

WAR FREE SCHOOLS

The Rise of the Counter-Recruitment Movement



WAR FREE SCHOOLS

Organizing Kit for Counter-Recruitment in Canada

Edited by Dylan Penner

Published By
ACT for the Earth
2006

To order printed copies of War Free Schools contact us today.
Suggested donation of \$5. The War Free Schools organizing kit
is also available online at www.OperationObjection.org

ACT for the Earth
238 Queen St. West, Lower Level
Toronto, ON Canada M5V 1Z7
1-647-436-6398
info@OperationObjection.org



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Published by ACT for the Earth
2006, 1st Edition

The *WAR FREE SCHOOLS* organizing kit includes two volumes: *WAR FREE SCHOOLS: The Rise of the Counter-Recruitment Movement* debunks the myths about the military actions Canada is engaged in and places them in the context of rising tuition fees and military recruitment. It also proposes a clear response to these trends. When governments push for war, the people have to push back. This resistance to war and militarism takes the many forms, including soldiers refusing illegal orders or deployments, conscientious objection, desertion, and counter-recruitment. The second volume, *WAR FREE SCHOOLS: A Handbook for Counter-Recruitment in Canada*, is a how-to guide for students in high schools, colleges, and universities, as well as others who are interested in organizing against military recruiters.

ACT for the Earth empowers people and communities to take action for peace, ecology, and human rights. Founded in 1982 as the Against Cruise Testing Coalition, ACT has a long history of resisting militarism, including co-founding the Canadian Conscientious Objectors Registry, the War Resisters Support Campaign, and most recently, Operation Objection.



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EDUCATION NOT OCCUPATION





Why Counter-Recruitment?

As you read this, the Canadian military is embarking on its largest recruitment effort in at least 15 years. General Hillier, Chief of Defence Staff, and Commander of the Canadian Armed Forces, calls this *Operation Connection*. The *War Free Schools* organizing kit is a central tool of *Operation Objection*, a pan-Canadian counter-recruitment campaign.

General Hillier made the point crystal clear at a defence association conference in February 2006, when he called for an increase in Canadian military recruiters from 300 to 80,000 as a key part of *Operation Connection*'s strategy. The new and aggressive approach to recruiting embodied in *Operation Connection* aims to add thousands of new recruits annually to the ranks of the Canadian forces, so they can be sent off to places like Afghanistan. The role of *Operation Objection* is critical in order to rise to the challenge of this dramatically increased militarization in Canadian society.

Meanwhile, according to the London Free Press, the annual number of Canadian troops convicted of going AWOL (Absent Without Leave) has risen from 340 in 2000 to 708 in 2005. According to the investigation, "Numbers show a sharp rise after 2001, when the 9/11 terrorist attacks propelled Canada's military into a more dangerous, combative role abroad." This illustrates just how much potential support *Operation Objection* already has to build on.

The *War Free Schools* organizing kit is designed to help students educate other students about the realities of war, as well as to provide a guide to organizing against military recruitment in their school. *War Free Schools: A Handbook for Counter-Recruitment in Canada*, which accompanies this volume, draws on the successful and inspiring experiences of the counter-recruitment movement in the U.S. as well as the beginnings of Canadian soldiers who are refusing to fight.

AFGHANISTAN: CANADA'S IRAQ

The reasons that we are given for Canada being at war in Afghanistan, like those used for Iraq, are also beginning to unravel at the seams. Canada is at war for oil in Afghanistan, not democracy or liberation. The huge fossil fuel reserves in the Caspian region need a pipeline route. Jean Chretien, Canada's former Prime Minister ensured this would happen by sending Canadian troops to Afghanistan's Kandahar region (a key portion of the pipeline route) and later helping to broker the deal for the Trans-Afghan Pipeline. And just like Iraq, the people of Afghanistan - and the soldiers who go there - are paying the price. Afghanistan is quickly becoming Canada's Iraq.

Meanwhile, tuition fees for Post-Secondary education are increasing rapidly, as is recruitment for the armed forces in Canadian high schools, colleges and universities. It's called a poverty draft, and it is no coincidence. Militaries depend on recruiting young men and women to sustain themselves, especially when they set ambitious goals for growth, as the Canadian Forces have. Whether by accident or design, Canada's increasing tuition fees are coinciding with a large-scale recruitment campaign. The military offerings of free post-secondary education in the context of rising tuition fees exploits lower-income communities by preying on people's needs for affordable

housing, public services, and education. And in fact the military specifically targets lower income communities for recruitment. Of course, the recruiters won't tell you that if a small percentage of military spending was diverted to funding human needs - like post-secondary education - major incentives for joining the military would disappear.

THE MILITARY IS BAD FOR YOUR HEALTH

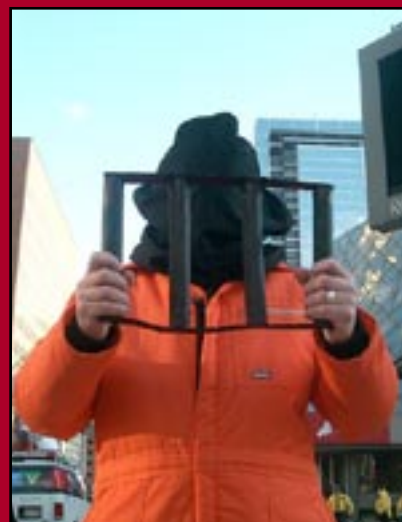
An August 2002 report by the UN Human Rights Commission indicated that 11 international laws had been breached by the use of Depleted Uranium (DU) shells and bombs by US-UK in four countries, including Afghanistan. By participating in those conflicts on the side of the aggressors, the Canadian Forces and the political leadership of Canada are complicit in those violations of international law. Canadian troops are also being contaminated by DU along with Afghan civilians. Even the Canadian Forces admit to the poor health of Canadian soldiers in recent years, compared to Canadian civilians.

RESISTING RECRUITMENT ON CAMPUS

According to the Canadian Forces, "DND's [Department of National Defence] recruitment strategy focuses on, "Improved advertising and attraction by "branding" the CF as an "employer of choice... Establishment of effective relationships and partnerships with educational institutions and guidance counsellors... The CF must also commit itself to cultivating professional relations with a broad range of education institutions, whose programs impact upon the profession of arms." High schools in cities like Toronto have also begun "coop" programs where students can take military training - including automatic machine gun lessons - and get credits.

In 2005, military recruiters arrived on several Canadian campuses and were met with spontaneous resistance from local students. However, given the scope of the Canadian Forces recruitment campaign, a much more proactive and coordinated response is needed. Ads on campus, in school bathrooms, hallways, and student newspapers have become prolific, and are very likely to increase.

Seeing military recruiters on Canadian campuses will soon become a dramatically more frequent occurrence. Students and peace activists need to meet this challenge head on. And that's where counter-recruitment comes in. By working together, in a pan-Canadian counter-recruitment network, we can ensure that when recruiters come to your school they are met with a rapid response. By stalling military recruitment in Canada, we can and will have a tangible impact on ending the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. We will also be better able to thwart plans for future wars, like Iran. Canada's blind support of the recent war against the people of Lebanon is an indicator of the approach that will be taken in future international conflicts. Join *Operation Objection*, and together we can shut down the war machine.



DROP FEES NOT BOMBS

RESISTING RISING TUITION FEES AND MILITARY RECRUITMENT

While tuition fees in Canada are rising, so is military recruitment in high schools, colleges, and universities. This is no coincidence.

Militaries depend on recruiting young men and women to sustain themselves, especially when they set ambitious goals for growth, as the Canadian Forces have. Whether by accident or design, Canada's increasing tuitions are coinciding with a large-scale recruitment campaign. The military offerings of free post-secondary education in the context of rising tuition is arguably exploiting lower-income communities.

And in fact the military often targets lower income communities for recruitment. In the U.S. this convergence of factors has come to be called a poverty draft. Indeed, there is no guarantee that the military will hold up its end of the bargain to pay for post-secondary education, once you have signed up. While conditions in Canada may not be as extreme in this regard, we are quickly catching up. The Canadian Federation of Students has been calling for \$4.5 billion for education. That has yet to happen, but the military has received an extra \$13 billion.

Recruiters On Campus

In September 2005, military recruiters arrived at York University in Toronto. Students there mobilized a rapid and organized response, succeeding in driving the recruiters off-campus. Keep a close eye on upcoming events at your school - especially volunteer and career fairs - and be ready to spring into action.

Ads on Campus

There are two basic types of on-campus recruitment ads: Those found in school



space (i.e. bathrooms, hallways, guidance offices, etc) and those found in student space (i.e. student newspapers). The second type is easier to challenge. Find out if your student newspaper is running military ads (many are) and if so, launch a campaign to have the ads barred in the future. Better yet, get involved in your local student newspaper's editorial board or collective. This will give you the opportunity to both increase counter-recruitment content as well as shape advertising policy to ensure that military recruitment ads are refused.

Building a Unified Movement

The key to resisting increased militarism in our schools is to build strong links between the student and peace movements through counter-recruitment efforts. In practice this begins with the simple act of local peace and student groups picking up the phone and talking to each other.

In the Spring of 2005 hundreds of thousands of students went on strike in Quebec to protest \$103 million in cuts to post-secondary bursary programs. The students engaged in massive demonstrations, occupations, and blockades, and they won. Now, imagine the strength of a unified front to challenge rising tuition fees and military recruitment of Canada's youth.



Photo: students on strike in Quebec in 2005.

END THE POVERTY DRAFT

Included here is an overview from the Canadian Federation of Students on Tuition Fees and Funding in Canada, indicating that the poverty draft is alive and well: In the early to mid-1990s, the federal government made massive cuts to post-secondary education transfer payments to the provinces. Most provinces passed on the cost of those cuts to students in the form of higher tuition fees.

At the time, the Federation articulated the view that rising fees would result in reduced access to post-secondary education. Now, in 2003, a wide variety of studies substantiate the view that an increase in fees precipitates declining rates of participation among low and middle income Canadians.

In 2002 Statistics Canada reported a pronounced drop in participation rates from students from low and middle-income families. For the purposes of this study the cut off for low and middle income is household income of less than \$60,000. The decline in participation rates, recorded in 1999, was the first recorded decrease since Statistics Canada began tracking this data in 1965. In addition, several studies have been undertaken to examine the deregulation of tuition fees in Ontario. In each study, the investigators found a startling

decline of students from lower and middle-income homes.

In response, the Federation has focused much of its campaigns and government relations work during the past five years on halting tuition fee increases and restoring federal transfer payments for post-secondary education.

The Federation's efforts have met with some success. Tuition fees in British Columbia were frozen between 1996 and 2002. In Newfoundland and Labrador, fees for all public post-secondary students have been frozen since 1999. In addition, fees for undergraduate and graduate university students were reduced by 10% each year in 2001/2002 and 2002/2003, with a further 5% reduction promised for 2003/2004. In Manitoba, fees were reduced by 10% in 2000/2001 and have remained frozen since. Tuition fees in Québec have been frozen (for Québec residents) for close to a decade.

In addition, the federal government has ceased cutting and has begun restoring transfer payments. Unfortunately, some provinces such as Ontario and Nova Scotia have continued to increase fees. BC recently deregulated tuition fees resulting in fee hikes of up to 100% and Ontario has deregulated graduate, professional, and some college fees. In addition, the hard-fought freezes and reductions that have been won in some provinces are under attack by those who would have students shoulder more of the funding burden.

The Canadian Federation of Students and the Canadian Federation of Students-Services were formed in 1981 to provide students with an effective and united voice, provincially and nationally. Today, more than 450,000 students from college and university students' unions across the country belong to the Federation.

Undergraduate Tuition Fees by Province

	1993-1994	2005-2006
Canada	\$2,023	\$4,214
NL	\$2,000	\$2,606
PEI	\$2,509	\$4,645
NS	\$2,701	\$6,281
NB	\$2,385	\$5,037
QC	\$1,550	\$1,900
ON	\$2,076	\$4,881
MB	\$2,272	\$3,272
SK	\$2,341	\$5,062
AB	\$2,209	\$5,125
BC	\$2,240	\$4,874

► **Take Action to Freeze the Fees on February 7, 2007**
www.cfs-fcee.ca

UNIVERSITIES OF

A CASE STUDY IN THE MILITARY-ACADEMIC COMPLEX

Criticism of partnerships between the University of Toronto, the military, and defence contractors has increased recently. In response, John R.G. Challis, DSc, FRSC, Vice-President, Research and Associate Provost, issued a dismissive *Report to Governing Council on Military Research at the University* on June 27, 2005. The report reiterates a key argument that is used to justify military-academic partnerships in Canadian universities, which is that the research doesn't have any *direct* military applications, so no harm done. These arguments miss the point that the harm is in the increasing militarization of Canadian culture, and our educational institutions in particular. Military research partnerships go hand in hand with recruitment of students for military service - they are really just two sides of the same coin. While this incident is specific to the University of Toronto, the issue is relevant for campuses throughout Canada, where similar military partnerships are occurring. Excerpts of Challis' report are included here:

"There is no policy within the university which limits research funding to certain sources. There are many areas of research funded by military sources. The U.S. Office of Army Research meets from time to time with academics across Canada to advise them of research funding opportunities.

"As of May 13th, 2005 the University has 11 active grants from Canadian or U.S. defense related sponsors. These are the Canadian Forces Personnel Support, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Partnership Program, Public Works and Government Services Canada, the National Aeronautics and Space Agency, NASA Astrophysics Data Program, and the United States Air Force. These grants include studies of nanosatellite formation flying... On average, over the past 10 years research supported through agencies such as those listed above averaged approximately \$1.7 million/year.

"Any attempt to restrict the sources of funding for research undertaken at the University is a form of censorship and an attack on the freedom of academic inquiry."

The full report is available online at www.research.utoronto.ca/about/pdf/GC_report.pdf



MASS DESTRUCTION

LESSONS LEARNED FROM CAMPAIGNING TO END MILITARY WEAPONS RESEARCH ON CAMPUS

by Randy Viscio



1. Do your homework by filing Access to Information requests and securing copies of University Contracts.
2. Get friendly science and economic faculty or others to assist you in interpreting the documents. Publish your findings.
3. Know your University: If they will talk and work with you that's great. If you know they won't, don't waste time attempting more than cordial dialogue. Know who is on your Board of Regents (or similar body) and identify them. They are most likely aligned with big corporations that benefit from the cheap labor of students.
4. Educate the student body through news publications, teach-ins, debates, guerilla theatre and rallies.
5. Timing is Everything: Initiate any direct actions early in the school year to ensure that you can maintain pressure throughout the year.
6. Secure MEANINGFUL concessions: Committees or decisions that have no "binding" power are relatively meaningless.
7. Use the threat or reality of lawsuits to gain concessions.
8. Be prepared to be in it for the long haul and pass your knowledge onto others. This is an ongoing process that will last longer than the time you are in school.
9. Discuss how you will deal with all the dynamics that will come into play when larger numbers of students decide to get involved, particularly if you have successful direct actions. Stay the course on your issue and don't get pulled off the subject

by people who want to go in other directions. Don't be afraid to ask people who are detracting for your issue to leave the group but also have an open mind.

10. Be willing to get arrested for your beliefs. Five or six students getting arrested can (and usually will) lead to large-scale involvement in your cause by those who would otherwise sit on the sidelines.

11. Develop a good balance of moral and economic arguments with the understanding that most people will respond to economic arguments over moral ones: remember, we live in a capitalist economy and we are brought up on a healthy dose of "money over morals."

12. Stay away from "killing is wrong" arguments. Most people don't agree.

13. Describe for people the kinds of weapons that are being developed and how those weapons kill people. They will make their own decision about whether or not that is something they want at their University.

14. Describe for people how funding from the military is not the only option and offer alternatives. At a minimum, argue that the University has the resources to seek other options and that you would be more than happy to be involved in that process if the University is serious about change.

15. There are plenty of arguments you can make about the amount of money being spent on war and weaponry as opposed to rising tuition.

16. Argue that students are unknowingly conducting research for the military. Most students and even some faculty have no clue that their research is funded by the military. Make them think about it.

Randy Viscio is an alumnus of the Student Environmental Action Coalition (US). He can be reached at rviscio@aol.com.



THE MYTHS OF WAR

WHY IS CANADA IN AFGHANISTAN?

A primary argument proponents of Canada's war in Afghanistan use is that "if we don't fight them over there, we will have to fight them over here." But, is this really true?

AFGHANISTAN AND 911: IS THERE REALLY A CONNECTION?

One of Prime Minister Stephen Harper's primary justifications for Canada's presence in Afghanistan is that "two dozen Canadians were killed" in the attacks on September 11, as he stated during the debate on the extension of Canada's military presence in Afghanistan on May 17, 2006. On this occasion and others, Harper argued that there is an Al Qaida - Taliban connection. His reasoning is that by fighting the Taliban, Canadian troops are fighting the perpetrators of September 11.

According to the FBI, Osama Bin Laden is "wanted in connection with the August 7, 1998, bombings of the United States embassies in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and Nairobi, Kenya. These attacks killed over 200 people. In addition, Bin Laden is a suspect in other terrorist attacks throughout the world." However, neither of their website's two pages dedicated to him make any mention of any suspected connection to the attacks of September 11 (www.fbi.gov/wanted/terrorists/terbinladen.htm & www.fbi.gov/wanted/topten/fugitives/laden.htm). If Bin Laden is a suspect in what happened on September 11, 2001, why does the FBI make no mention of such suspicions? If he is not connected to what happened on September 11, even if he was at some point in Afghanistan, what is Canada really doing there?

CANADA, AFGHANISTAN, & OPIUM

Heroin is derived from opium, and the RCMP notes that, "Afghanistan is the largest producer of opium in the world... In 2004, Afghanistan produced 4.2 metric tonnes of opium which represented 87 percent of worldwide production of this narcotic, an increase compared to 3.6 MT in 2003 and 3.4 MT in 2002." In other words, opium production in Afghanistan has been increasing dramatically since Canadian and other foreign troops began operations there in 2001. While there are many things to be critical of the Taliban for, one thing they had managed to do was nearly eradicate opium production in Afghanistan, and therefore cut off the world's largest supply. With the resurgent supply of opium, there is also an increase in the amount coming into Canada. The RCMP has observed that "Opium seizures in Canada have been rising steadily, indicating a greater flow of this substance on the Canadian market." Coincidence? You be the judge.

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Afghanistan Opium Production*	4,565	3,276	185	3,400	3,600	4,200

*Figures are in metric tonnes

According to the Criminal Intelligence Service Canada, "Heroin is a highly addictive drug that, in Canada, is used by between 25,000 to 50,000 addicts that reside mainly within urban centres, particularly Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal. It is estimated that between one or two tonnes of heroin is required annually to supply this illicit market."

Sources: UNODC World Drug Report August 2005 :

http://www.unodc.org/pdf/WDR_2005/volume_1_chap1_opium.pdf

http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/crimint/drugs_2004_e.htm#heroin

http://www.cisc.gc.ca/annual_reports/annualreport2005/heroin_2005_e.htm

WHY IS CANADA IN HAITI?

by the Canada Haiti Action Network

The current situation in Haiti, for which the Canadian government bears much responsibility, is characterized by political assassinations and imprisonments, the murder of peaceful protesters by police, the destruction of limited social programs and health care, and the repression of democratic activity.

The evidence shows that at every turn, Canada has declined every opportunity to uphold democracy in Haiti, while taking the lead in overthrowing the country's democratically elected government and legitimating a power grab by Haiti's wealthy elite.

Consequently, Canada finds itself in league with a grim roster of alumni from Reagan's murderous interventions in central America such as Roger Noriega, John Negroponte and Jesse Helms and on the wrong side of a war against Haiti's poor majority. Behind the mask of humanitarianism, Canada is carrying out a murderous and destructive foreign policy in Haiti.

THE COUP

With paramilitary forces controlling most of Haiti after a month of battles, US and Canadian military forces landed in Port-au-Prince, the nation's capitol. While Canada's Joint Task Force 2 (JTF2) secured the airstrip and 550 members of the Canadian military were stationed around Port-au-Prince, US diplomat Luis Moreno and several armed US Marines arrived at the presidential palace with an ultimatum for Jean Bertrand Aristide, the elected President of Haiti. According to Aristide, Moreno said that if he did not leave, thousands of Haitians would die, and Aristide would likely be killed by rebels.

POLICING

The Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) has had the task of reducing insecurity and protecting human rights. According to a Harvard Law School report, however, the UN forces have frequently done just the opposite: "MINUSTAH has effectively provided cover for the police to wage a campaign of terror in Port-au-Prince's slums. Even more distressing than MINUSTAH's complicity in HNP abuses are credible allegations of human rights abuses perpetrated by MINUSTAH itself."

Canada plays a major role in committing these abuses: Canadian advisors are present in the UN military command and RCMP police officer David Beer heads the 1,401 strong UN Civilian Police (CIVPOL) in charge of restructuring, training and monitoring the Haitian National Police (HNP); Canada has also contributed over 100 RCMP officers to CIVPOL. On numerous occasions, UN peacekeepers have stood by as HNP officers have opened fire on peaceful demonstrators.

Sources: www.outofhaiti.ca, www.canadahaitiaction.ca



Shocking Lancet Study: *8,000 Murders, 35,000 Rapes and Sexual Assaults in Haiti During U.S.-Backed Coup*

Regime After Aristide Ouster

By Democracy Now!, August 31, 2006

[http://www.canadahaitiaction.ca/
article.php?id=201](http://www.canadahaitiaction.ca/article.php?id=201)

Canada in Afghanistan

Top Ten Under-reported Facts

by MANA (the Media Alliance for New Activism)

The Canadian mainstream media has been promoting our role in Afghanistan, with almost no critical voices, despite polling that indicates between 48% to 62% of Canadians not only question but oppose our engagement of troops in this war-torn country (Ipsos-Reid, Mar. 4/06; Strategic Counsel/Globe and Mail, Feb. 24/06).

The 'post-Harper trip' polling results have been misrepresented because Strategic Counsel found that, while views had shifted due to a heightened campaign by the military and the media, 69% want a "debate to decide if our troops should stay in Afghanistan beyond next year" and 70% base their support on the misconception that our purpose is significantly more "peacekeeping than combat." In fact, the new polling finds that "52 per cent of Canadians say they are against a 10-year mission" (Globe and Mail, Mar. 14/06).

HERE ARE TEN VERIFIABLE FACTS THE MEDIA HAS AVOIDED

FACT #1: FORMER PRIME MINISTER JEAN CHRETIEN AND CANADIAN CORPORATIONS INVOLVED IN NATURAL GAS PIPELINE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH AFGHANISTAN, IN COOPERATION WITH REPRESSIVE GOVERNMENT

In 2002:

"An agreement has been signed in the Turkmen capital, Ashgabat, paving the way for construction of a gas pipeline from the Central Asian republic through Afghanistan to Pakistan. The building of the trans-Afghanistan pipeline has been under discussion for some years but plans have been held up by Afghanistan's unstable political situation... With improved regional security after the fall of the Taleban [sic] about a year ago, Afghanistan, Turkmenistan and Pakistan have decided to push ahead with plans for the ambitious 1,500-kilometre-long gas pipeline."

-- BBC News, Dec. 27, 2002

Available at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/2608713.stm

And in 2004:

"Jean Chretien is advisor to the Bennett Jones, a Calgary-based law firm specializing in energy issues. He is also consul in another law firm Heenan Blaikie. In addition, Chretien is international relations advisor to PetroKazakhstan Inc., an energy firm based in Calgary with major interests in Kazakhstan and Caspian."

-- News Central Asia, Sept. 4, 2004

Available at: <http://www.newscentralasia.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=876>

"During a meeting Friday [September 3, 2004] in Ashgabat, President Niyazov invited Oman and Canada to participate in oil and gas projects in Turkmenistan. He identified construction of Trans-Afghan Pipeline (TAP) and modernization of Seyidi refinery as two likely projects where Omani and Canadian firms could take part. A joint Omani-Canadian delegation including Yusuf bin Alavi, foreign minister of Oman and Jean Chretien, former prime minister of Canada, called on Niyazov to discuss cooperation in the energy and hydrocarbon sectors. ... [The Trans-Afghan Pipeline] would transport Turkmen natural gas to Pakistan through Afghanistan."

-- News Central Asia, Sept. 4, 2004

Available at: <http://www.newscentralasia.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=876>

"Headed by president-for-life Saparmurat Niyazov [sic], Turkmenistan remains one of the most repressive and closed countries in the world. Regressive government policies in education, culture, and health care caused increasing concern in the international community. ... [T]he overall human rights situation in Turkmenistan remains dismal."

-- Human Rights Watch, Jan. 18, 2006

Available at: <http://hrw.org/english/docs/2006/01/18/turkme12244.htm>

More on Chretien, Canadian Corporations, and the Caspian:

<http://www.newscentralasia.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=1140>

<http://www.newscentralasia.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=959>

FACT #2: CANADA'S DEFENCE MINISTER, GORDON O'CONNOR, IS A FORMER LOBBYIST FOR MILITARY CONTRACTORS

"The new defence minister is a retired general who once lobbied government on behalf of some big military contractors, a background which some find troubling. ... He went into business and in the 1990s became a senior associate at Hill and Knowlton, one of the world's largest public affairs firms. Up until February 2004 - when he left the firm to run in the June election - he was a registered lobbyist. He represented defence contractors such as Airbus Military, United Defense, General Dynamics Canada and BAE Systems as well as a variety of other, non-military clients."

-- Canadian Press, Feb. 5, 2006

Available at: <http://cnews.canoe.ca/CNEWS/Canada/2006/02/07/pf-1430220.html>

On General Dynamics:

"On September 1, 2005, [Defense Industry Daily] noted that General Dynamics had just become a second-source prime for small-caliber ammunition to the US military, as a result of the Army's small-caliber ammunition shortage. ... That award may be having ripple effects now, as General Dynamics has just entered a definitive agreement to acquire Canadian ammunition system integrator SNC Technologies Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of SNC-Lavalin Group Inc., for approximately \$275 million (CDN\$ 315 million). SNC Technologies supplies small, medium, and large-caliber ammunition and related products to armed forces and law enforcement agencies in North America. Products include its Simunition line, and customers include Canada and the U.S. Defense Department.... The company generated USD\$ 293 million in revenue in 2005, with EBITDA of approximately USD\$ 39.5 million."

-- Defense Industry Daily, Feb. 27, 2006

Available at: <http://www.defenseindustrydaily.com/2006/02/general-dynamics-looks-to-canada-for-ammo-related-acquisition/index.php>

On BAE Systems:

"BAE Systems Land & Armaments in York, PA has received a delivery order amount of \$187.3 million as part of a \$227.3 million firm-fixed-price contract for repair of desert damaged vehicles. [Defense Industry

Daily] has discussed the maintenance overhang facing US equipment as a result of use in Iraq and Afghanistan, and this is one small piece of that. Relevant systems manufactured by BAE Systems include M2/M3 Bradley Infantry Fighting Vehicles and the derivative M270 MLRS rocket artillery vehicles; M113 Armored Personnel Carriers, M88 Hercules armored recovery vehicles, M019 self-propelled howitzers, and the US Marines' AAV7 Amtracs amphibious armored vehicles."

-- Defense Industry Daily, Mar. 14, 2006

Available at: <http://www.defenseindustrydaily.com/2006/03/1873m-delivery-order-to-fix-desert-damaged-vehicles/index.php>

On the record:

"Having worked in an industry in the past does not constitute a conflict of interest in the present."

--Prime Minister Steven Harper; Canadian Press, Feb. 5, 2006

Available at: <http://cnews.canoe.ca/CNEWS/Canada/2006/02/07/pf-1430220.html>

FACT #3: CURRENT AFGHAN PARLIAMENT (ELECTED SEPTEMBER 2005) INCLUDES WARLORDS AND DRUG LORDS

"Human Rights Watch estimates that 60 percent of the new legislators have links to warlords. The New York-based rights group singled out Abdul Rasul Sayyaf, a powerful militia commander whose guns ravaged Kabul residents in the 1990s, and Mohammed Fahim, a former defense minister, who has been accused of war crimes. ... A European diplomat, who asked not to be named, reckoned that about 20 legislators still have active private militias and that at least 20 more have been involved in drug smuggling."

-- San Francisco Chronicle, Dec. 19, 2005

Available at: <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2005/12/19/MNGOEGA9T81.DTL>

U.S. President George W. Bush's official White House response to the elected Parliament:

"I congratulate the Afghan people and Afghan Government for today's successful parliamentary elections, which are a major step forward in Afghanistan's development as a democratic state governed by the rule of law."



-- Office of the Press Secretary, Sept. 18, 2005
Available at: <http://usinfo.state.gov/sa/Archive/2005/Sep/18-118686.html>

Commenting on the elections, Mark Schneider, Senior Vice President of International Crisis Group, had stated:

"It's not merely about drug money financing candidates. Drug lords are candidates."

-- Boston Globe, Oct. 20/04

Archived at: <http://opioids.com/afghanistan/heroin-economy.html>

"Abdul Karim Brahovie, Afghanistan's minister of tribal and frontier affairs, says that the government has become so full of drug smugglers that cabinet meetings have become a farce. 'Sometimes the people who complain the loudest about theft are thieves themselves,' he says."

-- Christian Science Monitor, May 13, 2005

Available at: <http://www.csmonitor.com/2005/0513/p01s04-wosc.html>

Canada's role in the Elections:

"... Canada will contribute through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) an additional \$5 million to support Afghanistan's [2005] parliamentary elections. This increase brings the total amount of CIDA funding for the election to \$13 million."

-- Canadian International Development Agency, Sept. 14, 2005

Available at: http://www.acdicida.gc.ca/cida_ind.nsf/0/3ec4084781ba14238525707c006f7a66?OpenDocument

FACT #4: AFGHAN WARLORDS CONSIDERED A BIGGER THREAT TO AFGHANISTAN'S SECURITY THAN THE TALIBAN

"The warlords and private militias who were once regarded as the west's staunchest allies in Afghanistan are now a greater threat to the country's security than the Taliban, according to the interim president, Hamid Karzai."

The Guardian, July 13, 2004

Available at: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/afghanistan/story/0,1284,1259689,00.html>

FACT #5: AFGHAN WOMEN FACING OPEN REPRESSION DESPITE THE SUPPOSED REMOVAL OF THE TALIBAN AND PRESENCE OF FOREIGN TROOPS

"An Afghan province has banned women from performing on television and radio, declaring female entertainers un-Islamic, a provincial official said

on Saturday. The ban in Nangahar, a southeastern province heavily patrolled by U.S.-led troops hunting for Islamic militants, took effect from Friday and also covers women presenters of news and other information, the official said."

-- Reuters, Apr. 17, 2004

Archived at: <http://www.rawa.org/ban-singer.htm>

"Afghan farmers prevented from growing poppies under a British-led eradication programme have been forced to hand over their daughters to drug traffickers to settle their debts, according to reports from Afghanistan. The claim is the latest in a series to dog the British effort to curb Afghanistan's opium industry. Opium dominates Afghanistan's economy, accounting for 60 per cent of its income. Critics say the country is turning into a narco-state under the noses of NATO peacekeeping forces, and of the Western governments involved in reconstruction."

-- The Independent (London), Oct. 3, 2005

Archived at: <http://www.rawa.org/opium5.htm>

Amnesty International states in 2005:

"Violence against women and girls in Afghanistan is pervasive; few women are exempt from the reality or threat of violence. Afghan women and girls live with the risk of: abduction and rape by armed individuals; forced marriage; being traded for settling disputes and debts; and face daily discrimination from all segments of society as well as by state officials. Strict societal codes, invoked in the name of tradition and religion, are used as justification for denying women the ability to enjoy their fundamental rights, and have led to the imprisonment of some women, and even to killings. Should they protest by running away, the authorities may imprison them."

-- Afghanistan: Women still under attack - a systematic failure to protect, May 30, 2005

Available at: <http://web.amnesty.org/library/index/engasa110072005>

FACT #6: ELECTED AFGHAN WOMAN FACES ONGOING DEATH THREATS FOR SPEAKING OUT AGAINST WARLORDS AND DRUG LORDS IN CURRENT GOVERNMENT

"As a new parliament opens in the Afghan capital, ... all eyes are on Malalai Joya, a 27-year-old woman, who has emerged as a fearless critic of the warlords that control the country. In 2003, Joya, then a women's literacy and health worker, had stood up at a public meeting to discuss the new constitution and denounced the factional leaders as 'criminals' who should be taken to the world court. Her speech earned her powerful enemies. Despite her immense popularity, which led to her winning the September election from the border province of Farah on her own steam, she rarely travels alone. She employs at least 12 security guards -- there have been at least four assassination attempts -- and is always seen in public wearing a burqa (veil that covers the body and face from head to toe)."

-- Inter Press Service News Agency, Dec. 18, 2005

Available at: <http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=31476>

“Women’s activist turned politician Malalai Joya ... picked up where she left off two years ago, condemning Afghanistan’s warlords, some of who now sit with her in the Parliament that convened Monday after three decades. ‘I can see them sitting here in this House,’ said Joya, who earned an international reputation when she spoke against warlords and drug smugglers in the Loya Jirga national meeting to discuss the country’s constitution in late 2003.”

-- Inter Press Service News Agency/Pajhwok Afghan News, Dec. 20, 2005

Available at: <http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=31501>

For more information:

BBC News: “Afghan rights advocate expects death”
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/3937891.stm

Defense Committee for Malalai Joya
<http://www.malalaijoya.com/>

FACT #7: SINCE THE U.S.-LED WAR BEGAN, AFGHANISTAN HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY DEPENDENT ON OPIUM POPPIES AND HEROIN FOR ITS ECONOMIC SURVIVAL

“The hardline Taliban regime, which ruled Afghanistan until 2001, greatly reduced opium poppy cultivation. However, under the rule of the new democratically elected president, Hamid Karzai, opium production is approaching record highs, with poppies now being grown in all of Afghanistan’s 32 provinces.”

-- CBC News, Nov. 18, 2004

Available at: <http://www.cbc.ca/story/world/national/2004/11/18/opium041118.html>

“Afghanistan has re-emerged since the U.S.-led war as the world’s leading source country for opium and heroin — rapidly returning to levels of the 1990s, when it produced about 70 percent of the world’s illicit opium supply, a U.N. report says. ... The U.N. report, issued Friday, said a half-million people are involved in Afghanistan’s trafficking chain and

estimated an annual income at \$25 billion, despite a ban on opium production put in place by Afghan President Hamid Karzai.”

-- The Washington Times, Aug. 11, 2003

<http://www.washtimes.com/national/20030811-100220-8928r.htm>

“The United Nations estimated that 323,700 acres in Afghanistan were dedicated to opium last year [2004]. That marks a 64 percent increase over the figure for 2003. The U.S. government’s estimate was even higher: 5.1 million acres, a 239 percent increase over its 2003 figure. The United Nations says Afghanistan produced nearly 90 percent of the world’s opium and the drug accounted for more than 60 percent of the country’s gross domestic product.”

-- Associate Press / MSNBC.com, Jan. 25, 2005

Available at: <http://msnbc.msn.com/id/6867458/>

“To call Afghanistan a third world country exaggerates its wealth. A stunning 70% of its people are undernourished: in a typical developing country this is 25%. Infant mortality is almost twice the third world average. Today, some two million Afghans rely on opium poppies for their livelihood, generating \$2.7bn of illegal wealth. They will not give this up readily, nor will the farmers whose desire to feed their families is stronger than their desire to placate NATO.”

-- The Scotsman (Scotland’s National Newspaper), Jan. 29, 2006

Available at: <http://news.scotsman.com/topics.cfm?tid=230&id=144412006>

“‘There is a danger that all the stabilization and reconstruction efforts will be neutralized unless the narco trafficking problem is addressed,’ says Ursula Müller, political counselor at the German Embassy in Washington. ‘We have to fight this corruption ... those guys involved in the drug business [who] are in all levels of Afghanistan’s government,’ adds Ms. Müller, who has been actively involved in rebuilding Afghanistan since the US toppled the Taliban in late 2001... But the opium trade is deeply rooted in Afghan society. Many regional warlords and opponents of the Taliban are now top officials in the Karzai government. One of the most complicated - and delicate - tasks is to get corrupt officials to turn away from the drug trade as a source of personal income.”

-- Christian Science Monitor, May 13, 2005

Available at: <http://www.csmonitor.com/2005/0513/p01s04-wosc.html>

FACT #8: U.S. AND COALITION FORCES ARE USING EXCESSIVE FORCE AND ARBITRARY DETENTION IN AFGHANISTAN

U.S.-based Human Rights Watch, which recommended “additional troops” in Afghanistan in July 2003, admits the following about conditions in 2005: “U.S. and coalition forces active in Afghanistan under Operation Enduring Freedom since November 2001, continue to arbitrarily detain civilians and use excessive force during arrests of non-combatants. Ordinary civilians arrested in military operations are unable to challenge the legal basis for their detention or obtain hearings before an adjudicative body. They have no access to legal counsel. Generally, the United States does not comply with legal standards applicable to its operations in Afghanistan, including the Geneva Conventions and other applicable standards of international human rights law. At least six detainees in U.S. custody in Afghanistan have been killed since 2002. U.S. Department of Defense documents show that five of the six deaths were homicides.”

-- Human Rights Watch World Report 2006, p. 226

Available at: <http://hrw.org/wr2k6/>

“From 2002 to [2004], Human Rights Watch estimates that at least one thousand Afghans and other nationals have been arrested and detained by U.S.-led forces in Afghanistan... There are numerous reports that U.S. forces have used excessive or indiscriminate force when conducting arrests in residential areas in Afghanistan. As shown in this report, U.S. military forces have repeatedly used deadly force from helicopter gunships and small and heavy arms fire, including undirected suppressing fire, during what are essentially lawenforcement operations to arrest persons in uncontested locales. The use of these tactics has resulted in avoidable civilian deaths and injuries, and in individual cases may amount to violations of international humanitarian law. Human Rights Watch has also documented that Afghan soldiers deployed alongside U.S. forces have beaten and otherwise mistreated people during arrest operations and looted homes or seized the land of those being detained.”

-- Human Rights Watch Report, Mar. 8, 2004

Available at: <http://hrw.org/reports/2004/afghanistan0304/>

Recent Examples:

“In early May 2005, sixteen [Afghan] protesters were killed by police and army troops during violent demonstrations in several cities in response to reports of U.S. interrogators desecrating a copy of the Koran during interrogations at Guantanamo Bay.”

-- Human Rights Watch World Report 2006, p. 220

Available at: <http://hrw.org/wr2k6/>

“A US air raid in Afghanistan’s rugged eastern mountains killed 17 civilians, including women and children, an Afghan official said yesterday. The US military confirmed civilian deaths but said the numbers were unclear.”

-- The Toronto Star / Associated Press, July 5, 2005

Available at: http://www.thestar.com/NASApp/cs/ContentServer?pagename=thestar/Layout/Article_Type1&c=Article&cid=1120513810320&call_pageid=968332188854&col=968350060724

FACT #9: CANADA COMPLICIT IN THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS FOR THE ‘WAR ON TERROR’

“U.S. partners such as Britain and Canada compounded the lack of human rights leadership by trying to undermine critical international protections. Britain sought to send suspects to governments likely to torture them based on meaningless assurances of good treatment. Canada sought to dilute a new treaty outlawing enforced disappearances.”

-- Human Rights Watch, Press Release, Jan. 18, 2006

Available at: http://hrw.org/english/docs/2006/01/13/global12428_txt.htm

FACT #10: U.S. TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY SPENT NEARLY FOUR YEARS ASSESSING AFGHANISTAN’S OIL AND GAS RESERVES AND FOUND MORE THAN EXPECTED IN 2006

“Two geological basins in northern Afghanistan hold 18 times the oil and triple the natural gas resources previously



photo: Himy Syed

thought, scientists said Tuesday as part of a U.S. assessment aimed at enticing energy development in the war-torn country. Nearly 1.6 billion barrels of oil, mostly in the Afghan-Tajik Basin, and about 15.7 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, mainly in the Amu Darya Basin, could be tapped, said the U.S. Geological Survey and Afghanistan’s Ministry of Mines and Industry... The \$2-million US assessment, paid for by the U.S. Trade and Development Agency, was nearly four years in the making, said Daniel Stein, the agency’s regional director for Europe and Eurasia. The total area assessed was only about one-sixth of the two basins’ 518,000 square kilometres that lie within Afghanistan.”

-- Associated Press, March 14, 2006

Available at: <http://cnews.canoe.ca/CNEWS/Science/2006/03/14/1488187-ap.html>

A NEED FOR INDEPENDENT FACTS AND MEDIA:

This overview was originally inspired by the fact that the Toronto Star, one of Canada’s largest, most respected, and ‘liberal’ newspapers, had decided to only have one external link from its ‘Special Report’ section on Afghanistan - *to the Department of National Defence*. When the mainstream media only provide government information and rely on government links and officials for the whole story, they are no longer objective, independent, or critical. That is why the public must respond with facts and action. Produced by members of the Media Alliance for New Activism (MANA), a pan-Canadian network of over 50 independent media groups. On the web: www.independentmedia.ca

IF YOU WISH TO ACT:

Those critical of our role in Afghanistan, and those dedicated to non-military solutions to global conflict need to make their voices collectively heard. For more details on public actions in your community or neighbourhood, please contact:

The Canadian Peace Alliance / L’Alliance Canadienne Pour La Paix. www.acp-cpa.ca

WAR IS A RACKET

By Major General Smedley Butler, 1935

WAR is a racket. It always has been.

It is possibly the oldest, easily the most profitable, surely the most vicious. It is the only one international in scope. It is the only one in which the profits are reckoned in dollars and the losses in lives.

A racket is best described, I believe, as something that is not what it seems to the majority of the people. Only a small "inside" group knows what it is about. It is conducted for the benefit of the very few, at the expense of the very many. Out of war a few people make huge fortunes.

In the World War [I] a mere handful garnered the profits of the conflict. At least 21,000 new millionaires and billionaires were made in the United States during the World War. That many admitted their huge blood gains in their income tax returns. How many other war millionaires falsified their tax returns no one knows.

How many of these war millionaires shouldered a rifle? How many of them dug a trench? How many of them knew what it meant to go hungry in a rat-infested dug-out? How many of them spent sleepless, frightened nights, ducking shells and shrapnel and machine gun bullets? How many of them parried a bayonet thrust of an enemy? How many of them were wounded or killed in battle?

Out of war nations acquire additional territory, if they are victorious. They just take it. This newly acquired territory promptly is exploited by the few – the selfsame few who wrung dollars out of blood in the war. The general public shoulders the bill.

And what is this bill?

This bill renders a horrible accounting. Newly placed gravestones. Mangled bodies. Shattered minds. Broken hearts and homes. Economic instability. Depression and all its attendant miseries. Back-breaking taxation for generations and generations.

For a great many years, as a soldier, I had a suspicion that war was a racket; not until I retired to civil life did I fully realize it. Now that I see the international war clouds gathering, as they are today, I must face it and speak out.

There are 40,000,000 men under arms in the world today, and our statesmen and diplomats have the temerity to say that war is not in the making.

Hell's bells! Are these 40,000,000 men being trained to be dancers?

Yes, they are getting ready for another war. Why shouldn't they? It pays high dividends.

But what does it profit the men who are killed? What does it profit their mothers and sisters, their wives and their sweethearts? What does it profit their children?

What does it profit anyone except the very few to whom war means huge profits?

Wikipedia Bio: Smedley Butler was a Major General in the U.S. Marine Corps and, at the time of his death, the most decorated Marine in U.S. history. Butler was awarded the Medal of Honor twice during his career, one of only 19 people to be awarded the medal twice. He was noted for his outspoken non-interventionist views and his book War is a Racket, one of the first works describing the military-industrial complex. Butler was known for his outspoken lectures against war profiteering and what he viewed as nascent fascism in the United States. His book War is a Racket (1935), from which the above excerpt is taken, presents a highly critical view of the profit motive behind warfare. The full text of War is a Racket is online at: www.activistmagazine.com/~122

“I spent 33 years and four months in active military service and during that period I spent most of my time as a high class muscle man for Big Business, for Wall Street and the bankers. In short, I was a racketeer, a gangster for capitalism.”

- Smedley Butler

DEPLETED DEMOCRACY



UrANIUM WEAPONS IN AFGHANISTAN

Afghanistan: The Nuclear Nightmare Starts

When questions were asked in the British Parliament a year ago about whether DU weapons had been used in the military strikes on Afghanistan, defence minister Geoff Hoon played his cards close to his chest. "No British forces currently engaged in operations around Afghanistan are armed with depleted uranium ammunition. However, we do not rule out the use of depleted uranium ammunition in Afghanistan, should its penetrative capability be judged necessary in the future."

He did not rule out the use of DU by the United States.

When the Afghan crisis began, many of us believed that a great amount of DU/dirty uranium would be used to achieve the US-British campaign objectives, both to penetrate the opposition's hideouts in rocky terrain and to test new weapons systems.

Startling report

A new report based on research in Afghanistan indicates that our worst fears have been realized. The study, produced by the Uranium Medical Research Centre (UMRC), points to the likelihood of large numbers of the population being exposed to uranium dust and debris.

Dr. Asaf Durakovic, a professor of nuclear medicine and radiology and a former science adviser to the US military, who set up the independent UMRC, has been testing US, British, and Canadian troops and civilians for DU and uranium poisoning over the past few years.

A scientific study team was sent to Jalalabad region, Nangarhar Province in Afghanistan in the aftermath of the conflict in 2001-02. This area was a strategic target zone for operation Enduring Freedom high and low altitude, precision guided-bombing and first time deployment of bunker busting and seismic shock warheads.

The UMRC field team identified several hundred people suffering from illnesses and medical conditions displaying complex clinical symptoms similar to those of Gulf War Veterans. Urine and soil samples were collected and sent to an independent science research lab in the UK. The results were astounding. Every person donating urine specimens tested positive for Uranium internal contamination, with concentrations of toxic and radioactive uranium isotopes between 100 and 400 times greater than in tests on Gulf War veterans in 1999.

The study was extended in September when a second team returned, this time to Kabul, Mazar-I-Sharif, Tora Bora, Kndahar and Jalalabad. Samples were taken from bomb craters, market squares, gardens, farms, watercourses etc adjacent to bombed targets. 30% of the members of families interviewed displayed medical problems, and examinations of new-borns showed congenital effects of contamination.

Appeal

The results of study will be distributed to the governments of Afghanistan, NATO countries and the United Nations. However, it costs \$1000 to test each sample due to the specialised equipment required, and UMRC needs to raise this amount for 40 samples from this second study. To find out more and to help with finances, contact info@UMRC.net, or look at website www.UMRC.net.

http://www.cadu.org.uk/info/countries/13_1.htm

DU IS AGAINST THE LAW

"Over the past few years, several random surveys of CF members have shown that their self-reported health status appears to be poorer in some ways than the general Canadian population of the same age and sex. The reasons for this are not well understood, though there is evidence that some of it may be attributable to the effect of previous deployments." Operational Health Info for CF Members, http://www.forces.gc.ca/health/information/op_health/op_apollo/engraph/op_apollo_intro_e.asp

The August 2002 report by the UN Human Rights Commission-Sub 2 listed the following laws breached by the use of DU shells and bombs by US-UK in four countries (Iraq, Bosnia, FRY, and Afghanistan):

- the Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907
 - the Geneva Protocol of 1925.
 - the Nuremberg principles of 1945
 - the Charter of the United Nations
 - the Anti-Genocide Convention of 1948
 - the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948
 - the four Geneva Conventions of 1949
 - the Convention Against Torture
 - its Additional Protocol I and II 1977
 - the Conventional Weapons Convention of 1980
 - the UN Human Right Commission / Sub 2 resolution of 1996
- <http://nucnews.net/nucnews/2003nn/0304nn/030413nn.htm#016>*

Scientists uncover radioactive trail in Afghanistan

by Stephanie Hiller, Awakened Woman Magazine

“Astounding” levels of uranium in the urine of Afghan civilians

Four months after the attacks in Afghanistan by the US and its allies, under the banner of Operation Enduring Freedom, a team of Canadian scientists led by former US Army adviser Dr. Asaf Durakovic, went to the battlefields to test Afghan civilians for evidence of depleted uranium. What they found shocked them.

Instead of depleted uranium, they found medically significant levels of non-depleted uranium in the urine of 100 percent of civilians tested, who live near bomb sites -- 400% to 2000% higher than the normal population baseline. Where did it come from?

Uranium does exist in nature. But all of the likely natural sources -- anomalous geological and agricultural conditions, uranium extracted from weapons production cycles, pottery, uranium mining -- were ruled out. While Al-Qaeda had small nuclear weapons, it did not have the means to deliver them. The uranium had to come from weaponry used during the recent war.

Non-depleted uranium, explains the first of two reports by the medical team, is the feed stock of the enrichment phase of the fuel and weapons development cycles. “NDU” is more radioactive than depleted uranium, whose use, beginning with the first Gulf war, has stirred considerable controversy, with government sources generally insisting that it is relatively innocuous. Nevertheless, more than 221,000 American soldiers are now on disability due to severe war-related symptoms attributed to the mysterious “Gulf War Syndrome” and a growing legion of independent scientists and war vets, among them former Army health physicist Doug Rokke and independent researcher Dai Williams, have marshalled stunning evidence that depleted uranium is the cause.

NDU is arguably not significantly more dangerous than DU; speakers at a panel discussion on uraniums weaponry held in Oakland, CA, last December 4, including Patricia Axelrod and Leuren Moret, argue that the issue of nondepleted uranium is nothing more than a red herring to distract attention from concerns about DU. But if the use of NDU indicates experimental application of new nuclear weapons, as the UMRC suggests, then it should alert the public that proliferation of small nuclear weaponry, proposed for some future use, has in fact already begun.

At the six sites studied by the UMRC research team -- two in Kabul, and others in villages South East of the city -- some type of bunker buster bombs had been employed to penetrate multiple levels of concrete and explode under buildings or in the subterranean tunnels Al Qaeda had used as military installations. In all but one location, the hits were accurate. Bombs penetrated roofs without exploding -- “a clue to the weapons’ sophistication” -- in some cases puncturing

ing through concrete floors before detonating. At the Yaka Root Radio Station, “the blast traveled through the walls, destroying equipment stored outside and damaging adjoining buildings and trees. No fire or heat effects were observed in the buildings or on the combustible materials (trees and wooden structures) outside the buildings.”

Subjects interviewed reported large, dense dust clouds and smoke plumes rising from the point of impact, an acrid smell, followed by burning of the nasal passages, throat and upper respiratory tract.

Reports of that study and a subsequent one by the Uranium Medical Research Center in Canada are posted at the UMRC’s web site. The author of the second study, Tedd Weyman, concludes his report with the following story:

In Bibimahro, a large suburban neighborhood in Southern Kabul, the Coalition attacked a government radar installation on a steep hill above the suburb. But they missed.

At 5:30 AM, Mr. Saheeb Daad and his 12-year-old son were returning from prayers at the mosque. “Mr. Daad hears an odd, revolving or whirling sound. It is a strange mechanical sound coming from above and rapidly increasing in volume. . . As Mr. Daad and Hussein approach their home, a brilliant green flash suddenly bursts out of the ground. It blinds them and is instantly followed by an explosion and pressure wave -- knocking the boy and his father to the ground.

“After regaining their orientation from the shock, they find they are uninjured. They quickly rise to their feet and run towards their house -- a mud brick, one story structure where Mrs. Daad is preparing the morning meal and Hussein’s younger brothers are still sleeping.

The neighbour’s house -- which shared a common brick wall with the Daad’s -- is nothing but a low pile of rubble, roofing materials and bodies. The Daad’s house is still mostly intact; except for one room. In horror, they discover that nothing remains of the children’s sleeping room. It is flattened to rubble just like the neighbour’s house. Buried under the remains are Mr. Daad’s two youngest sons. Entangled in the remains of the neighbour’s house are eight bodies -- mother, grandmother and six little girls.

“By this time the neighbours have filed into the street. People rush to look for survivors and pull out the bodies. Mr. Daad digs through the remains of their house to rescue his two young sons. They died in his arms as the sun rose over the mountain.

“The neighbour’s house received the rocket’s impact directly. Nothing remains to indicate that a house sat on this lot a few minutes earlier.

“No one heard the attack plane . . . Tactical

fighter bombers, AC-130 gun-ships and A-10 Warthogs fly at low altitudes, often only 25 to 30 meters. They work their way through valleys, between hills and mountains so their engines' sounds will follow them rather than precede them. . .

"Kabul was occupied by US and British Special Forces troops by this time. There was no local resistance to the OEF air and ground forces, nor were there reports of anti-aircraft defensive responses. Government military facilities were abandoned . . . The approach and backdrop to the Bibimahro Tapa installation is surrounded by densely populated, residential neighborhoods, including a hospital . . .

"It wasn't a large weapon. The angle of entry was about 35 degrees. The crater is shallow, perhaps a meter deep and 4 to 5 meters in diameter. This bomb would be considered small compared to the 6 meter deep by 30-meter diameter craters we investigated elsewhere. Rather than a high explosive, fragmentation or thermobaric weapon, designed for maximum body count, it was one of the new generations of "precision-destruction" warheads, intended to destroy "hard targets" and avoid collateral damage. But in Bibimahro that day, the immediate effects were not so discriminating. . .

Awakened Woman talked with Tedd Weyman by telephone in December. He explained that this nondepleted uranium is some 70 percent higher in quantity of radioactive U-235 than depleted uranium. "But that's not really the issue," he said.

"The issue is that there's more than one stockpile of metallurgical sources being used for large bunker-buster heavyweight weapons -- a different type of bomb" than depleted uranium weaponry, and much bigger. He acknowledged that "since there's been no disclosure" by Coalition forces, the evidence is circumstantial. But the bomb craters are particularly radioactive, as are the rice fields in the immediate area of the bombing, whereas kilometers away levels are much lower.

"So the people who were there during the bombing, who inhaled the dust, they have very high levels being excreted in their urine, which is an indication that they've inhaled a tremendous amount."

From the description in the reports, these bombs sound like the Nuclear Penetrator Missiles discussed in Bush's Nuclear Posture Review in March, 2002, which the Administration said they were going to test.

"Yes," said Weyman, "exactly."

And they tested them . . . in Afghanistan?

"Yes, that's my hunch. We tested the prototypes there.

"Whether they have continued to use them we will soon know in Iraq, because we've collected materials from similar bomb craters in Iraq."

"Is it worse than depleted uranium?"

"It's equally bad. The term depleted reduces the psychic impact." However, "there's evidence coming out of the Defense Department well before they started using

these [DU] weapons that it's toxic and it is dangerous. It's only in the last ten years that they've played this game, downplaying the medical significance of these weapons."

Depleted uranium was first used during the Persian Gulf War. It has since been used in the Balkans, and huge amounts have been used in the recent war on Iraq.

Numerous independent scientists at the Uranium Weapons Conference held last October in Hamburg, Germany, testified to the huge increase in birth deformities and cancers wherever DU has been used. At a meeting of the International Court Tribunal for Afghanistan held last December in Tokyo, the court ruled that the US was guilty of multiple war crimes in Afghanistan, among them the use of depleted uranium which is illegal by international law.

"This may sound overly dramatic," said Weymann, "but why don't they go there and be present with [these weapons]? People will not sniff the dust that these weapons have contaminated. Yet they will quite willingly say it won't hurt the civilians. It's just a hypocrisy..."

Other agencies associated with governments and even with the UN continue to downplay the health effects of uranium weaponry.

"We're under attack constantly, from the United Nations Environmental Program, the Defense Departments in Canada and Britain, by people that they finance -- so called DU activists that they've funded -- that we're manufacturing this just to get attention.

"But we're about to invite the UNEP -- to provide GPS coordinates for all these bombsites and to accompany them, to arrange translators for them, because they say they won't look for it until they know where the bomb sites are. So we have them all identified -- over 10,000 bomb sites we have coordinates for. I'm not saying they're all contaminated but we can provide them for them. They can bring their instruments, they can test them in their labs. Our material's all been published in scientific journals like Military Med Journal in the United States. We're not here to play games. We're here to do serious scientific investigations."

Depleted or not depleted, these types of weapons on detonation release a radioactive dust which, when inhaled, goes into the body and stays there. "It has a half life of 4.5 billion years. Basically it's a permanently available contaminant, distributed in the environment, where dust storms or any water nearby can disperse it. It's a heat formed, ceramicized, insoluble that stays in the body for the remainder of the life of the person who imbibed it and so its effects are much different than if it was sitting on the ground beside you. It's releasing subatomic particles that slice through DNA inside the body. So whatever cells are

adjacent to those particles, they're all at risk. Self repair mechanisms fail, the cells mutate, and from there you get precancerous tissues. So this is well established scientifically although they say there's no reported case of DU causing cancer. But that's like saying there's no reported case of a jack knife in your purse having killed somebody so therefore all jackknives don't kill. It's doubletalk."

At the Uranium Weapons Conference, Dr. Jawad Al-Ali, a British-trained oncologist showed a PowerPoint demonstration that can be viewed at the conference web site, including photographs of the kinds of birth deformities and tumors he has been seeing at the Saddam Teaching Hospital in Basra, where cancer had increased dramatically before the recent war. In 1989 there were 11 abnormalities per 100,000 births; in 2001 there were 116 per 100,000. In 1988, 34 people died of cancer; in 1998, 450 died of cancer; in 2001 there were 603 cancer deaths.

We may never know how many more cancers will result from the last Iraq war because, as Dr. April Hurley has testified, all the records disappeared during the war.

In any case, the possible use of new nuclear weapons in the attack on Afghanistan signifies that the Nuclear Posture Review announced in March 2002, six months after Operation Enduring Freedom, is already in effect. From nuclear exchanges in video games and "nuking" food in the microwave to depleted uranium and nuclear penetrator missiles, the public is gradually being prepared to accept the fact that the use of nuclear arms is becoming "business as usual" in 21st century warfare.

*Please see the report from the ICTA at
www.awakenedwoman.com/icta.htm/*

For more information on DU and non-DU:

"America's Dirty Secret" by Robert James Parsons in Le Monde Diplomatique at <http://www.mondediplo.com/2002/03/03uranium>

"Iraqi Cancers, birth defects blamed on U.S. depleted uranium," by Larry Johnson, in the Seattle Post-Intelligencer, <<http://seattlepi.nwsource.com/printer2/index.asp?plc=b&crefer=http://seattlepi.nwsource.com/national/95178.du12.shtml>>

"Project Afghanistan" at Uranium Medical Research Center <http://www.umrc.net>

Uranium Weapons Conference <http://www.uraniumweaponsconference.de>

Traprock Peace, <http://www.traprockpeace.org>

Helen Caldicott's new Nuclear Policy Research Organization (see especially the report "Depleted Uranium: Scientific Basis for Assessing Risk) <http://www.nuclearpolicy.org>

Uranium Medical Research Centre
<http://www.umrc.net/>

Discounted Casualties: The Human Cost of Depleted Uranium by Akira Tashiro
http://www.chugoku-np.co.jp/abom/uran/booksale_e.html





RECRUITING CANADA



ACT for the Earth contingent at a Toronto anti-war march. Photo: Himy Syed



OPERATION CONNECTION: THE LOOMING EXPLOSION OF RECRUITMENT IN CANADA

“The government’s plan is to continue to increase the number recruited by 1,000 every year so that by the year 2011, some 12,000 new regular force and reservists will join the Forces annually.”

- Bob Bergen, Ph.D., Research Fellow with the Canadian Defence & Foreign Affairs Institute (CDFAI) in Calgary. *

“Recruiting is everybody’s business. I expect every sailor, soldier, airman and airwoman to recognize their role as a potential CF recruiter...”

- General Rick Hillier, Chief of the Defence Staff

In February 2006, at the Annual General Meeting of the Conference of Defence Associations, General Rick Hillier laid out the Canadian Forces’ ambitious plan for the exponential growth of military recruiting across Canada. Included below are excerpts from his speech.

“[W]e need a culture and an approach that is radically different for how we recruit and how we train to take us much further than the approaches of these past years. I remain puzzled as to with the excitement that we offer in the Canadian Forces to young men and women, the security that we provide for jobs, the challenge that we give, the training and education that we ensure and the salary and benefits that we offer, I remain puzzled as to why every single Canadian — man and woman coming out of high school, college or university — does not want, does not seek to join us. If you want to go sail the seven seas in the most high tech ships in the world, you come see us, you can do that. If you want to fly high performance aircraft, something like the CF-18... we have to get back into advertising.

“We’ve got to make recruiting every service man and woman’s business and I mean this. Going from 300 recruiters at present to very quickly 30,000 recruiters and then eventually to 80,000 recruiters touching every community, geographical and ethnic, in Canada. And we’re moving from a passive approach on recruiting where essentially we sat around waiting for you to come to us to a more active and aggressive one...”

“It means using a hub and spoke recruiting system here. Take those recruiting centres and give them all the tools they need to be effective and use that as the hub, and then use the spokes as mobile recruiting centres, every man and woman in uniform, and in particular step to our reserve units

to become the way we reach into every neighbourhood across this country and reach into those populations that I’ve talked about.

“It means a different look and approach to offering... many things the United States Forces are doing, offering many things like that.

“We’ve got to look at the thing in a different dynamic and maybe we want to go and seek with Citizenship and Immigration Canada, maybe we want to go and seek with them an agreement that if landed immigrants join the Canadian Forces they have an accelerated route to citizenship in our great country. We have to come at this in an entirely new approach. Our approach has got to be recruit a family and recruit a nation.

“We’ve got to focus, for example, on the major events across Canada where almost a half of our country’s population in one year go... we’re going to focus on seven big events across Canada as an operation under Canada Command:”

- Pacific National Exhibition; [Vancouver]
- Calgary Stampede;
- Canadian National Exhibition; [Toronto]
- Canada Day, Ottawa;
- Carnaval in Quebec City;
- Nova Scotia Tattoo;
- Grey Cup Game, Ottawa

Source: www.cda-cdai.ca/CDA_GMs/AGM69/Hillier.pdf

“The goal of Op CONNECTION is to fill recruiting centres with viable applicants.”

“CF is planning on participating in “hundreds of events and activities” including “festivals, ship tours, school visits, vehicle displays, employment fairs, air shows, sporting events”. These have already included

*www.cdfai.org/bergenarticles/Mar.22.2006%20Baby%20boomers%20and%20Canadian%20Forces%20recruitment.pdf



“the Powell River Career Fair in B.C.; the Bon Soo Winter Festival in Sault Ste Marie, Ont.; the Canadian Engineering Competition in Montréal; the World Pond Hockey Tournament in New Brunswick; the Marine Institute Career Fair in St. John’s” as well as the Greatest SNOW on Earth, the Ontario Winter Carnival in the Sault Ste. Marie area.

“CF has prepared “senior leaders briefing packages prepared by CF Recruiting Group for Op CONNECTION. More than 350 packages with accompanying video presentation and speaking notes have been sent to senior leaders across the country.

“Soldiers are being told to wear their uniforms on the bus, and to tell passengers about the wonders of joining the military. Suggestions include: “Telephone your children’s schools or your grandmother’s seniors’ residence and ask if you and/or your unit could be of help planning a Canadian Forces Day event or setting up a Remembrance Day program or arranging a tour of a local military museum.”

- www.forces.gc.ca/hr/cfpn/engraph/3_06/3_06_admhrmil_op-connection_e.asp

MILITARY INTEGRATION WITH THE U.S.

“A key factor of the DND’s (Department of National Defence) strategy over the next 5 years and beyond is to “Manage our interoperability relationship with the US and other allies to permit seamless operational integration at short notice” DND also aims to make joining the military a “career of choice”. The aim is to “Position Defence as a rewarding, flexible and progressive workplace that builds professional teams of innovative and highly skilled men and women dedicated to accomplishing the mission.”

- www.cds.forces.gc.ca/pubs/strategy2K/s2k07_e.asp

REBRANDING THE MILITARY AS YOUR KIND OF JOB

“DND’s recruitment strategy focuses on, “Improved advertising and attraction by “branding” the CF as an “employer of choice”... Establishment of effective relationships and partnerships with educational institutions and guidance counsellors... The CF must also commit itself to cultivating professional relations with a broad range of education institutions, whose programs impact upon the profession of arms.”

- www.forces.gc.ca/hr/docs/hrmil-docs/pdf/hr2020_e.pdf

Rights of Recruits

Canadian Soldiers and the National Defence Act

As the numbers of soldiers questioning the war within the Canadian Forces rises, more will need help navigating the legal and political mazes to find their way to peace. A good place to start seeking legal assistance is with Lawyers Against the War, www.LawyersAgainstTheWar.org. The *National Defence Act* sets out the laws which apply to soldiers in the Canadian Forces. Included here are excerpts, which are worthwhile for counter-recruiters to familiarize themselves with.

14. The Canadian Forces are the armed forces of Her Majesty raised by Canada and consist of one Service called the Canadian Armed Forces.

20. (1) Commissions of officers in the Canadian Forces shall be granted by Her Majesty during pleasure.

Obligation to serve

23.(1) The enrolment of a person binds the person to serve in the Canadian Forces until the person is, in accordance with regulations, lawfully released.”

29.13(1) The Chief of the Defence Staff is not bound by any finding or recommendation of the Grievance Board.

Release

Entitlement

30. (1) Except during an emergency, an officer or non-commissioned member who is not on active service is entitled to be released at the expiration of the term of service for which the officer or non-commissioned member is enrolled or re-engaged.

Effect of illegal absence

(2) Except as may be prescribed in regulations made by the Governor in Council, any period during which an officer or non-commissioned member is in a state of desertion or is absent without leave shall not be reckoned toward the completion of the term of service for which that officer or non-commissioned member was enrolled or re-engaged.

Exception in emergency or when on active service: (3) Where the term of service for which an officer or non-commissioned member is enrolled or re-engaged expires during an emergency or when the officer or non-commissioned member is on active service or within one year after the expiration of an emergency or after he has ceased to be on active service, the officer or non-commissioned member is liable to serve until the expiration of one year after the emergency has ceased to exist or after he has ceased to be on active service, as the case may be.

Active Service

Placing forces on active service

31. (1) The Governor in Council may place the Canadian Forces or any component, unit or other element thereof or any officer or non-commissioned member thereof on active service anywhere in or beyond Canada at any time when it appears advisable to do so

(a) by reason of an emergency, for the defence of Canada;

(b) in consequence of any action undertaken by Canada under the United Nations Charter; or

(c) in consequence of any action undertaken by Canada under the North Atlantic Treaty, the North American Aerospace Defence Command Agreement or any other similar instrument to which Canada is a party.

When officers and non-commissioned members deemed on active service

(2) An officer or non-commissioned member who

(a) is a member of, serving with, or attached or seconded to, a component, unit or other element of the Canadian Forces that has been placed on active service,

(b) has been placed on active service, or

(c) pursuant to law has been attached or seconded to a portion of a force that has been placed on active service, shall be deemed to be on active service for all purposes.

Proclamation for meeting of Parliament

32. Whenever the Governor in Council places the Canadian Forces or any component or unit thereof on active service, if Parliament is then separated by an adjournment or prorogation that will not expire within ten days, a proclamation shall be issued for the meeting of Parliament within ten days, and Parliament shall accordingly meet and sit on the day appointed by the proclamation, and shall continue to sit and act in like manner as if it had stood adjourned or prorogued to the same day.

Service

Liability in case of regular force

33. (1) The regular force, all units and other elements thereof and all officers and non-commissioned members thereof are at all times liable to perform any lawful duty.

44. The personal belongings and decorations of an officer or non-commissioned member who is absent without leave that are found in camp, quarters or otherwise in the care or custody of the Canadian Forces vest in Her Majesty and shall be disposed of

Cadet Organizations

Formation

46. (1) The Minister may authorize the formation of cadet organizations under the control and supervision of the Canadian Forces to consist of persons of not less than twelve years of age who have not attained the age of nineteen years.

Training, administration, provision and command

(2) The cadet organizations referred to in subsection (1) shall be trained for such periods, administered in such manner and provided with materiel and accommodation under such conditions, and shall be subject to the authority and command of such officers, as the Minister may direct.

Not part of Canadian Forces

(3) The cadet organizations referred to in subsection (1) are not comprised in the Canadian Forces.

Insubordination

Disobedience of lawful command

83. Every person who disobeys a lawful command of a superior officer is guilty of an offence and on conviction is liable to imprisonment for life or to less punishment.

Desertion

Offence

88. (1) Every person who deserts or attempts to desert is guilty of an offence and on conviction, if the person committed the offence on active service or under orders for active service, is liable to imprisonment for life or to less punishment and, in any other case, is liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding five years or to less punishment.

Definition

(2) A person deserts who

(a) being on or having been warned for active service, duty during an emergency or other important service, is absent without authority with the intention of avoiding that service;

(b) having been warned that his vessel is under sailing orders, is absent without authority with the intention of missing that vessel;

(c) absents himself without authority from his place of duty with the intention of remaining absent from his place of duty;

(d) is absent without authority from his place of duty and at any time during such absence forms the intention of remaining absent from his place of duty; or

(e) while absent with authority from his place of duty, with the intention of remaining absent from his place

of duty, does any act or omits to do anything the natural and probable consequence of which act or omission is to preclude the person from being at his place of duty at the time required.

Presumption of desertion

(3) A person who has been absent without authority for a continuous period of six months or more shall, unless the contrary is proved, be presumed to have had the intention of remaining absent from his place of duty.

Connivance at desertion

89. Every person who

(a) being aware of the desertion or intended desertion of a person from any of Her Majesty's Forces, does not without reasonable excuse inform his superior officer forthwith, or

(b) fails to take any steps in his power to cause the apprehension of a person whom he knows, or has reasonable grounds to believe, to be a deserter, is guilty of an offence and on conviction is liable to imprisonment for less than two years or to less punishment. R.S., c. N-4, s. 79.

Absence without Leave

Offence

90. (1) Every person who absents himself without leave is guilty of an offence and on conviction is liable to imprisonment for less than two years or to less punishment.

Definition

(2) A person absents himself without leave who

(a) without authority leaves his place of duty;

(b) without authority is absent from his place of duty; or

(c) having been authorized to be absent from his place of duty, fails to return to his place of duty at the expiration of the period for which the absence of that person was authorized.

94. Every person who uses traitorous or disloyal words regarding Her Majesty is guilty of an offence and on conviction is liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding seven years or to less punishment.

126. Every person who, on receiving an order to submit to inoculation, re-inoculation, vaccination, re-vaccination, other immunization procedures, immunity tests, blood examination or treatment against any infectious disease, wilfully and without reasonable excuse disobeys that order is guilty of an offence and on conviction is liable to imprisonment for less than two years or to less punishment.

For the full version on the National Defence Act visit: <http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/n-5/index.html>. For the portion pertaining to the Canadian Forces specifically, go to: <http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/n-5/269085.html#rid-269086>

MILITARY RECRUITING IS FALLING SHORT IN CANADA

Canada's Auditor General published a report on Military Recruiting and Retention in May 2006. Included here are relevant excerpts in quotations, and Operation Objection commentary.

CANADA'S RECRUITMENT OBJECTIVES

"The military is embarking on a major transformation that includes, in part, an increase of 5,000 personnel over the next five years. It has identified this expansion as a priority if it is to meet operational demands." This would raise personnel to over 67,000. "To achieve this 5,000-member expansion, National Defence plans to increase its recruitment target to about 5,800 each year until 2010... About one third of applications become recruits."

"National Defence targets Canadians aged 16 to 34... A National Defence survey of this specific target group indicated... 30 percent said they would consider joining if their education was paid for or if they were offered an entry bonus... National Defence has also conducted demographic studies and recognizes that it needs to recruit young women and young Canadians from Aboriginal and visible minority groups"

NATIONAL RECRUITING CAMPAIGN: THE CALM BEFORE THE STORM

National Defence engages in "outreach activities at schools". Between 2002 and 2006 National Defence recruited 20,000, but only 700 made it all the way into active duty, according to the Auditor General's report. however, National Defence officials launched a national recruiting campaign in the Fall of 2006. "The recruiting and attrition problems that remain are jeopardizing the success of the Canadian Forces' planned expansion." Attrition during this period was approximately 16,000. "The Navy, Army, and Air Force occupations are experiencing uneven, persistent shortages in almost half of their 69 specific occupations. Many of the occupations that were facing shortages in 2002 are still in the same situation today." The report cites that there is a "low interest among Canadian youth in joining the military". It also notes that "National Defence forecasts an increase in attrition over the next 10 years."

GOVERNMENT OVERSIGHT

The person with key oversight of Canadian military personnel is the Assistant Deputy Minister-Military Human Resources. "In November 2005, National Defence endorsed new terms of reference for the position, clarifying the responsibilities of this position as the single authority to manage the Canadian Forces personnel system." Recruitment and retention are among the top priorities of the Canadian Forces, as outlined in their April 2005 policy statement. "In fact, targets dropped from 7,000 new recruits in 2001 and 6,200 in 2002, to fewer than 4,500 in 2003 and in 2004... in 2005, the number of recruits exceeded the number of releases by less than 200."

Attrition is a key point the Auditor General's report notes for dwindling service members. "Approximately 50 percent of Regular Force personnel have 15 years of service or more... thus they are either already eligible to leave or soon will be."

"National Defence conducted retention surveys between 2002 and 2004 on the reasons people intended to leave. It found members had given reasons, such as

"a lack of fairness in the Canadian Forces,"

"uncertainty about the future of the Canadian Forces,"

"leadership and bureaucracy, and"

"career concerns"

CONCLUSIONS

The report draws the conclusion that "there is a shortage of about 2,400 qualified people to meet the needs of the Canadian Forces to accomplish their military tasks... The Department has not been able to improve its recruiting of Aboriginal people, visible minorities, or women... Despite an increase in the youth population of these groups, the number of these recruits joining the Regular Forces is declining." And, despite \$1.5 million in spending on "diversity recruiting", these efforts are "not achieving results". Interestingly, the personnel shortage in the Canadian Forces is approximately the same as the number of Canadian troops in Afghanistan. Ironically, there would not be a "troop shortage" if we brought them home.



REFUSING TO FIGHT



Brandon Hughey (left) and Jeremy Hinzman (right), the first two U.S. war resisters to seek refuge in Canada. photos: John Bonnar



Counter-Recruitment in the U.S.

**Interview with High School Counter-Recruitment Activist
M. Junaid Alam with Clara Lightner , Left Hook.org
May 2005**

Clara Lightner, a sophomore at Foss High School in Tacoma, WA, recently led a successful campaign to beat back an attempted administrative crackdown on the counter-recruitment group she helped form at her school. She talked with Left Hook co-editor M. Junaid Alam about how this victory has both been a product of and a motor force for growing anti-war sentiment among youth.

- {MJA}

Alam: Clara, thanks for doing this interview with Left Hook. Was there a specific event that compelled you personally to take a stance against the war in Iraq? Were you against it from the outset, or was it more of an evolutionary process?

Lightner: I've grown up in a family that taught me that war was bad and that wars have always been for the profits of the rich and powerful. In high school, I started listening to punk music, like the Dead Kennedys, Aus-Rotten, Crass, and they exposed so many lies and stories that I hadn't heard before. It opened my eyes to why war was so wrong. It turned me into someone willing to stand up against the war and militarism.

Alam: When and how did your anti-war feelings translate into taking political action along with other students at your school?

Lightner: A few months ago I joined a group in Tacoma called Socilaist Alternative. They were working on starting a campaign to fight military recruitment in schools. That sparked my interest and I was really excited to work on making a difference at my school that could possibly impact the war machine and its power.

Alam: How did your group, Students Against the Draft and War, approach other students in making the case against the war and possibilities of a draft? How did other students receive your group's message?

Lightner: Mostly, we've passed out fliers at lunch-time and had students sign up for an email list. We've had a lot of support among students. There is a big anti-war sentiment among people my age and especially minorities who are aware of the fact that military recruiters target them for joining their wars. We've had some problems with the JROTC [Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps] at my school, but mostly kids agree with our points of view and want the Iraq war to stop, don't want a draft, and want recruiters out of schools.

Alam: You've noted in your previous solidarity appeal that things came to a head when the JROTC instructor pressured one of your teachers and the vice-principal about a counter-recruitment event your group had planned. Can you explain how the school initially justified shutting down your event?

Lightner: The school told us that we had to follow a special procedure to set up meetings and have guest speakers. This procedure was only for "controversial speakers". They said they had to clear our speaker with the school board attorneys or somebody like that before we could hold the event of have Ty Moore speak in the school. Unfortunately, speakers come in all the time for the JROTC with absolutely no problem. One of my teachers even had to risk getting fired to have [our speaker] at Foss.

Alam: You've also noted in a follow-up announcement that, after sending out a solidarity appeal online, your group has won the right to hold the event, and has also seen several other of its demands met. Can you tell us what role you think the call for solidarity played in making the school administration change its mind, what groups helped you out in this campaign and how?

Lightner: The solidarity appeal definitely made this possible. The hundreds of phone calls to both the superintendent and my principal got their attention and made it clear that we are not a group that will back down when facing injustice. I'm not sure if it would have worked as well without the solidarity appeal. Also, Socialist Alternative has made this entire campaign possible. They started this whole thing and have helped me and given me everything I've needed during this. I've learned a lot from them about activism and have had their support and advice through the entire ordeal.

Alam: Can you detail those other demands your group had made which have now been agreed to?

Lightner: We had three key demands:

1. The right to find out 2 weeks before a military recruiter comes to my school and the right to set up a table to distribute alternative information and all the things the recruiters don't tell students.
2. The right to hold weekly meetings to establish our club, Students Against the Draft and War.
3. The right to hold our meeting with the video Military Myths and have Ty Moore speak on May 10th, to make up for the meeting they cancelled. Mrs. Schauss agreed to all three demands on Friday, May 6th. We hope she'll stick to them.

Alam: What is the general mood among the students at your school, both those who are a part of the anti-war group and those who just generally took interest in the campaign you initiated to have your meeting? Are you planning any future events?

Lightner: The students are very excited and relieved to know a campaign like this is going on at their school. Many students want to support us and become active members of Students Against the Draft and War. We are planning to have meetings to establish our club for this year, before we try to stage protests or walk-outs. The main thing we need right now is to get organized.

Alam: Today's high school students may be tricked or forced into becoming the cannon fodder for tomorrow's wars. After winning a political battle to help raise anti-war consciousness among these students at your high school, do you feel optimistic about the potential for progressive politics and anti-war beliefs among the upcoming generation?

Lightner: I really hope that there are a lot of changes to the system of greed and capitalism. Many people in my generation are very aware of the lies of the government and the military. It is also a lot easier and more accepted for students to rebel and fight for their beliefs. I really think that my generation can be the one to change the way things are now, because it's not before long that the whole system will crumble. Things can't go on very much longer the way they are.

Source:

www.lefthook.org/Interviews/AlamLightner051305.html

fyi

Over 200 women have been raped since March 2003 in Iraq, Kuwait and Afghanistan. One VA survey done in 1996 reported 90% of recent women veterans experienced sexual harassment, one third reported being raped. Sexual abuse is rampant in the armed forces, as is racism, and homophobia. There are over 30,000 non-citizens in the US armed forces. There have even been reports in the press about military recruiters crossing the Mexican border to recruit in schools in Tijuana, as well as recruiters going across the Canadian borders to recruit Native American youth from Canada.

-Kevin Ramirez, Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors (U.S.)

Counter-Recruitment online REsources

War Free Schools is one of the few counter-recruitment resources in Canada. Included below are many of the U.S.-based resources which inspired this organizing kit. While the resources below contain details specific to U.S. counter-recruitment, there are many useful insights that can apply to counter-recruiting campaigns outside the U.S. The films in particular are excellent organizing tools. Operation Objection strongly encourages you to order copies for your local group and to start organizing film screenings and discussions.

FILMS

Sir No Sir
www.sirnosir.com

Military Myths
www.papertiger.org/index.php?name=Military-Myths-About

Winter Soldier
www.wintersoldierfilm.com

The Ground Truth
www.thegroundtruth.net

Feel a Draft?
http://www.gnn.tv/blogs/5005/Feel_a_Draft

Peace Now!
www.tvac.ca

CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION

GI Rights
<http://www.objector.org/girights/publications.html>

Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors
<http://www.objector.org/Resources/tools.pdf>

Not Your Soldier
<http://notyoursoldier.org/>

CODEPINK Counter-Recruitment 101
<http://www.codepinkalert.org/article.php?id=802>

COUNTER-RECRUITMENT RESOURCES

Peace and Counter Recruitment Contacts
in the US: www.unitedforpeace.org/article.php?id=2333

Reading Materials
<http://www.unitedforpeace.org/article.php?id=2332>

Counter Recruitment 101 (US)
<http://www.unitedforpeace.org/article.php?id=2873>

United for Peace and Justice
<http://www.unitedforpeace.org/article.php?id=2443#Kits>

Student Peace Action Network
http://www.studentpeaceaction.org/latest_resources.htm

DC Anti-War Network's Counter-Recruiter HQ
www.counter-recruitment.org

YOUTH AND MILITARISM

Non-Military Options for Youth
<http://www.progressiveaustin.org/nmofy/drupal/?q=node/136>

Alternatives to the Military
<http://webarchive.afsc.org/youthmil/alternatives/>
<http://www.unitedforpeace.org/article.php?id=2876>

Youth and Militarism
<http://www.afsc.org/youthmil/>

Opposing the Militarization of Youth
www.youthandthemilitary.org

Rethinking Schools
http://www.rethinkingschools.org/archive/15_02/Rrot152.shtml

Youth and Countermilitarism Program
<http://www.warresisters.org/youth/getinvolved.html>

Project on Youth and Non-Military Opportunities
<http://www.projectyano.org/>

National Priorities Project
<http://www.unitedforpeace.org/article.php?id=3137>

The Coalition Against Militarism in Our Schools (US)
<http://www.militaryfreeschools.org/>

PROTESTING

Actions: Pickets, Protests, Resolutions
<http://www.unitedforpeace.org/article.php?id=2888>

Standing Up to Military Recruiters
http://www.rethinkingschools.org/archive/20_03/mili203.shtml

Supporting the Young People Who Just Say No
<http://www.yesmagazine.org/article.asp?ID=1283>

How to Say No
<http://www.thenation.com/doc/20050912/caldwell>

AFSC Guide to Civil Disobedience
<http://webarchive.afsc.org/iraq/activism/civil-disobedience.shtm>



“You, the students, are the ones who can make the most impact. You can reach out to your peers in ways that no one else can. Show us the power and wisdom of youth. Show us that you are smarter than those who want to use your lives to support war and a militaristic way of life.”

-Arlene Inouye, co-chair of the Human Rights Committee of United Teachers Los Angeles and co-ordinator of the Coalition Against Militarism in our Schools (CAMS). www.militaryfreeschools.org

U.S. War Resisters and Counter-Recruitment

The War Resisters Support Campaign is a broad-based coalition of community, faith, labour and other organizations and individuals that have come together to support U.S. soldiers seeking asylum in Canada because they refuse to fight in the illegal war in Iraq. The Campaign works on two fronts: supporting the material needs of war resisters when they arrive in Canada; and campaigning to persuade the Canadian government to provide sanctuary for U.S. war resisters.



During the period of 1965-1973, more than 50,000 Americans made their way to Canada, refusing to participate in an immoral war. At the time, Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau said: “Those who make a conscientious judgment that they must not participate in this war... have my complete sympathy, and indeed our political approach has been to give them access to Canada. Canada should be a refuge from militarism.”

Thirty years later, Canada is faced with the same moral choice – to give refuge to those who refuse to be complicit in the US-led war on Iraq, which many legal opinions have deemed illegal under international law. In January of 2004, Jeremy Hinzman, a soldier in the 82nd Airborne Division, made his way to Canada seeking refugee status with his wife, Nga, and son, Liam. Brandon Hughey arrived in March 2004. Since then, a growing number of American soldiers and their families have made the decision to seek sanctuary in Canada. Over 30 have gone public. Estimates of U.S. soldiers living underground in Canada range between 100 and 200.

In December 2004, the Canadian government intervened in Jeremy Hinzman’s hearing before Canada’s Immigration and Refugee Board, asserting that the legality of the war had no relevance to his claim. The member of the Immigration and Refugee Board who was hearing the case accepted the government’s argument. Subsequently, both Jeremy and Brandon had their refugee claims turned down. They appealed the decision to the Federal Court of Canada. This appeal was also rejected, but is now making its way to the Federal Court of Appeal.

The War Resisters Support Campaign is calling on the Federal government to make a provision for U.S. war resisters to be allowed to stay in Canada. We have the support of the federal New Democratic Party, most national trade unions, many faith groups and a growing list of prominent Canadians. We need the support of both Bloc Quebecois and Liberal Members of Parliament, and are accelerating our lobby efforts in this area.

War resisters have first-hand experience with recruiters and refusing to fight in illegal and immoral wars. They speak at schools and public events across Canada on a regular basis. To organize an event for a war resister to speak to your classmates, or to show *Let Them Stay* - the short documentary film about them - contact: resisters@sympatico.ca

www.resisters.ca

A.W.O.L. SOLDIERS, Military families, & conscientious objectors in the U.S. & UK

Resistance to the Iraq war from within the U.S. military began early on when Stephen Funk became the first conscientious objector imprisoned for refusing to fight in Iraq. He was sentenced to 6 months, but it was not long before other U.S. soldiers began refusing deployment to Iraq, as well.

According to Sgt. Camilo Mejia, “Coming home gave me the clarity to see the line between military duty and moral obligation. I realized that I was part of a war that I believed was immoral and criminal, a war of aggression, a war of imperial domination. I realized that acting upon my principles became incompatible with my role in the military, and I decided that I could not return to Iraq.”

Aidan Delgado, according to Wikipedia, has “given many presentations on the atrocities committed at the Abu Ghraib prison, at which Delgado was stationed and of the torture and prisoner abuse in Abu Ghraib and across Iraq, of which he was a leading revelator. Delgado sparked considerable controversy when, upon his release from the Army and his return to the United States, he asserted, in an interview with The New York Times columnist Bob Herbert, to have witnessed egregious cases of abuse perpetrated against Iraqi civilians by American soldiers.” (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aidan_Delgado)

The rising numbers of military personnel and military families rejecting the war have given rise to several significant organizations in the U.S and U.K. Military Families Speak Out (U.S.) and Military Families Against the War (U.K.) have grown rapidly from a handful of people to thousands of people with relatives who have or are serving in Iraq, transforming the debate about the conflict. “The best way to support the troops,” they say, “is to bring them home now.” Cindy Sheehan in the U.S. and Rose Gentle in the U.K., both of whom lost their sons to the Iraq war have made it their mission in life to bring George Bush and Tony Blair to justice for their war crimes. The U.K. peace movement has played an important role in ending Tony Blair’s political career. Indeed many other grieving parents have come together with them to forge a potent voice for peace. In the U.S. this has taken the form of Gold Star Families for Peace.

Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW) was founded by soldiers in the U.S. who have served in Iraq from 2003 onwards, and their numbers continue to grow. What began as a small trickle into Canada, is quickly becoming a flood of U.S. war resisters, and IVAW now has a Toronto chapter.

A new wave of resistance to the war in the U.S. has begun with the refusal of U.S. Army First Lieutenant Ehren Watada to deploy to Iraq. He is the first commissioned officer to refuse deployment. His refusal comes at a time when as many as 9,000 soldiers are estimated to be A.W.O.L within the U.S., with as many as 200 living underground in Canada. There are also independent reports of hundreds - possibly thousands - of U.S. troops deserting from Iraq, despite official U.S. military denials.

Military Families Speak Out (U.S.) - www.mfso.org
Military Families Against the War (U.K.) - www.mfaw.org.uk
Gold Star Families for Peace (U.S.) - www.gsfp.org
Iraq Veterans Against the War - www.ivaw.net
Vietnam Veterans Against the War - www.vvaw.org
Veterans for Peace - www.veteransforpeace.org
Courage to Resist - www.couragetoresist.org
Bring Them Home Now - www.bringthemhomenow.org

Conscientious Objection in Canada

By War Resisters International

Conscription

The Canadian Forces (CF) are an all-volunteer, professional force. The Canadian Constitution does not expressly address the issue of conscription. At present there are no national laws that entitle the government to launch a conscription or compulsory military service scheme. Nor is there any system of national registration for a potential draft. [3]

Enlistment in the armed forces is voluntary for men and women. The minimum age for enlistment is 17. Sixteen-year-olds may enlist either as officer cadets in the reserve Force or as apprentices in the Regular Force. If they are under 18 they must have the written consent of parent or guardian. [6]

Conscientious objection

There is no national legislation on conscientious objection. [3] [4]

According to the government, professional serving members of the Canadian Forces, who would not otherwise be entitled to release on request may apply for release as conscientious objectors if they become firm, sincere objectors to war in general or to the bearing and use of arms as a military service requirement. The conscientious objection must be based on religious or moral study and belief and must be general. Objection to participation in or the use of arms in a particular conflict does not qualify an individual to be recognised as a CO. Similarly, a politically motivated objection is not accepted. [3]

To obtain recognition as a CO a professional serving CF-member must submit an application to the commanding officer, who considers it and weighs up whether it is valid. The findings are then sent to a career review

board which decides on the application. [3]

The CF is at present busy drafting a policy on conscientious objection. [3]

On 11 February 1991 a CO (an Acting Sub Lieutenant in the Navy) was honourably discharged from the CF. He had requested discharge in August 1990, but had merely been transferred to a non-combat position ashore. His superior officers had told him “he was free to believe what he wanted, but would have to complete his four years of Obligatory Service, and that anybody under any other type of CF contract would have been released if they made a similar request on similar grounds”. He resumed release proceedings in November 1990 and this time was successful. [2]

Desertion

Desertion is an offence under section 88 of the National Defence Act. The maximum punishment for desertion by a soldier who is not on active service or under orders may not exceed 5 years’ imprisonment. Desertion while on active service or under orders is punishable by from two years’ to life imprisonment, if the soldier concerned is tried by a general court martial. If the soldier is tried by a standing or disciplinary court martial the maximum punishment is less than two years’ imprisonment. [3]

History

During both the First and Second World War Canada employed a system of mandatory registration and compulsory military service that applied only during these wars. In the First World War there were limited provisions for religious COs. In the Second World War provision was made for COs to perform substitute service, but there were much local variations over the granting of CO status. Jehovah’s Witnesses were on the whole not

recognised as COs. During the war approximately 10,000 COs were acknowledged and some 400 imprisoned. Since the Second World War there has not been conscription in Canada. [1] [3]

Annual statistics

In 1997 the armed forces were 61,000-strong - that is, about 0.21 percent of the population. [5] [3]

In 1997 they recruited 3545 individuals, of whom 24 (1 percent) were 16-year-olds, 204 (6 percent) were 17 and 3317 (94 percent) were over 18. [6]

Sources

[1] Prasad, D., T. Smythe 1968. Conscription: a world survey, compulsory military service and resistance to it. War Resisters' International, London. [2] Conscience Canada 1991. News release, 20 February 1991. [3] Canadian Department of National Defence 1996. Reply to CONCODOC questionnaire, 2 August 1996. [4] UN Commission on Human Rights 1991. Report of the Secretary-General prepared pursuant to Commission resolution 1989/59. United Nations, Geneva. [5] Institute for Strategic Studies 1997. Military Balance 1997/98. ISS, London, UK. [6] Embassy of Canada in Geneva 1997. Response to an information request of 11 November 1997 from the Quaker United Nations Office, Geneva.

Source: <http://www.wri-irg.org/co/rtba/canada.htm>

RESOURCES

CONCODOC - The Conscription and Conscientious Objection Documentation project, www.wri-irg.org/co/rtba/

Canadian Forces website on conscientious objection at www.smafinsm.forces.gc.ca/admfincs/subjects/daod/5049/2_e.asp

A Conscientious Objector's Guide to the UN Human Rights System
<http://www.wri-irg.org/books/co-guide-un.htm>

Refusing to bear arms: a world survey of conscription and conscientious objection to military service
<http://www.wri-irg.org/co/rtba/index.html>

Nonviolent Struggle and Social Defence
<http://www.wri-irg.org/nonviolence/nvsvd-index.htm>

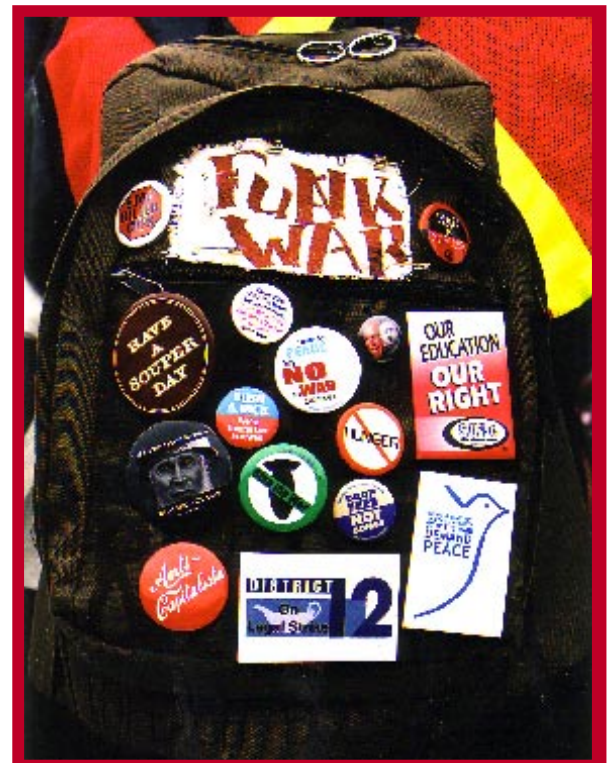


Photo: Anna Manshreck-Head

MORE CANADIAN SOLDIERS ARE GOING A.W.O.L.

In Canada, soldiers and military families are already beginning to question the war in Afghanistan. Francisco Juarez, a former Canadian soldier, recently left the Canadian Forces and has spoken out against Canada's role in Afghanistan.

Juarez is just the tip of the iceberg. Eva Skeffington's nephew was the first Canadian soldier killed in the war in Afghanistan and while awaiting her son's redeployment to Afghanistan in August 2006, she told the CBC, "They did go at first for peace and now it's war. I really don't agree with them being there. It's our sons and daughters."¹

Kathleen Harris, writing in the London Free Press has revealed that "The number of Canadian soldiers who have gone absent without leave has doubled in the last six years, Sun Media has learned. Records obtained through access to information show 708 troops were convicted of going AWOL in 2005 -- more than twice the 340 convicted of the offence in 2000. Numbers show a sharp rise after 2001, when the 9/11 terrorist attacks propelled Canada's military into a more dangerous, combative role abroad."²

The rise of the counter-recruitment movement has already begun. Despite the misleading reasons we are given for Canada's war in Afghanistan, the calls to bring the troops home are becoming louder and louder. It is just a matter of time until an organized voice of military families and soldiers emerges alongside the peace movement to make the same demands their U.S. counterparts have been making about Iraq: Not one more death. Not one more denial. Not one more deception. End the occupation and bring the troops home now.



¹ <http://www.cbc.ca/story/canada/national/2006/03/09/afghanistan-mother060309.html>

² <http://lfpres.ca/newsstand/News/National/2006/07/13/1681828-sun.html>

STOP THE WAR



OperationObjection.org