001 that the U.S. would make no distinction between the terrorists and those who harboured them. At the time, I recognized this as a recipe for an expanding and endless war. Instead of isolating al-Qaeda, President Bush widened the war to the country's regime, giving us the first regime change in the global war on terror.

● (0920)

The U.S. has not sought and did not receive UN authorization for its war on terror or the operation designed to carry out this war, Operation Enduring Freedom.

Unlike ISAF, OEF has no UN sanction. Canada entered Kandahar under the banner of OEF. From that moment on, we could not be labelled as impartial, objective, or having the population's interest foremost in mind. We have become increasingly identified with the global perception of the U.S. around the world, as seeking to find and defeat enemies in its national interest. We have become one of the conflicting parties, and we remain so today even though we are currently deployed under NATO.

The second item is consent. There is no peace agreement. We do not have consent of the main parties to the conflict for our deployment in Kandahar. Even the consent of the local population is in doubt. We do have the consent of the Government of Afghanistan, though many inhabitants see President Karzai as a leader hand-picked by the United States and legitimized by an election in which they did not vote.

Without winning the hearts and minds of the locals, you can never win the war or the peace, nor obtain their consent to your presence. Canada has for decades urged parties in vicious conflicts around the world the come to the peace table, but we can't seem to do it ourselves.

Third is minimum use of force as a last resort. We are clearly on the offensive in Kandahar. The posture is not one of self-defence or protection of civilians. Rather, it is characterized by search-and-destroy missions and large-scale offensives in which civilians are all too often unfortunate casualties. We seem to be producing as many enemies as we are killing, as angry brothers, sons, clan members, and other displaced people fill the ranks of the fallen. We, too, are losing our young and courageous, namely 45 soldiers and one diplomat dead in the fields of Afghanistan.

We have lost more soldiers in Afghanistan during our deployment there than in any UN operation over a period of 60 years. This was not because Canada was risk-averse in peacekeeping. As you can see from the last page of the table, we still rank as number two in the level of fatalities in the history of UN peacekeeping. But the stance the Canadian Forces chose in Kandahar—and this was a conscious choice of its leadership, to choose this region and the current posture and to work under Operation Enduring Freedom and then NATO—has meant that to many we appear as aggressors, not defenders.

We deviate from these three principles of peacekeeping—impartiality, consent, and minimum use of force—at our peril. What is the alternative? There is no use criticizing unless we have a better way. Robust peacekeeping of the type the UN has practised so successfully in recent years is the better way. In the eastern Congo, where I recently was during my sabbatical, and in Sierra Leone and Liberia, this approach has given us useful lessons: one, serve the local population first and foremost, not only to win hearts and minds to our cause, but to make sure their interests become our common cause; two, narrow the list of spoilers of the peace process, rather than broadening it; three, negotiate for peace and always give a way out to those committing violence, except for those who have committed the most egregious crimes, which should be referred to the International Criminal Court or to a special tribunal under due process; and four, do not lump together all those who oppose the international presence.

In Afghanistan, this means recognizing that not all those who oppose the Canadian presence are Taliban terrorists. There are many former mujahedeen from various clans that the west once supported during the war against the Soviet invaders. They are motivated by the defence of their country, not love of the Taliban. They long to live and die like the heroes of their folklore, whether it be heroes from the time of the British colonizers or Soviet occupiers. They are willing to sacrifice themselves for their tribe or country.

Of course, to use another Mackenzian turn of phrase, it's combat if necessary, but not necessarily combat.

● (0925)

The current model of the Canadian Forces, originating from U.S. Marine Corps General Charles Krulak, is a three-block war concept. In the first block, Canada will engage in a high-intensity fight against the armies of failing states, to use the words from a recent army poster. The three-block war, let me be clear, is unworkable and fatally flawed, because you cannot simultaneously fight offensive high-intensity combat and carry out effective humanitarian and reconstruction tasks. This is the case in Kandahar. In Kabul, we did have a working peacekeeping model.

The UN uses force as a last resort when all negotiations and warnings have failed. I saw this in the eastern Congo in November 2006 when the renegade 81st and 83rd Congolese brigades tried to capture the city of Goma. The UN gave a firm order to these forces to halt in Saké. When this warning was not heeded, the UN and Congolese government forces stopped the advance using advanced helicopter gunships flown by India.

NATO has not even started talking or negotiating with its opponents in Kandahar, or anywhere in Afghanistan, to my knowledge.

The UN has tried to create a working model for a broad-based central government of national unity. This is an approach that is sometimes called the ink-blot approach: you get a model that's working and spread out according to the consent of local people, rather than impose yourself on their lives. This alternative model suggests that you spread out only when you can succeed. As hearts and minds are won, people will flock to the safety and security of protected areas, to places where their voices are heard, where their rights are respected—especially the right to peace—and where their votes are permitted. We have to build a capacity for dependency and unity, not animosity. This is what is working in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and it seems to me to be the only model that can work in the long term in Afghanistan.

Some may dismiss the UN's 60 years of peacekeeping as outdated and outmoded, and my colleague has certainly done that in the past. But today's operations are in fact the result of a steady evolution of learning from past lessons on the underuse and overuse of force. A balance has finally been achieved in many UN operations, but in the mountains of Afghanistan and on the plains, we seem to be re-learning these lessons the hard way.

I've looked at it as hawk, dove, and owl approaches. The first two are flawed. The hawk approach is, in my mind, too aggressive and will not establish long-term stability or peace. The dove approach—calling for an immediate withdrawal—is not strong enough to deal with the messy problems in harsh war zones. The owl approach is the only one that can show the wisdom to know when and where to engage. We should move to this owl approach, or the ink-blot model, where we spread out only when the time is right.

Furthermore, as the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Honourable Peter MacKay, said to you two days ago, we seek to restore Canada's leadership in the world. Then we should start where we are able and universally recognized to provide solid leadership. Of course, we should still make substantial contributions to NATO and NORAD, but if there is an activity where we stand out in the eyes of the world, it is in peacekeeping. We need not compete with South Asian nations for boots on the ground. We should be innovative, using our specialized expertise and equipment to make UN peacekeeping more effective and the world safer. We have the technology and skilled personnel that are so badly needed in UN peacekeeping today. With UN peacekeeping booming, it is the place to be. It is the model to use.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Thank you.

We will go into the first round of questioning.

We'll start with Mr. Eyking.

Hon. Mark Eyking (Sydney—Victoria, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'd like to thank the two guests for coming here this morning.

There's no doubt the Afghanistan situation is one of the biggest challenges we're facing as a country. If we're going to be a meaningful NATO member, we know that we have to participate substantially in Afghanistan, because that is the major role NATO is facing right now. But our relationship with NATO in Afghanistan is going through quite a test, and as some of you mentioned already, we hear statements that in Afghanistan we seem to be in one of the toughest regions. We're putting a lot of military there and not enough aid, compared to what some of the other countries are doing. There's no definite exit strategy for us, and that doesn't seem to be communicated between us and NATO.

The other thing is, regarding the way NATO is handling the poppy farmers in Afghanistan, the Senlis Council has said we should be taking a totally different approach to poppy eradication. They've come up with some fairly good, constructive ideas. Especially because Europe is using over half of the narcotics that are coming out of Afghanistan—illegal narcotics—European countries should be going in there, buying the crop, and using it for prescribed drugs. They say that would go a long way to getting some sort of respect from the people in the area, instead of our going in and damaging the crops.

I have three questions. One, should we be changing our role in Afghanistan? Two, should we be clear with NATO on our long-term commitment? And three, should Europeans be taking this poppy situation more seriously and probably taking a different strategy?

I'll just open that up to whoever wants to answer.

● (0930)

The Chair: Mr. Bland.

Dr. Douglas Bland: My colleague and I always have interesting discussions about peacekeeping. I think it's a great operation.

I spent a lot of my life in Canada's largest, oldest, and most successful peacekeeping operation, and it was called NATO. It liberated more countries and more people than all the other operations the UN ever imagined, and it kept us safe. But we can talk about that at another time.

I'm a little surprised that Dr. Dorn would be praising the Taliban as a liberating and helpful Boy Scout organization in Afghanistan.

Dr. Walter Dorn: Don't put words in my mouth.

Dr. Douglas Bland: They are hardly the people to hold up to the Afghan people. It's why the Afghan government invited Canadians to make war on these criminal elements in their society.

Finally, when we talk about peacekeeping as not being warfare, the Congo exercise was a very good example of the fact that peacekeeping is another form of warfare or a different type of tactic. When the blue flag didn't work in the Congo, the United Nations employed combat forces, as Walter said, with gunships, explosives, and ammunition, killing lots of people, including civilians, as they're doing in the other states.

But let's go back, if I may, to the questions.

I think the role of the Canadian Forces, the Canadian government, and other agencies in Afghanistan have been evolving for two reasons. It's entirely reasonable that the mission will evolve over time, as our missions in Korea, NATO, and Cyprus in the Middle East, and all over the place evolved over time, because circumstances have changed. As the circumstances change in Afghanistan, for better or worse, I expect our operations in all aspects will evolve differently.

On our commitment to NATO, I think it's a very good question. I delivered a presentation a few days ago in this city in which I said that I think it's time for us to rethink our NATO alliance, not the alliance itself or the treaty but our support to Europeans. The European Union has not been helpful to us, and it's not helpful to the situation of NATO commitments in places like Afghanistan and perhaps Darfur. I've been predicting for many years that our next big mission is Mozambique, or I should say Zimbabwe. We need to think about that.

On the poppy problem, over the last 10 years or more, I've been involved on the sidelines with Plan Colombia, which is the drug strategy designed by Latin Americans and supported by the United States to eradicate cocoa drugs, and so on, in that region. They've tried a number of interesting strategies. One is to substitute another crop. Two is to eradicate the crop. Three is to buy it out. There are more drugs flowing from that region to Europe and the United States than ever before or than there were 10 years ago. These strategies don't work because they're at the wrong end of the spectrum. By that I mean the poppy problem isn't a supply problem; it's a demand problem.

The crudest Afghan farmer understands basic economics. He knows if there is a demand for his crop, he'll grow the crop and make money. The demand for the crop comes from the United States, Russia, India, Canada, and all over Europe. If you want to stop the growing of the poppies, stop the use of heroin in the communities.

We could go through all the details, but if you ask an Afghan farmer to grow carrots and tell him you'll support the growing of carrots, he'll grow carrots, especially if you give him money. I don't want to compare it to Canadian supply agricultural policies, but he'll grow carrots and he'll grow poppies too. Why wouldn't he? He has a market for the crop.

Let's solve the demand problem.

● (0935)

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Bland.

Madame Lalonde.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Francine Lalonde: Thank you.

Thank you very much, both of you. I believe this is our first really fundamental debate on this matter, and it pleases me greatly.

Mr. Dorn, you are questioning NATO's strategy in Afghanistan. Canada cannot remain there with a different strategy. Are you not in fact questioning the “war against terrorism“ strategy?

My second question is aimed at determining if Canada's change in strategy is clearly linked to the arrival of General Hillier. The change in policy did not occur with the arrival of the Conservatives, but with that of General Hillier, who studied for three years in the United States. There is a military base in my riding, which is why I have some information. General Hillier transformed the army and brought about the adoption of the 3D formula, that I discussed back home, on the base. If you have a bit of time, I would also like you to speak to us a little bit about that. In my view, it is impossible for a soldier to invade people's homes and then come later on the same day to do diplomatic, defence and humanitarian aid work. I do not believe that these things are compatible. In fact, you are saying that the war we are waging at the present time is incompatible with humanitarian aid.

[*English*]

Dr. Walter Dorn: Thank you.

First of all, I find myself alarmed that my colleague to the left put words in my mouth. I certainly didn't describe the Taliban in the words he used. I made the point that not all fighters are Taliban and that it's simplistic to view this war as just a fight against the Taliban, the enemy. It's overly simplistic. We adopt that model to our peril.

Secondly, I challenge him when he says that NATO has statistically liberated more people than anybody else. I can count in my head over half a billion people in which UN operations, over 62 of them in the history of the world, have brought people to peace. You have to ask where NATO was actually deployed in areas that were subsequently liberated. I just don't believe, on either of those cases, they have a factual basis.

On the issues of contributing substantially to NATO, yes, absolutely, we have to contribute substantially to NATO, and we have to do so for the long term. I believe the answer is not that the NATO strategy is completely flawed, but the overly offensive approach used in southern Afghanistan is flawed. That is tied in with the global war on terror, as you say, because this is a strategy brought in. When we moved into Kandahar, the campaign plan was designed in the United States and authorized by Donald Rumsfeld. This was part of the GWOT, the global war on terrorism, Operation Enduring Freedom. So I think we came in on the wrong foot. We should have come in on a much more impartial, objective, consensual, and minimum use of force basis rather than on an offensive basis in which our motives are questioned.

General Hillier did bring the three-block war concept. He brought it from the United States, where, as you mentioned, he spent so many years, but he transformed it from something that was never meant to be, as many U.S. officers will tell me. The three-block war was meant to describe the dilemma in which the United States found themselves during their operation in Somalia, in which they were primarily there to help the people and they might find themselves in combat. So you had to deal with the dilemma where you were forced to do combat. That's necessarily combat, and in responding to the attack against you, all of a sudden, you are alienating some people. That's a completely different problem. We're going in and saying, “Your strategic goal is to commit combat”, and that's the combat if necessary but not necessarily combat approach. You only engage in combat as a last resort, with a minimum use of force.

● (0940)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Dorn.

Mr. Bland, do you want to respond to that?

Dr. Douglas Bland: We could have a debate about who liberated whom, but if you go to Spain and Bulgaria and Romania, all the eastern European countries, they're not only liberated, but they're liberal democracies.

Dr. Walter Dorn: A civil society.

Dr. Douglas Bland: One of the points that Walter makes that's important is that there are some—it depends on whose stats you look at—70,000 or 80,000 so-called peacekeepers around the world. And that's great. More power to them. It makes a lot of money for a lot of nations. That's how they pay their soldiers.

The thing is, if there are that many soldiers available, why do we need to be there? Lots of people seem to be doing this job. The other side of that coin is, of course, if Canadians want to be involved everywhere and have an appetite for international affairs, as Paul Martin Sr. said, then pony up the resources.

There's no reason in this country, where we have 32 million people, that we only have 60,000 people in the armed forces. It's ridiculous. We can make a much bigger contribution if we actually believe in things like responsibility to protect.

Why aren't we doing something in Darfur? Well, because the United Nations won't let anybody do anything in Darfur. The Security Council has voted against it. The mission in Afghanistan, on the other hand, was sanctioned twice by unanimous vote of the United Nations Security Council and as a United Nations peace-keeping mission, employing appropriate operational means—three D and the CDS.

The Liberal government that appointed General Hillier as the CDS did so, in my conversations with all the defence ministers of the time and with the Prime Minister of the time before he was Prime Minister, with their eyes wide open. They believed not in three D as a three-block war—and we shouldn't get confused about that—but they believed, as Canadians have always exercised, whether it was in the Second World War or the First World War or Korea or anywhere else, and in UN peacekeeping, that you need military operations, humanitarian operations, and diplomacy. We've always done that. It's nothing new.

The point is—and the story hasn't been written yet—how did we get to Kandahar? I'd just say this. We got there because we were late. You can make that argument. There were ample opportunities for the government of the day to deploy a provincial reconstruction team in the northern, peaceful parts of the country. The government dithered around, did nothing, then realized they couldn't pull out of Afghanistan. So they deployed a provincial reconstruction team into a dangerous area, and then we had to protect it, and we've been protecting that kind of operation ever since.

So there's a long story here. It's complicated, it's not simple, and it's not a choice between this abstract idea of collective security under the UN or some three-D thing from the United States war college. It's much more complicated than that.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Bland.

Mr. Obhrai.

Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Calgary East, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'll share my time with my colleague, Wajid Khan.

I want to make a comment. I don't need a response.

I've been to the Congo; I've seen the UN peacekeeping operations and their impact on everything, but I want to set the record straight. Walter said the Afghanistan mission was not a UN-sanctioned mission, if I'm to understand you correctly. I am sorry, it is a purely UN-sanctioned mission. That is why we are there, as you are. I know at one time we wanted to be with the UN, and the second time, when we didn't like it, we just ignored the UN. But I want to be on the record to say it is a UN-sanctioned mission.

WIth that, I'll hand over to my colleague.

Mr. Wajid Khan (Mississauga—Streetsville, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Gentlemen, welcome.

Mr. Bland, I've just come from Afghanistan. I know about the operation at Kajaki Dam. Is it a military operation? I think not. It is there to increase the power to the provinces. It is strictly a mission for development.

I also know there are three companies—a Canadian company, an American company, and an Indian company—who are prepared to invest $1.8 billion in a copper mine in Afghanistan. I'm also aware of the fact that after Operation Medusa in Kandahar, Canadians are handling up to 100 projects. Japan and Kuwait are building roads, Kandahar roads. When you control Kandahar, you control Afghanistan. That's a psychological factor. So there is a perfect example of military operations in Kandahar and the 100 projects being developed there.

At the same time, the expansion of government work, which could not leave Kabul for some time...now they're travelling with the strategic assistance team, with Colonel Dixon. The ministers and deputy ministers in Kabul are going to 17 provinces.

I would like to receive your comment, Mr. Bland. Is this purely a military mission? Is this a military plus development mission? I've seen many, many other examples of development in Afghanistan, such as Maharat, and all those places where they're training hundreds and hundreds of people, men and women, and providing them with jobs—$120 to $150 per month. The average wage used to be $10 a month, which is now $30, so four to five times more, sir.

I think this is a very good example. I know about Afghanistan. I don't want to go to the Congo. What would you say to that, Mr. Bland?

● (0945)

Dr. Douglas Bland: I think that's a fairly accurate description of what's been going on.

If we have time, Mr. Chair, I'll just reminisce for a minute. My father served in World War II in combat units in Italy, Normandy, and the Netherlands. He liked to tell stories, along with his chums at the Legion and so on in his older age, about air strike three-D operations. He didn't know that that's what he was talking about, but now we know that that's what he was talking about.

His combat unit, when it was in the Netherlands, for instance, and it was an artillery unit, would be at one moment firing their weapons at German emplacements far away and then they would be stopping and cooking up dinner and giving it to the local people. And in their spare time they were building schools, handing out candy, and doing all sorts of humanitarian operations. Soldiers do those kinds of things, and our soldiers do it particularly well all over the world. It is natural that they would be doing this kind of thing.

If you read the report from the Somalia inquiry, you will see that the soldiers there from the Airborne Regiment were particularly proud of the operations they conducted building schools and helping people. The three-D notion is ingrained in our traditions of foreign policy and military operations.

I would like to come back to a question someone asked about exit strategies, and it's on everybody's mind. There is a real and theoretical change in warfare in our societies these days. In the old days, we used to think of war as having an immediate cause. There would then be some sort of a conflict, there would be a victory or a peaceful negotiation of the causes, people would stand down, and governments would agree—because these things were run by governments—and then there would be some sort of peace and a demobilization of sorts. That's the kind of model of warfare we have understood since at least 1914, and probably before that.

We're in an era now of what I call continuous warfare. There is no exit strategy, because, by definition, in continuous warfare you can't get out of it. Look at Palestine: people fighting people, people fighting our soldiers and our non-combatants. They are targets, they are shields, they are willing victims, and they are perpetrators.

A British general who had lots of peacekeeping experience all over the world wrote recently in a wonderful book, called *The Utility of Force*, that these are wars amongst the people. It's not the old model in which somebody starts it and governments negotiate and end belligerence. There is nobody to negotiate an end. We are more and more, as in Bosnia and throughout the Balkans, as in the Middle East, Africa, and other countries, becoming involved in continuous wars for which there is no exit. Wars among the people, where you can't even decide—if you are the most dedicated, true believer in UN peacekeeping—who you're peacekeeping with, we don't know how to handle yet.

● (0950)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Bland.

Were you done, Mr. Khan?

On that point, where does the local government, then, take responsibility? If we're involved in Bosnia, certainly we go in there, and we move it to a point where we think we have some control. And I'm not just talking about Bosnia, but of other conflicts. When does it really become that local government's responsibility? It seems that far too often we're in there, we seem to hand it back to the governments, and then it breaks out again.

Dr. Douglas Bland: That's part of our difficulty—at least mine—in trying to describe these things and think about them.

Mr. Chair, if I may put words in your mouth, what you're saying to me is old model. We want to look around for the government to deal with. Which government are you going to deal with? What if there isn't any government?

In the Latin American sense, when we're talking about some of these things.... In Colombia, for instance, there is a government, but then there are vast ungoverned spaces where the government doesn't have any control and other forces move into the ungoverned spaces. In Latin America, especially now, we're seeing the transformation of street gangs, for instance, in Brazil, from being petty thieves and so on to being political organizations. They have moved into these ungoverned spaces.

We're dealing now, for instance, in the Middle East, in Palestine, and perhaps in Afghanistan, and certainly in the coming wars in Africa, with large areas of ungoverned space. The model of saying that we're going to have a peacekeeping operation where we'll talk to this government and that government and we'll stand in between them—and Walter can correct me if I'm wrong.... The mission the UN sent to Palestine to settle the war and to observe the war was sent in 1947. It's still there. What the UN usually does is enhance the status quo. It's not suited for this. We don't know how to handle these kinds of wars.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Bland.

Madam McDonough.

Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm very sorry for being late.

I apologize to our guests. I'm especially sorry not to have heard the presentations.

I have to say, though, just listening to you, Mr. Bland, and without having heard your earlier presentation, it seems to me that you've added strength to the argument about Kandahar and the folly of what we're embroiled in.

I want to thank Dr. Dorn for the work he has been doing to try to dispel the myth, which keeps being thrown in the faces of those who ask for the facts to be known and analysed, that peacekeeping is now for wimps, that peacekeeping has now gone the way of the dinosaurs and the dodo birds. Of course, the facts show otherwise. What is clear is that Canada is a dropout in terms of any robust involvement in UN peacekeeping.

I want to revert, very briefly, to a conversation I had last night with an Afghani Canadian friend who has lived in Canada for 17 years, who goes back to Afghanistan almost every year, and who has just come back from Kandahar and Kabul.

I had an opportunity to ask him what he would ask here this morning. The essence of what he said is, how can Canada continue to characterize the Taliban as the devil incarnate, say we are there to protect the people, and then be completely oblivious to the numbers of citizens being killed? He made the point that had he been killed in Kandahar when he was there a couple of months ago, he would have been counted as a Taliban devil because he had a beard and because he was Muslim and because he was Pashtun.

His point was that it is desperately, desperately important to engage with the Taliban and to recognize that the exclusion of 10 million Pashtuns from any decision-making, any really effective representation, is a recipe for Kandahar and Afghanistan to turn into Canada's Iraq. I want to ask for your reaction to that.

I wish he was here this morning. If he wasn't out working his guts out to earn a living and help support his family in Kandahar, it would have been a very good idea for him to try to enlighten us from a perspective that we don't hear enough from.

I'd like to ask for your reaction to his comments.

● (0955)

Dr. Walter Dorn: Very quickly, since I'm a professor I love to correct factual points. Palestine was 1948. The UN did not vote against Sudan; it actually authorized the force for Sudan. It's the Sudanese government that's the problem.

I don't think my colleague's cynical views of the motives of the developed world for contributing to peacekeeping are accurate. I think many of them are doing so for the high-minded ideals that we've contributed to peacekeeping in the past.

If you look at my fatalities list you'll see that half the nations in the top 10 fatality countries in UN peacekeeping are developing and the other half are developed world. Canada, of course, is the first in the developed world and India is the first in the developing world.

There is an exit strategy in Afghanistan. It's the same one that has been applied so successfully in lots of conflicts we had in the 1990s. It's only in Somalia where we gave up. And we decided to go on fighting this endless war, which is maybe another Iraq. Maybe what we have in Kandahar is another Somalia. It's just not a workable strategy.

NATO does have a model of its own. It has peace support operations. It's actually a very well-developed, doctrinally founded model of peace support. They've done successful peace support operations in Bosnia and Kosovo. It's not that we have to go only to the UN for the model of peacekeeping; NATO has the model.

I appreciate the words on protecting the dam. That's exactly the sort of project we have to do more of, in a protection mandate, rather than one on search and destroy.

I agree that our soldiers do public outreach extremely well. We do it better than the Americans. I think we are probably the best in the world in terms of relating to local populations. We have that because of our bilingual and multi-ethnic culture in Canada.

In terms of the views on the Taliban, absolutely, our view is too simplistic now. If we start looking at the Pashtuns, the Daris, and the different tribes and weave into that web of interests and motives... then we'd be getting close to the truth. It's only in that way that we can begin to get back to the question of local government, of how you devolve power to the people, especially in those regions where the central government has proven to be corrupt, and that you actually look regionally at ways in which people can start helping themselves.

It means giving them more power, which means power sharing. It means sharing with a lot of people we now mistakenly classify as Taliban. It means sharing power with people, many of whom don't agree with our current policy, who have an interest in their families and lives in that area.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Dorn.

Mr. Bland, did you want to make some comment on that?

Dr. Douglas Bland: Chair, I've followed members' opinions and ideas over many years, and I respect them, and I enjoy most of them.

I have anecdotes too that I could tell, if we had lots of time, of people coming to me from those parts of the world, from Afghanistan, saying, "God bless Canada. You saved my life. You saved my farm. You saved my village. Your guys are dying in our name. We want to be free from religious dogma. Thank you." I wish they were here to talk to the committee.

When we talk about peacekeeping—and again we can always have a theoretical argument—I can't find anybody who has a definition of what peacekeeping is. When peacekeeping failed miserably in the Balkans and led to the deaths of thousands of people—for instance, in Srebrenica—peacekeeping started to take on terms like robust peacekeeping, muscular peacekeeping, and so on. I think there is certainly a place for peacekeeping-type operations in warfare. But I just hope people don't get it confused with mythical peacekeeping.

As for negotiating with the Taliban, perhaps somebody can explain something to me. If you don't know who it is you're killing, and you call them Taliban, who is it that you're going to negotiate with? How do you know you're negotiating with somebody who is the Taliban? Who is the Taliban? Who are the leaders? I've got a little research money. I'll buy a one-way ticket for anybody in the House who wants to go to Afghanistan and drive off into the countryside and negotiate with the Taliban.

More seriously, I would like somebody in a responsible position to write down a list of the negotiating points. What is it that you're going to negotiate? On the hard side, is it the abuse of only 50% of the women in the country? What are you going to negotiate on when somebody has a gun at your head? Quite seriously, a paper on negotiating strategy with the Taliban would be useful.

The other point, of course, is that we don't like to beat up on third world countries, and Afghanistan is a third world country by any definition. So why should we be out there telling the Government of Afghanistan to negotiate with people who are trying to destroy their country and their government? I don't have answers to those. Perhaps somebody does.

● (1000)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Bland.

We'll go to Mr. Goldring for a quick question. We may go a little past 10, if that's allowable. I know there are a couple of you who have a number of other questions.

Mr. Goldring.

Mr. Peter Goldring (Edmonton East, CPC): Dr. Bland, I believe it's evident that our government wishes to take a balanced approached to the situation in Afghanistan, or indeed other regions of the world. Part of this balance involves some of your comments earlier about the state and condition of the armed forces. Coming from the Royal Canadian Air Force of the 1960s myself, I see a considerable difference between that and today. But we have been ordering heavy lift and are trying to catch up on it.

I think it's well recognized, from our earlier meetings here too, that the balanced approach requires, first of all, your security, and if that involves a robust military, then that's exactly what it takes to set the stage for doing your next stage of security, your policing, whether it's by international police or whether it's by the country's own police force. I note that we're doing much work with the Afghanistan police force, paying them, for example, so that they can provide this service on an ongoing basis.

The third part is the governance, and this is the whole discussion of this democracy that we have been involved with. There seems to be a very clear role in here to, at the same time—and this is the balanced approach—be working on bringing about a civil society structure of governance and helping it right out into the remote areas and remote communities, trying to get an understanding of it so that when the day comes that the military does leave, you have a much more in-depth rapport with these remote regions with the centralized government, and trying to help them grow through that and recognize the benefits of democracy. Could you comment on this as a balanced approach and on the importance of it?

I have one other short question on the democracy unit. I think there's been discussion on how to do this. How do you get it involved? Is it government-to-government or not? I think the sense is that we have a unit that is completely at arm's length from our government, and how that's structured and formulated.... The intent is to not supplant their form of governance with our own, but to work within that country to try to structure and to help them into a more democratic civil society.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Goldring.

Mr. Bland.

Dr. Douglas Bland: Not to be a professor, but when I talk to students and other people in public meetings and they say that missions should be balanced, I always remind people that balance doesn't mean equal. You can have 2,000 soldiers and 25 diplomats in a mission and the mission would be in balance—unless you think we should have 25 soldiers and 2,500 diplomats out in the field, but that sort of gives me pause.

I think we need to be fair in these deliberations. Afghanistan has had, what, five years to get it right? They did have votes, they did have people out, and they did have universal voting. I think they need to do something. As you all know, we're dealing with, in some respects, a society in which the idea of liberal democracy is as foreign as it could possibly be.

Mr. Peter Goldring: It might take 20 or 30 years.

Dr. Douglas Bland: It's going to take a very long time. It took a long time in Germany after the war to make things work, and there you had a literate, organized state that at least had its roots in liberal democracy in European enlightenment. Maybe that's not what's in store for these places. Maybe they don't need to do that. But we have to give them time to sort it out. Leading and negotiating away things for them won't work.

To come back to the idea of balance and whether you have to use force, police, or this or that, again, just from a theoretical point of view, when people talk about security and defence in a difficult environment, why try to put this idea of a peacekeeping mode into the most difficult cases you can imagine? Why don't we start in something easy, like Vancouver? We'll just disarm the police and we'll have peacekeepers standing between the bad guys and the good guys.

In our societies we have balance between police, courts, human rights, welfare programs, and all sorts of things to sort out very similar problems that you see in major countries, or failing countries, I guess is the word these days. Except that in those countries the problems are exaggerated at every level—in the security, the welfare, the humanitarian, and the democratic systems.

● (1005)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Bland.

Mr. Patry.

Mr. Bernard Patry (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.): Merci, and thank you very much.

Mr. Bland, all conflicts will end through negotiation; no conflict will ever end without negotiation.

My question is for Professor Dorn.

This conflict doesn't seem to show any signs of finishing soon. Knowing all the interrelated regional issues that involve and impact on Afghanistan, would you not say it is the time now for all the international communities through the UN to start real diplomatic talks that would include the P-5, with Pakistan, India, Iran, and for sure Afghanistan?

Dr. Walter Dorn: Yes, the UN should do more in Afghanistan, but they're hamstrung because all the major nations that can back the UN are now putting their resources into NATO. We're seeing a problem in that we're not getting the kind of support in the UN for attention on Afghanistan. They're basically saying NATO is the big player, and since they, including three permanent members of the security council, say they want to handle it through NATO, then you're blocked from a major UN initiative.

I think we should have a different force there. In fact, I think one model would be that NATO does the really tough stuff when necessary and the UN does the easier part in the various provinces.

To answer the question about how to negotiate with people you can't recognize as being Taliban or not, well, it's negotiating with everyone. You try to bring everyone into the big tent. It's actually a *loya jirga* process, without exclusion. There's no problem with negotiation there; you just have to negotiate with the people you find opposing you.

There are lots of definitions of peacekeeping, and the UN has one very good definition. They're found in textbooks and we teach them in courses. The definition has expanded. It's not what it was when you were doing peacekeeping. The UN has expanded it. It has become more robust. It's becoming more multi-dimensional and able to adapt to complex internal conflicts.

The Chair: Thank you.

Very quickly, Mr. Bland.

Dr. Douglas Bland: If 36 or 37 countries in Afghanistan are putting their efforts behind the NATO operations and not the UN operations, that has to tell you something. Those countries are not full of dumb people, dumb diplomats, and dumb politicians.

M. Bernard Patry: I never said that. I'm very sorry.

The Chair: No, he never said that.

Mr. Wilfert.

Hon. Bryon Wilfert (Richmond Hill, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'm sorry I missed your presentation. I was at a breakfast meeting with a former foreign minister of Australia and a few others on Afghanistan.

The Chair: Very quickly, please.

Hon. Bryon Wilfert: My question is this, and this point was raised very strongly.

The approach on the national Afghan army is different than on the national police. If we, whether it was our government or the present government, have not committed the resources to the development of a strong national police force in Afghanistan—most of them are underpaid or not paid at all, and there are many issues with regard to training, etc., as we only had six RCMP and I think one chap, if he's still there, was from Prince Edward Island—my question to you is, how can we approach that differently?

If we believe that security is important and, once forces move out, to have the local national police there, what should we be doing differently with our allies, etc., and with the Afghan government to encourage a strong, viable, national police force in the villages across Afghanistan?

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Wilfert.

Mr. Bland, and then Mr. Dorn.

Dr. Douglas Bland: Mr. Chair, I think the point is very well taken, and it has been recognized in these kinds of continuous warfare operations that you need police amongst the people.

I hope you've had a chance to speak to Brigadier-General David Fraser, who commanded our forces in Afghanistan. He acknowledges that he wished he had had the time, the money, and the resources to work with the police first, and now they're trying to correct that. As I understand, the United States is going to provide hundreds of millions of dollars for that effort. But it's a lesson we've drawn out of those places. Policing, in most parts of the world, and I'm sure Walter would agree, is a very tricky thing.

We don't have enough police either. I think the committee from that other place on the Hill recommended yesterday 800 more policemen just for our airports. It would be good to have about 300 to 400 mounted policemen to go to Afghanistan, but I don't think Parliament has voted that kind of money.

● (1010)

The Chair: Mr. Dorn.

Dr. Walter Dorn: Yes, I believe you have the right strategy. You build where you can build, and we should spend the billions in areas where they know they can be effective. In many cases that means developing the capacity that's there, and building capacity, not dependency.

We have our basis in the Afghan National Police, and we have a long way to go. But we seem to be spending precociously on the war fighting and so miserly on the other side.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Dorn.

I know that when we've talked to the different agencies that have asked for police forces or when police forces have gone, there is frustration, though, if we're asking police to do military-type procedures and combat and not the military. I mean, you have to get the military there; you get it to the place where the police can look after things.

A couple of things. Mr. Bland, you mentioned that you gave a paper a few days ago related to NATO and the EU. Can you send a copy of that presentation to this committee?

Dr. Douglas Bland: Yes, Chair, I'll do that. I'm just reworking it now for publication, but I'll send you something.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Bland.

Mr. Dorn, in your bio it says that you've taken a sabbatical leave and you've been working with the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations in New York. One of the areas of the study you're doing is technological means of patrolling borders. We have a real concern between the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. As you know, the minister went to Pakistan. The minister negotiated and spoke with the Pakistani government to see if they could in some ways monitor the border.

Could you give us a bit of an idea of innovative, new, technological ways that perhaps that border could be better monitored?

Dr. Walter Dorn: Yes, very quickly.

Use of satellites—we'll be launching very soon RADARSAT-2, which has unprecedented radar coverage day and night, in all weather, to look at movements on the ground, with three-metre resolution.

We are now getting equipped with uninhabited aerial vehicles that can be flown—the U.S. is flying them, and we've flown them in Afghanistan. It's a major means.

Then we have excellent ground surveillance radar, like the Coyote reconnaissance vehicle, which would help out. We even have underground means, using ground-penetrating radar to look for weapons underneath the ground, or mass graves, if you want to find sites of atrocities. There are also seismic sensors, so that when people or vehicles are passing by a point, we know they're going there. That's one way of intercepting any fighting forces, by getting advance warning they're coming there, using the air to be able to do the reconnaissance and then have an intercept mission.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Dorn.

Madam Barbot.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Vivian Barbot (Papineau, BQ): There would be so many things to say about the meeting we have just had. What strikes me at this stage is the extent to which we are floating in euphemisms. We are no longer waging wars, but more muscular peacekeeping missions.

Mr. Bland has told us that the army has always tried to turn on the charm in its dealings with the locals. However, I believe that there is a fundamental difference between sharing one's food with the local population and seeing to it that the people have access to proper food over the long term.

Furthermore, minister MacKay came to see us yesterday to tell us that Canada wishes to assume leadership in the war in Afghanistan. However, at NATO and at the UN, Canada has no leadership role; at most, it has a participatory one.

Would it enlighten this debate if we could at least agree on the need to wage war in certain places — even if, personally, I do not agree with war — and on the moment at which Canada should intervene in peacekeeping missions? It is clearly in this area that we have the most expertise, and this is what the people are in agreement with.

There is another element that we must pay more attention to than in the past, and it is the fact that the citizens of this country, overall, are opposed to warfare. Things get a little muddled when we are told that we are moving on to the 3D formula, whereas we are well aware that we are unable to do the three things at once.

I would like to know your views on this.

● (1015)

[*English*]

The Chair: Thank you, Madam Barbot.

Mr. Dorn, then Mr. Bland.

Dr. Walter Dorn: There is a spectrum of force, and we have to find the correct balance point. There will be no ideal point, but rather the one that gives the best results. In some cases we've gone too far in the spectrum of force, and in many cases in its history the UN has not used enough force. Now I think they've found the right balance point.

In my view, in the Kabul region in Afghanistan, we found a good point and we had a working model. But going into Kandahar, we went so far in the spectrum of force that it actually created more enemies than it's dissipating. So it's finding that correct point of force.

Canada has a major contribution to play here, because we do have both the peacekeeping and the war-fighting experience. We have a proud tradition of peacekeeping and a proud tradition of fighting in the world wars and in the Korean War. I think the expertise we have is central and very much needed by the UN, in order to have that kind of blend of capacity, especially now that we're talking about a more muscular type of peacekeeping.

One of the ways we can be involved in leadership in the UN is not by putting lots of people on the ground. We can't compete with the South Asians, who have 25,000 in total on the ground. We can have value-added by giving the technological capabilities. They're so needed. You can have one air reconnaissance vehicle replacing a battalion of soldiers in terms of the area it can cover and what it can see and what it can do.

We have the means. It's just that we're putting all our eggs in one basket now, and that's in Kandahar. We just have no eggs right now for the UN. We have a mere 55 soldiers, which is a shame for our long-standing tradition.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Dorn.

Mr. Bland.

Dr. Douglas Bland: I always encourage students not to become wrapped up in the myths of peacekeeping—for instance, that Canada invented peacekeeping and such things. We didn't.

Walter is very right that we have some sort of special expertise. Well, lots of people in the world have special expertise. The Norwegians and the Scandinavians, the Indians and the Pakistanis, and all kinds of other people have lots of expertise.

I agree with him that Canada ought to provide a great deal of technical assistance to these kinds of missions. But guess what? Parliament is not paying for it. There isn't any technical stuff out there. Our airplanes are falling out of the sky. Maybe we have a hundred Coyote vehicles that are ten years old.

We don't have the stuff that people seem to think we have. I refer you, if you wish, to a study we did at Queen's University, called *Canada Without Armed Forces?*, which not only pointed out where our major capabilities are falling, but—more difficult—pointed out that many of our major capabilities are going to crash before they can be replaced.

We have the oldest Hercules fleet in the world. Does anybody here fly around on 40-year-old airplanes? Does anybody here in Parliament have their kids driving around in 25-year-old trucks in war zones? That's what you're doing. That's what Canada is doing.

Yes, we should provide more. I agree we should provide more. We should be the technical background to the United Nations missions. We can do all those kinds of things. We can have large communications squadrons and hospitals to support them. But somebody has to vote the money.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Bland.

Mr. Casey, you may have a very quick question, and then we're completed.

Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley, CPC): Thank you very much. I'm really enjoying this presentation.

I have two questions. One is for Dr. Dorn. You mentioned earlier that it's not a war against the Taliban. What is it?

Dr. Bland, I really appreciate your concept of continuous warfare. I think you're right there, but do you agree with the mission in Afghanistan? Do you see this as continuous warfare—not unlimited, but indefinite? If you were in control of all the levers, what would you do?

Dr. Douglas Bland: If I were in control of what, sir?

Mr. Bill Casey: If you were in control of all the levers and all the power, both from the military and political side.

Dr. Douglas Bland: Heaven forbid. I'm an academic.

You can go first. I've got to think up an answer.

Dr. Walter Dorn: I think that as we are now fighting it, it is a war against the Taliban. That's the way it's being perceived. What we have, right from September 11 when Bush made the statement about no difference between terrorists and those who harbour them, is a war against the Taliban, because the Taliban government did harbour al-Qaeda. It was declared, then, a war.

I remember that at the Pearson peacekeeping centre at noon on September 11, I said the United States was going to attack Afghanistan. I was quite clear that no matter what they actually found on September 11, there would be an attack on Afghanistan, and that Canada's role was to moderate the United States in what would happen—so it was a war, and it's being fought that way, and now we're part of that war; we are a combatant. We are one of the fighting nations.

I don't think I would agree that I said this was not a war against them. We're fighting it as a war against the Taliban, but it doesn't have to be. It could be a more impartial mission, one in which we take on anybody who commits violations according to a set law. Then you have a much more solid process in which you involve widespread discussions, creating a body that is representative of all the people, not just the government elected in the territories—when there was a vote and when they could vote.

● (1020)

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Bland, have you decided which levers you'd be pulling?

Dr. Douglas Bland: I don't know whether I'd want to be Rick Hillier, Prime Minister, or either. They are dreadful jobs, actually.

For those who had difficulty hearing me when I made my introductory remarks because we had problems with the microphones, the answer to your first question is something like this. When people ask if the Canadian deployment to Afghanistan is the right policy for Canada, the mission supports four inseparable and longstanding objectives of Canadian foreign policy. They are: the defence of Canada as far from our shores as possible; the support of the United Nations, especially the authority of the Security Council; the maintenance of NATO and the alliance of like-minded states; and most critical of all, support to the reasonable security interests of the United States in our own interest, because the United States provides the source for our economic well-being and our national defence.

If I had my hands on the lever, Canadians might not like it, but then who knows.

Seriously, Canadians at the political and bureaucratic levels need to understand that we're in the situation we haven't been in for a very long time of having to find out how to manage a war. The bureaucrats in this town don't understand that, and they're learning very slowly. We can have slogans like three Ds, and that's all they are—slogans. We need the other slogan, “whole of government approach”, which some of us have talked about for a long time, to bring the efforts of the foreign ministry, the defence ministry, the Department of Transport, Corrections Canada—maybe not the Department of Fisheries and Oceans—and all the parts of the government together so they work in a coherent way under a strategy. The Canadian political community, with respect, hasn't got around to understanding how to manage a war that is being waged in Canada's interests broadly defined. We need to do that.

We also need to mobilize a great deal of our resources in financing police, military capabilities, diplomatic capabilities, and humanitarian capabilities. That takes a lot of money and effort. On that conversation for the most part over the years—and Walter might agree with me—going back to the intervention in the Balkans in the early 1990s, we still haven't got it. We still don't understand that those are the wars of the present and the wars of the future. We haven't adjusted the Canadian bureaucracy to the steady piece of the commitments to NATO and UN peacekeeping.

UN peacekeeping has a lot of merits, but one of its faults is that it's still kind of stuck in the idea of state-directed warfare, intervention between states, and so on. Many countries, especially in the west, haven't got used to the idea that continuous warfare is not abnormal. It's not asymmetric warfare or irregular warfare; it's the real thing. It's the new regular warfare. So we need to think about how we are going to handle that politically, bureaucratically, and with all the instruments of government.

If I had my hands on the levers, I'd just go and do that.

● (1025)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Bland.

I want to thank you both for coming. It has been good. We had two differences of opinion on certain issues and we had a healthy discussion. We appreciate your comments, your time, and that you stayed the extra time. I realize you were scheduled for one hour and you stayed for an hour and a half.

We're going to suspend and then come back to look at a report highlight.

[*Proceedings continue in camera*]

Published under the authority of the Speaker of the House of Commons

Publié en conformité de l'autorité du Président de la Chambre des communes

Also available on the Parliament of Canada Web Site at the following address:
Aussi disponible sur le site Web du Parlement du Canada à l'adresse suivante :
http://www.parl.gc.ca
