Carl Robichaud is a program officer at The Century Foundation, where he directs the Afghanistan Watch program. He is co-author of the report, Rule of Law: The Missing Priority.

Buying Time in Afghanistan

Carl Robichaud

Afghanistan is increasingly seen as Iraq in slow motion. It is not. The headlines of car bombs and casualty tolls echo each other, but mask deep differences in each society and in the dynamics of each insurgency. As Iraq has descended into civil war, Afghanistan's center has held. The government remains weak, but power holders and the public show no appetite for a return to internecine fighting. The insurgency remains solvent because of safe havens across the border in Pakistan, but has been unable to expand upon its toehold in Afghanistan or offer a compelling alternative to the status quo.

In the short-run, the only way Afghanistan could capsize is if the ballast of international support is withdrawn. Unfortunately, this scenario seems increasingly likely. The Taliban are fond of saying that "the Americans have watches, but we have time."[1] A quarter of the United States public now favors a pullout from Afghanistan in the next year if things do not improve, and an additional 40 percent believes troops should be withdrawn "as quickly as possible," if a basic level of stability is achieved. Polls in Canada, Britain, and the Netherlands—the NATO countries which are shouldering the alliance's military burden in the volatile South—suggest about half of those surveyed want troops withdrawn within a year.[2] In Germany, two thirds of the public now opposes its military contribution, and in February a dispute over Afghanistan collapsed the center-left Prodi government in Italy. National leaders continue to assert that "we cannot afford to lose" in Afghanistan, but many of their constituents believe they already have.

Military Solutions to Broader Problems

Afghanistan can still be salvaged, but continued donor commitment is not sufficient without a reformed strategic approach. Doctors sometimes refer to the period immediately after a multi-system failure as the "golden hour" during which intervention is especially consequential. Unfortunately, the United States and its allies missed this window in Afghanistan by pursuing a flawed approach with far too few resources: one RAND study, which suggests that high per capita aid during the first couple years of an intervention correlates with relative success, notes that Afghanistan received $57 per capita, compared to Bosnia ($679 per capita), Kosovo ($526), and East Timor ($233).[3] Additionally, Iraq diverted resources from Afghanistan, including critical human capital: development experts, diplomats, intelligence assets, and special forces.

This has all been well documented.[4] What is less understood is the degree to which these mistakes are related to a central pattern: a narrow focus on counterinsurgency when a comprehensive approach to statebuilding was needed. This remains the dominant pattern of engagement today.

Virtually every major decision taken during the early years of the U.S.-led intervention in Afghanistan—from the choice to extensively co-opt warlords into counterinsurgency and government roles, to the criteria and methods by which development assistance was deployed, to the mode of

engagement with Pakistan—were driven by the exigencies of a narrowly conceived counterinsurgency. While dozens of countries contributed to political, economic, and humanitarian goals—efforts touted by diplomats and heralded by the press—these efforts, even taken cumulatively, were but a meager fraction of what the U.S.-led military operation (known as Operation Enduring Freedom or OEF) was expending. From 2001 to 2005, according to the Congressional Research Service, the United States spent 11 times as much on military operations as it did on reconstruction, humanitarian aid, economic assistance, and training for Afghan security forces combined.[5]

The result has been a mission driven overwhelmingly by military considerations and solutions. The shape of the military deployment provided the contours of the intervention. The United States, wary of replicating the Soviet debacle and skeptical of working through the United Nations, sought an approach that minimized entanglements. But the choice to forgo a comprehensive security presence for a focused counterterrorism campaign became the central constraint for operating in post-Taliban Afghanistan, circumscribing not only American actions but those of the Afghan government and international non-governmental organizations.

Overreliance on the Pentagon is hardly exclusive to Afghanistan—it could, in fact, be considered the fundamental pathology of American engagement in the world. In Afghanistan it has been particularly counterproductive, driving the nation on to dysfunctional political and developmental pathways. The Pentagon is no longer the only, or even the largest, military force in Afghanistan: the NATO-led "peacekeeping force" of 27,000 is now larger than the 13,000 strong U.S.-led counterterrorism task force (the successor to OEF). Nevertheless, the overemphasis on military solutions to non-military problems remains—even as the realization grows that this approach is not working.

No Easy Diagnosis

Is Afghanistan failing? The answer depends on what we expect; as the British author Rory Stewart has observed, we tend to be "far too pessimistic about the current situation on the ground and far too optimistic about what we can turn Afghanistan into." Success, one might posit, requires as a minimum condition an Afghan state that can constrain the threat of violent jihadism within its borders and that poses little threat to the international order. This minimum condition does not require Afghanistan to become an exemplar of democracy or women's rights, or to eradicate corruption and opium production. It does, however, require a functioning state that has the support of its people. Achieving this is a far more difficult task than was envisioned by those who believed a minimalist strategy could succeed, such as former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. "The idea that we could just hunt terrorists and we didn't have to do nation-building, and we could leave it alone was a big mistake," notes Ronald E. Neumann, who inherited this strategy when he became the U.S. ambassador to Afghanistan in 2005.[6]

Last year was a reality check: after several years of lying low, the Taliban changed their approach.[7] The strength of their resurgence came as a surprise even to those close to the ground; Tom Koenigs, the UN special representative to the secretary general, recalls that the Taliban threat was considered such a second-tier concern that it was barely mentioned during his initial briefings in December 2005.[8] He was greeted by a spring offensive in 2006 that saw anti-government forces mass for the first time in large formations, seek to reclaim territory, and initiate firefights. Insurgents, who had in the past targeted more vulnerable Afghan units, went after recently deployed British and Canadian NATO troops in Helmand and Kandahar.[8] The increased tempo of fighting, combined with the eruption of once-rare suicide tactics, led to

a perception that Taliban forces were gaining momentum and that the tide had started to shift.[10]

The less evident story of the 2006 Taliban offensive is that it largely failed. In operation after operation, NATO and coalition forces battered Taliban positions and eroded their ability to operate. The loss of hundreds of militants and at least three top commanders in the past year seems to have led the Taliban to change their approach. The much anticipated 2007 spring offensive never materialized, and was replaced instead with hit and run attacks on soft targets and the introduction of suicide and roadside bombs into previously unscathed provinces in the north and west.

Despite these tactics, most of Afghanistan remains relatively safe and secure. While this is hardly a measure of the country's long-term prospects, Afghanistan is making progress on several significant metrics. Economic growth has been consistent and strong, with gross domestic product (GDP) doubling in the past five years and government revenues growing (they rose 30 percent last year).[11] Poppy production has soared in recent years, but a better indicator of the problem is the drug economy's share of GDP—which is actually in decline.[12] A study by Johns Hopkins University showed that access to healthcare has expanded dramatically, and concluded that improvements in maternal health alone prevented 40,000 infant deaths last year.[13]

Public opinion surveys in post-conflict countries should be cited with skepticism, but in Afghanistan multiple surveys by different polling outfits tell a consistent story. In the most recent, a survey of 1,036 Afghans conducted for ABC/BBC in November 2006, majorities say the U.S.-led invasion was a positive thing for the country (88 percent), see the United States favorably (74 percent), and prefer the current government of Afghanistan to Taliban rule (88 percent).[14] The Taliban remain highly unpopular and have become more so in the past year: 89 percent of Afghans nationwide now view the group unfavorably, and even in the southeast, where its support is strongest, only 10 percent say they themselves support the Taliban (though 22 percent report that others in the area support them at least "fairly strongly"). If these numbers are to be believed, the Taliban retains some regional support but, as a national movement, presents no credible alternative to the elected government.

At the same time, Afghan optimism and support for the central government has eroded. In 2005, 77 percent of Afghans said their country is headed in the right direction but that number has dropped to 55 percent. The majority of Afghans remain supportive of President Hamid Karzai (68 percent) and the parliament (59 percent) but this support has also declined from 83 percent and 77 percent respectively.[15] This drop suggests that the government's greatest asset—its legitimacy—is being depleted.

The data suggest that central to this decline is frustration with corruption and a culture of impunity. Three in four Afghans now call official corruption a problem, and more than half say it is acute.[16] The international community's failure to adequately invest in justice sector reform has allowed many of the worst actors to carve out fiefdoms within the judiciary, the police, and the Ministry of the Interior. Parallel failures in election vetting allowed drug lords and militiamen to take seats in the new parliament. Perhaps unsurprisingly, a coalition of impunity has emerged in Parliament, with former Communist officials banding with mujahideen of various factions to prevent accountability for past crimes.

Arrayed against this weak government stands a multifaceted anti-government insurgency which has rebounded from heavy losses and is adopting increasingly radical tactics of the sort that sent Iraq over the brink. There is no sign that cross-border support from elements in Pakistan

is waning, and attacks increased last year after Pakistan's president, Pervez Musharraf signed truces with tribal militants.

Nevertheless, the Taliban present no credible alternative to the government. So long as international forces remain in sufficient quantity, Afghanistan will not become Iraq. The central threat is not the strength of the Taliban—it is the weakness of Afghanistan's government. Some military leaders and diplomats quietly admit that Afghanistan is a 10 year, or even 20 year, project.[17] This may be a realistic timeframe for the nation to get back on its feet, but it is unrealistic politically unless Afghanistan demonstrates short-term progress.

Pathologies of Engagement

Afghanistan would be in better shape if, in the past five years, so many opportunities had not be squandered. Critics of the Afghanistan intervention argue that the United States and its allies devoted too few resources to reconstruction from the start, and then further diverted attention and resources to Iraq. But Afghanistan's problems are not simply a function of "taking our eye off the ball," as critics of the administration have argued.[18] Reconstruction efforts were too minimalist and too militarized even before Iraq.

From September 2001, the administration saw Afghanistan as primarily a military mission. The goal was to defeat the Taliban and its jihadist guests—and to avoid a messy and expensive entanglement.

It is a great irony of the "light footprint" approach that today Afghanistan is seen today as needing more troops, more development funds, and more time than it was four years ago. Ambassador James Dobbins, who served as special representative to Afghanistan in 2001 and has studied every major intervention since 1960, observes that Afghanistan is "the only time on record in which we spent more money and had more troops five years after we started than we did the first year or two," a problem "indicative of this early failure to seize the golden hour when we could have done so much more."[19]

The central failure has been the persistent over-reliance on military mechanisms and priorities where a comprehensive approach was needed. The lopsided focus on military goals and methods has shaped the Afghanistan intervention in three specific ways:

- The narrow focus on the counterinsurgency has attached disproportionate emphasis to short-term stability, at the expense of other priorities, most significantly government legitimacy.
- The instrumental use of development assistance primarily as a means of winning hearts and minds has led to unsustainable and inefficient practices, including an over-concentration of scarce resources in the least-secure provinces.
- The existing ties between Pentagon officials and their counterparts in Pakistan's military establishment meant that Washington's first response when seeking to defeat Taliban and al Qaeda networks in Pakistan was to channel its efforts through General Musharraf.

These patterns continue to define and shape our engagement in Afghanistan. They will be discussed in turn.

Stability Over Legitimacy

The administration, seeking proxies and fearing that "green on green" conflict between rival factions would distract from its central objective, chose to co-opt powerful warlords with sordid pasts rather than marginalizing or confronting them. President Hamid Karzai, with no authentic base of support and a conciliator's temperament, has become a leading proponent of the "big tent" approach.

For many Afghans, the face of the government is a cadre of strongmen and criminals, empowered through a flawed election.

Helping install a government of former antagonists who have little legitimacy in the eyes of their constituents is not a recipe for long-term stability. The preoccupation with avoiding conflicts led to premature capitulations for which Afghans continue to pay.

Proponents of the gradualist approach argue that they had no choice but to work with existing power-brokers, but in 2001 the vast majority of warlords were weak militarily and economically and had little popular support. These armed intermediaries were appealing as allies only because they seemed to offer a short cut to establishing order. With sufficient political will, it would not have been difficult to circumvent, confront, and marginalize the worst of these illegal armed groups. In some cases, co-option can be a wise tactical move, but it is one thing to overlook past abuses and another thing to sanction their perpetuation in the present. As things stand, any future progress in Afghanistan must be built upon a cracked foundation. A "stability first" agenda may appear cheap, but a government sapped of its legitimacy will find its every action more costly.

America's New Development Agency

Development efforts have lagged in Afghanistan, in large part because of the difficulty of delivering assistance in a non-permissive environment. Security concerns led to skyrocketing costs and impede oversight. One prominent case is the Kabul-to-Kandahar highway, which used five subcontractors and required 1,000 Afghan troops to provide protection, at the cost of $256 million—or over a million dollars per mile.[20]

Most of Afghanistan is relatively secure and would permit effective development projects—if the funding were there to enable them. Yet restive Kandahar leads all provinces in foreign aid, and donors have focused fully one quarter of Afghanistan's assistance on four provinces where the insurgency is active. These provinces (Kandahar, Helmand, Oruzgan, and Paktika) have received as much in development grants as 17 other provinces combined.[21] This approach is driven by the view that development projects are essentially another tool to defeat the insurgency by showing local communities that the Afghan government and its backers can provide more for them than the Taliban.

The problem with this method is that it is exceedingly difficult to perform development work in these regions. In response, the coalition stood up Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) to serve as small outposts of stability—an innovative but ultimately insufficient approach. PRTs are each run by a lead nation, and they have varied extraordinarily in composition, purpose, and effectiveness. Their mandates are shaped less by the needs of the community in which they are situated and more by the political concerns of their lead nation. Only a few have been able to provide a secure environment for development. In short, PRTs have been no substitute for the sort of comprehensive security that the United States and its allies declined to provide.

Nevertheless, donors continue to focus funding on at-risk regions. The latest manifestation is the exponential growth in the Commander's Emergency Reconstruction Program (CERP), which emerged in 2004 as a mechanism for winning "hearts and minds" in restive areas. These "emergency" funds, which do not require prior approval or coordination with other agencies, are typically spent by PRTs on small-scale projects. The CERP budget in Afghanistan has ballooned from $40 million in 2004 to $231 million in 2007, and now totals about a quarter of all other U.S. development spending *combined*.[22]

The rationale for CERP funding is that traditional development mechanisms cannot operate in the ungoverned areas where development assistance is most needed.[23] "By building trust and confidence in coalition forces," Secretary of Defense Robert Gates

argued in February 2007, "these CERP projects increase the flow of intelligence to commanders in the field and help turn local Iraqis and Afghans against insurgents and terrorists."[24] CERP funding is channeled through Provincial Reconstruction Teams, which are ostensibly civilian-led outposts, but which might contain a handful of civilian development experts amidst 200 troops. The climate and culture of PRTs are driven by its military leadership, and its development projects tend to receive funding based upon their likelihood to advance military objectives. The result is an increasingly militarized approach to development.

Well intentioned as this effort may be, international development is not among the army's core competencies. Andrew Wilder, who has studied this issue as research director at Tuft's Feinstein International Center, argues that the entire strategy may be premised on "flawed assumptions that reconstruction assistance leads to greater support." Far from being seen as a neutral and universal good, aid can accentuate tensions over the distribution of resources and activate inter-communal or tribal competition. "You cannot count on reconstruction assistance to make you popular, since no matter what you do, people will usually be unhappy you are not doing more," observes Wilder. "People will stand in a school and next to a well built by the international community and tell you that 'nothing is done for us here.'"[25]

Gambling on the General

After September 11, the administration realized that al Qaeda's center of gravity stretched beyond Afghanistan and into Pakistan, and decided its best option was to throw its lot in with Pakistan's President Pervez Musharraf. It was argued that substantial aid (about $4 billion per year) and common interests in preventing radical jihadism would steer Pakistan toward becoming a faithful partner against the Taliban. Our military-to-military contacts paved the way for an infusion of defense funding that was seen as a way to bolster Musharraf's capacity and willingness to take on jihadists.

The past several years have made it increasingly clear that Musharraf's interests align imperfectly with ours. The general has shown a willingness to confront certain Islamists that pose a threat to his regime (such as Arab or Uzbek militants), but no enthusiasm for risking political capital and military assets to root out those insurgents that focus their energy on Afghanistan. Even as Pakistan's army takes on renegade militants in Waziristan, Pakistan's intelligence service continues to provide insurgents with money, arms, and information. According to Seth G. Jones of RAND, who cites conversations with military, security, and diplomatic officials in Afghanistan, it is not clear that these orders come from Musharraf, but at the very least he knows about the support to militants and has failed to stop it.[26]

Breaking the Pattern

A narrowly focused military campaign was never realistic. Counterinsurgency operations were able to blunt Taliban operations but never created the counterweight of a functioning state. With a cross-border haven in Pakistan and a power vacuum in southern Afghanistan, the Taliban were able to regroup and recruit.

The need for a comprehensive approach in Afghanistan is better understood now by policymakers and generals who focus on Afghanistan, but old ways die hard. Breaking from past patterns would open the way for more productive approaches.

Break the reliance on militarized aid by reallocating development resources: Focusing development assistance on the most-violent provinces is a misallocation of resources: development in insecure areas costs more and yields fewer results. Most of Afghanistan remains secure, and countless opportunities exist to improve lives and consolidate sup-

port for the government. Alex Thier, an expert on Afghanistan with the U.S. Institute of Peace, argues that "by short-changing the more peaceful provinces, we are allowing the low-hanging fruit to rot on the vine. Money goes further in stable areas due to lower security costs and easier access, and signs of development will contribute significantly to the consolidation of government authority and legitimacy."[27]

Emphasize rule of law and condition funding on reform: Afghans have shown in survey after survey that they desire justice and the rule of law. Yet Afghanistan's justice sector stands on three fractured pillars, the police, the judiciary, and prisons, which have received inadequate attention.

The lead donor experiment, in which each country adopted a sector to reform, has been partially to blame. Italy was grossly ineffective, getting off to a slow start and then becoming embroiled in Afghan politics; Germany saw its role as coordinator rather than funder, but resource limitations led to an anemic, if thoroughly trained, force.

In response to these failures, the United States stepped in, starting a new police training program run by the Combined Security Transition Command–Afghanistan (CSTC-A), the military team responsible for training and developing the Afghan national army. The U.S. approach seeks to rapidly boost the number of police in the field through a short crash course that focuses on preparing police for a "security and counter-insurgency" role, as opposed to a civilian "law and order" role. After the Defense Department took over police training from the State Department, the program budget climbed from $160 million in 2004 to $625 million in 2005. In 2007, the United States will expend four times that, $2.5 billion on police training, infrastructure, and equipment.[28]

The program has created a fierce interagency dispute over the purpose of Afghanistan's police force. The State Department's bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL) argues that police assistance must remain civilian-led and that military involvement would turn the police into auxiliaries against the insurgency rather than cops dedicated to providing rule of law. Moreover, they argue that putting poorly trained and equipped police in the front-lines against armed insurgents puts them at great risk. Afghan police have suffered far higher losses than the Afghan National Army, with over 1,000 police killed in action since 2005.[29]

The dispute over police training misses the central challenge, however, since neither approach will be effective unless the corrupt and dysfunctional Ministry of Interior is reformed. The ministry is rooted in a patronage system in which officials accept lucrative bribes in return for appointments to lucrative postings in drug regions. One senior police official from a northern province reported that almost all the police chiefs in his region paid to get their jobs and that "Every three months the commanders are pushed a little bit or they are told that they may be replaced. Then everybody rushes toward the ministry with $10,000."[30]

It is impossible to provide rule of law unless the ministry is reformed from top down and inside out. Doing so will require tough negotiations with the Karzai government, and may require donors to threaten to withhold aid unless tough reforms are made. In the next several years, billions will be spent on a police training program that sees the challenge as essentially technical, rather than political. Unless the international community conditions its assistance on reforming patronage networks, it will be just channeling more resources to bad actors, as has too often been the case with security force training in Iraq. Finally, the other two pillars must receive far more attention, since it is impossible to run a justice system without functioning courts and prisons.

Focus on sub-national governance: Donors have focused on establishing a strong central government, often failing to appreciate the

importance of sub-national governance. This approach risks repeating an error of the Soviets, who promoted a brittle and unresponsive state in which everything was run from Kabul. The need for decentralized governance and power is driven by Afghanistan's peculiar geography, demographics, and history: the nation remains exceedingly diverse and dispersed (80 percent of its population lives in rural communities which are only thinly connected by roads).

The most direct way to empower the government of Afghanistan is to provide it with the authority and resources to deliver services. This would be a major departure from the current model, in which three quarters of development assistance is delivered outside government channels through a parallel public sector. The two development programs that have proven most effective—the National Solidarity Program and the Ministry of Health—have achieved success because they are driven by local needs, concerns, and talent.

The obstacle, of course, is that many of these jurisdictions are woefully lacking in capacity to fund and implement projects. It is frequently argued that, in Afghanistan today, the problem is not a shortage of funds but an inability to spend money effectively because of low capacity in the Afghan government and private sector. This is somewhat misleading: Afghanistan lacks the capacity to spend these reconstruction funds precisely because strengthening this capacity was never prioritized over the past six years. This is especially true at the sub-national level. This year, the president has budgeted $7.4 billion to train and equip Afghan army battalions, yet Afghanistan still has no government training program. Training bureaucrats and technocrats to provide provincial governance is every bit as important as training soldiers.

Preparing for the Road Ahead

The window of opportunity for Afghanistan to move toward self-sufficiency and to escape its three-decade cycle of destitution and violence is closing, but there is still hope. It is important to remember that the scale of conflict in Afghanistan remains different in degree from Iraq. While last year was Afghanistan's most violent yet, the State Department estimates that 13 Iraqis were killed, injured, or kidnapped in terrorist incidents for every Afghan who suffered a similar fate.[31] Coalition fatalities in Iraq outnumber those in Afghanistan by more than six to one, and wounded in action by a substantially greater margin.[32] Every ten weeks, forces in Iraq spend the equivalent of a year's operations in Afghanistan.[33] To put it differently, the United States and its allies could theoretically fight a handful of Afghanistan-scale conflicts simultaneously and still not expend the blood and treasure being consumed by Iraq.

Success in Afghanistan is possible, but will require a break from the patterns of the past, which have focused resources on narrowly conceived military goals. If we succeed, Afghanistan will look less like paradise and more like Pakistan. But failure would look much worse, and an imperfect Afghanistan is well worth fighting for. ●

Notes

1. A senior Taliban commander captured by the coalition, quoted by Lt. Gen. Karl W. Eikenberry, lecture at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, May 5, 2006.

2. Moreover, in a recent poll, 57 percent of Americans believed that Afghanistan was "slipping backward" (versus 29 percent who said it had "largely succeeded.") In Germany: TNS Emnid/N24. May 21, 2007. Margin of error is 2.5 percent. Available at www.angusreid.com/polls/index.cfm/fuseaction/viewItem/itemID/15855. In Canada: Angus Reid Strategies. Margin of error is 3.1 percent. In Britain: YouGov/*Daily Telegraph*. No margin of error provided. Available at www.angusreid.com/polls/index.cfm/fuseaction/viewItem/itemID/15312 . In Netherlands: Maurice de Hond. No margin of error provided. Available at www.angusreid.com/polls/index.cfm/fuseaction/viewItem/itemID/15623.

3. James Dobbins, *The UN's Role in Nation-building: From the Congo to Iraq* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2005).

4. I summarize these arguments in a previous paper in this journal, "Remember Afghanistan: A Glass Half Full, On the Titanic," *World Policy Journal*, vol. 23 , no. 1, (spring 2006), pp. 17–24.

5. See Amy Belasco, "The Cost of Iraq, Afghanistan and Enhanced Base Security Since 9/11," (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, October 3, 2005), p. 14; and "Afghanistan: Post-War Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy," Updated CRS report, June 1, 2007, by Kenneth Katzman. Military (OEF) annual costs, in billions: 2001–02: $20.8; 2003: $14.7; 2004: $14.5; 2005: $20.8. Other U.S. spending, in billions: 2001–02: $1.05; 2003: $0.74; 2004: $1.7; 2005: $4.36. Note that the ratio is even more skewed if you remove military training and counter-narcotics.

6. David Rhode and David Sanger, "Losing the Advantage; How the 'Good War' in Afghanistan Went Bad," *New York Times*, August 12, 2007.

7. Anti-government forces are multifaceted, and consist not only of Taliban loyalists but also of various international jihadists— Gulbeddin Hekmatyar's faction of Hizb-i-Islami in the east and Jalaluddin Haqqani's group in North Waziristan (among others). These groups have distinct goals, and their collaboration is less alliance than marriage of convenience. Nevertheless, it is sometimes difficult to attribute and disaggregate the actions of each, and in these cases "Taliban" functions as a necessary, if flawed, shorthand.

8. Tom Koenigs speech at the U.S. Institute of Peace, March 21, 2007. Available at www.usip.org/pubs/usipeace_briefings/2007/0419_koenigs_afghanistan.html.

9. NATO-led forces currently number approximately 35,000 persons. There are an additional 20,000 troops in the U.S.-led Combined Joint Task Force 76 (the successor to Operation Enduring Freedom.) These two commands increasingly interoperate. In 2006, NATO expanded its area of operations to the south. Of the 26 NATO countries providing troops in Afghanistan, only six (the Unites States, Britain, Canada, Denmark, the Netherlands, Romania, and Estonia) permit their soldiers to fight. There are also 11 non-NATO countries that operate under the NATO umbrella.

10. There were 136 suicide attacks in 2006 compared with 26 in 2005 and 4 in 2004. Unlike in Iraq, suicide bombers in Afghanistan have almost exclusively attacked military and police targets, and their rate of inflicting casualties is much lower.

11. Asian Development Bank & Afghanistan: A Fact Sheet, 2007. Available at www.adb.org/Documents/Fact_Sheets/AFG.pdf.

12. Opium accounts for about a third of Afghanistan's economy, compared with more than 60 percent five years ago. See Michael Dwyer, "Afghan Economy to Quicken, IMF Says, Reducing Opium Dependence," *Bloomberg*, March 9, 2007.

13. "Study: Afghan infant mortality rate improving," Associated Press, April 27, 2007.

14. ABC News/BBC World Service Poll, Afghanistan: Where Things Stand, Dec. 7, 2006. Available at http://abcnews.go.com/images/politics/afghanistan_poll_061205.pdf.

15. The fact that the infamous police force also gets favorable ratings gives weight to poll-skeptics.

16. ABC News/BBC World Service Poll.

17. See, for example, Canadian general Rick Hillier, British ambassador Sir Sherard Cowper-Coles (June 22) and U.S. secretary of defense Robert Gates.

18. The metaphor has been used successively by Gov. Howard Dean (2003) Sen. John Kerry (2004), Sec. Madeleine Albright, Sen. Joe Biden (2005) and Sen. Carl Levin (April 23, 2006).

19. Senate Foreign Relations committee hearing on Afghanistan, March 8, 2007. Available online at www.rand.org/pubs/testimonies/CT276/.

20. Fabria Nawa, "Afghanistan, Inc.," Corpwatch Investigative Report. Available at http://globalpolicy.igc.org/empire/intervention/afghanistan/general/2006/1006afghaninc.pdf.

21. Andrew Wilder, May 22 presentation at the Council on Foreign Relations. Figures include ongoing, planned, and funded reconstruction and development work as of May 2007.

22. Afghanistan will receive $1.1 billion in economic, security, and counter-narcotics assistance in 2008 (excludes training for the Afghan national army and Afghan national police.) See State-Foreign Operations Appropriations for FY 2008, Congressional Quarterly, No. 110–12, June 19, 2007. For CERP

figures, see Government Accountability Office, "Securing, Stabilizing, and Reconstructing Afghanistan: Key Issues for Congressional Oversight," GAO-07-801SP, May 24, 2007. The CERP trend is consistent with the Pentagon's increased role in development across foreign aid; in terms of American official development assistance (ODA) spending the Department of Defense has increased its ODA share from 5.6 percent in 2002 to 21.7 percent in 2005; while USAID, responsible for 50.2 percent of ODA in 2002, is now responsible for 38.8 percent. United States (2006), DAC Peer Review: Main Findings and Recommendations. Available at www.oecd.org/document/27/0,3343,en_2649_34603_37829787_1_1_1_1,00.html.

23. Moreover, it is often easier to tuck funding into a $100 billion war supplemental than to increase Afghanistan budget lines for the State Department or USAID.

24. Available at www.defenselink.mil/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1127.25.

25. Interview with Andrew Wilder.

26. Gall, Carlotta. "Musharraf Vows to Aid Afghanistan in Fighting Taliban," *New York Times*, September 7, 2006, p. 8.

27. Interview with Alex Thier, June 26, 2007.

28. U.S. Department of State, 2007. Cited in Andrew Wilder, "Cops or Robbers? The Struggle to Reform the Afghan National Police," Afganistan Research Evaluation Unit (AREU), July 2007, p. 20.

29. 2002–05 figures from LOTFA, 1383 Annual Report, 2006. 2006–07 provided by CSTC-A. Both cited in "Cops or Robbers?" AREU, p. 45.

30. Scott Baldauf, "Inside the Afghan drug trade," *Christian Science Monitor*, June 13, 2006.

31. Individuals in Iraq killed, injured, or kidnapped as a result of incidents of terrorism: 38,813; in Afghanistan: 2,943 (State Department, "Country Reports on Terrorism," 2006).

32. U.S. fatalities in Iraq: 3,764; in Afghanistan: 440 (www.icasualties.org, figures as of September 10, 2007).

33. Belasco, "The Cost of Iraq, Afghanistan and Enhanced Base Security Since 9/11."