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Mr. Rick Casson

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• (1555)

[English]

The Chair (Mr. Rick Casson (Lethbridge, CPC)): I call the meeting to order and welcome Major General Stuart Beare. I understand you're the Commander of Land Force Doctrine and Training System, a very auspicious title. I'm sure you do a good job of that.

I'm sure you're very aware of the way we structure the committee meetings, and I see you have some able-bodied support behind you. You might want to introduce them as we get started, but we'll give you time to make your presentation and then go into rounds of questions in the very structured manner the committee has set forward. At quarter after five, we'd like to adjourn to some other committee business.

We hope we have allocated enough time to give you the opportunity to fill us in on what we need to know. The floor is yours, sir.

MGen Stuart Beare (Commander , Land Force Doctrine and Training System, Department of National Defence): Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will start by introducing the team that is with me today. I have my Regimental Sergeant Major, Chief Warrant Officer Wayne Ford, and my personal assistant, Captain Mike Duggan, who have travelled with me from Kingston to join me here today.

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. I am truly pleased to speak with you this afternoon on the subject of preparing our forces for success in land operations, be they missions at home or missions abroad, and today in particular in Afghanistan.

My duties as Commander, Land Force Doctrine and Training, as well as experience over the last decade-plus, permit me to provide you with some insights into the philosophy as well as the reality of our training design and our training delivery. In the end, I hope to leave you with the view that we Canadians continue to produce world-class results with a world-class team of military professionals, alongside valued and dedicated civilian and international partners. We achieve these results through a lifetime of investment in the quality of each military professional, regular and reserve force, and through a progressive and regulated journey of team building, from teams of two to teams of over 2,000, to produce the confidence and competence that allow our people to succeed.

[Translation]

The mission of the Canadian Forces is to defend Canada and Canadians and to promote peace and security abroad. Our land forces, as an entity of the Canadian Forces, must generate and

support multi-faceted combat-ready land forces capable of delivering results on the ground in both peace and wartime, here and abroad, today or tomorrow.

Every day, the Canadian Forces soldiers who are not deployed in operations are involved in four main activities: maintaining a strong foundation for the generation of forces; producing forces that are ready to be deployed; transformation and growth. I would now like to focus on the preparatory work we do for our forces that are ready to participate in operations.

[English]

The Government of Canada has tasked the Canadian Forces to maintain, amongst other commitments, the capability to provide, one, high-readiness brigade headquarters, and, two, land task forces for expeditionary operations on an enduring basis. The two task-force-level lines of operation represent the main output of the force's management readiness plan for land operations.

The chart behind me illustrates how we have, in the army, earmarked lead units for each of these land task forces from now to 2010.

Allow me to walk you briefly through the chart. In terms of a brigade lead, on the top you will see the three brigade group headquarters of the Canadian Army earmarked for high readiness or mission deployment in any particular 12-month to 18-month period. Below them, we have earmarked the land task forces based on an elite army unit that will deploy in operations or be earmarked for high readiness if they have no mission assigned.

Line of Ops 1, as we call it, is committed until 2009 to Afghanistan, and Line of Ops 2 is a reserve capability available to the Government of Canada for other missions and tasks. Given the level of our effort in Afghanistan, the Line of Ops 2 task forces are smaller, by necessity, than those in Line of Ops 1.

[Translation]

Let us now talk about what we need to do in order to prepare for our operations. Many months or, in some cases, a few years before being operationally ready, our soldiers receive individual instruction and professional training in order to develop general personal skills, skills specific to their area of expertise or combat readiness.

This applies to all ranks, whether we are talking about officers or junior officers. We maintain a very high calibre professional training program. This program is required in order to train our professional leaders and soldiers throughout their career.

[English]

Courses and professional development activities lead to advancement in rank, new skills and knowledge, and new responsibilities and authorities for our men and women. Armed with these, we form our teams at the most basic levels and progressively upwards, to the point that we achieve competence in trade in such areas as logistics and signals. That then allows us to group our all-arms team together; that is, our infantry, armour, artillery, engineers, signals, and our service support, such as supply, transport, maintenance, medical, military police, and the like.

These all-arms teams, which constitute the main element of our task forces, participate in steadily increasing levels of collective training, both computer-based and field. Their months of collective training culminate now in an army-directed exercise in our new collective training centre, the Canadian Manoeuvre Training Centre in Wainwright, Alberta, where they join the final additions of the Canadian Forces' team, such as air forces, special forces, and intelligence forces, as well as our whole-of-government partners and, where possible, multinational partners. Here in Wainwright, they experience over a period of four weeks the full replication of the environment they will live in operations before they are declared ready to deploy.

• (1600)

[Translation]

The Canadian Forces presently in Afghanistan include much more than the manoeuvre forces that perform the operations on a daily basis. This diagram provides the details on all of the components of our team currently in Afghanistan.

In Kabul, we have a strategic advisory team as well as an Afghan national training team. In Canada, we have a National Command Element and a National Support Element. There is also the HQ Command, the Multi-National Brigade in charge of the south regional command and the designated tactical group in the province of Kandahar. This group is based on 1 PPCLI. The provincial construction team as well as other officers are located in the city of Kandahar.

In preparation for the replacement of most of these groups occurring this summer and autumn, we have provided the required training and developed some esprit de corps in the group that will replace them.

[English]

In the end we guarantee our people that they deploy well-equipped, well-trained, and well-led. This is demonstrated and

confirmed through our whole range of training activities, including chain-of-command-led confirmation exercises.

[Translation]

In closing, I should clarify where our staff come from.

This diagram illustrates only the major bases where we generate the land force units and support elements. However, it does not include the bases and the navy and air force executives who make up the rest of the team and who are truly crucial to our success.

In order to illustrate the level of complexity involved in developing a well-trained team, I would like to show you where we are getting the troops who will be participating in the next three operational forces designated for Afghanistan.

[English]

In the summer of 2006, the 1 PPCLI Battle Group will be replaced by 1 RCR Battle Group, originating from Petawawa, Ontario. They will be supported by an infantry company from Shilo, Manitoba, with the balance of their forces, service support, and specialists from across the Canadian Forces. Their unmanned aerial vehicle unit will come from 408 Squadron based in Edmonton, Alberta, and soldiers will be provided by 5 Brigade in Valcartier.

Most of their training has taken place in Petawawa and Gagetown, New Brunswick, and was completed in May of this year in Wainwright, Alberta.

They'll be succeeded in February of 2007 by the 2 RCR Battle Group, originating from Gagetown, New Brunswick, and an infantry company will join them from Edmonton, Alberta, and their artillery engineer and service support will come from Petawawa, Ontario. They will train mostly in Gagetown, New Brunswick, and their last training event will be at the Canadian Manoeuvre Training Centre in Wainwright, Alberta.

[Translation]

Finally, the 3rd Battalion of the 22nd Regiment will be deployed in the fall of 2007 and will be originating from Valcartier. The Company of the 3rd Battalion is based in Valcartier, as well as most of the mission elements provided by the Valcartier brigade.

[English]

Here, other mission neighbours will originate from across the CF. Training will take place for them in Valcartier and in Gagetown and will culminate again at the Manoeuvre Training Centre in Wainwright.

So in the end, we strive to ensure that our men and women, soldiers all, have the training and conditioning to enable them to perform the mission that Canada has presented them, effectively as a team, with the best possible chances for success, and in a way that allows their experiences and lessons to be passed to those who follow behind. We work to regulate the load on the balance of our army and the Canadian Forces to ensure that we can do missions like Afghanistan, or wherever else conditions require us to go, well into the future.

• (1605)

[Translation]

Thank you. I will now entertain any questions you may have.

[English]

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Who wants to start? From the Liberal Party, is there anybody?

Mr. Dosanjh.

Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh (Vancouver South, Lib.): Thank you.

Obviously you've given us an overview of how things are done. Not being a military person, I'm assuming from what you've told us that when you go into a new mission, you train people well in advance to deal with any eventualities that might occur. In particular, missions such as in Afghanistan are different from force-on-force battles in conventional warfare. I'm not suggesting this is war or anything, but you're essentially dealing with a guerrilla situation.

Can you tell me how intensive that training is? For instance, if I were a soldier trained in conventional battles and I were to go into Afghanistan today, how long would it take for you to take me out of the situation I was in and then train me and send me on my way?

MGen Stuart Beare: Yes, sir.

Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh: That's the first question. I have a couple more I may ask.

MGen Stuart Beare: I'm going to speak just to land operations.

The fundamental competency of our people to perform land operations is based on our capacity to do ground combat. From that capacity we adapt to perform the missions and tasks required for a mission. If that includes training and educating ourselves in counter-insurgency, we do that. As a matter of fact, counter-insurgency is part of our professional curriculum for understanding conflict in general. So we train to be proficient in combat operations, somewhat in the context of a cold war—but not fully in the model of a cold war—to create a baseline of adaptability from which we can adapt to whatever scenarios we're presented, and then we close the gap between our baseline and what a specific mission requirement demands of us.

So our competence comes from our capacity to do combat. With a specific mission like the counter-insurgency mission in Afghanistan, we look at that and we close the gap—the professional knowledge gap, the professional skill gap, and the team-building gap—to make sure we then enter that theatre ready for that specific task.

We are doing that now for Afghanistan by transforming our training institutions to actually present the Afghan scenario to our training audience. So if you were to see the Manoeuvre Training

Centre at Wainwright today preparing our forces for Afghanistan, you would see Afghanistan in Alberta. You would see Afghans in our training area. They look an awful lot like Canadians hired to role-play Afghans, but they are role-playing Afghans. They will represent the full range of threats our people will see, like improvised explosive devices and terrorist extremists. They will represent the non-combatants on that battle space. They'll represent the international actors that we'll interact with in theatre.

So we replicate the operating environment to the best of our ability before our people go, so that they actually play it out here before they live it out there.

Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh: Thank you.

I have one other question. I don't know whether you're equipped to answer this. It's on the issue of the porous Afghan-Pakistan border.

Would you be able to shed any light on how difficult it is, and why it is difficult? What are the conditions that prevail around that border between Afghanistan and Pakistan?

MGen Stuart Beare: You're right, sir, I'm not well informed in terms of the specifics of that. But again, I can assure you that a cross-border problem is one of those problems we present to our people in their training environment. So in their computer exercises and in their field training, they know they're dealing not with an isolated population set here but with porous and fluid populations—combatant and non-combatant, national and international.

Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh: I may have missed this because I was out when you started, but have you been to Afghanistan?

MGen Stuart Beare: I've visited, yes, sir. I've not served there yet, but I've visited three times.

• (1610)

Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh: When was the last time you were there?

MGen Stuart Beare: I was there in April, eight weeks ago.

Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh: If I may ask a question to follow up on that, occasionally in the news stories that you hear...we understand the good work that our forces are doing—the reconstruction, the humanitarian work—and we also understand the counter-insurgency issue that you're dealing with, which is very difficult.

Sometimes when you read between the lines in the news stories... and there was one, in fact, on the front page of the *New York Times* about 10 days ago—not Sunday last, but the previous Sunday—and it appears from that commentary, that article and several others, that we may be losing the PR war on the ground.

Do you have any sense, from April when you were there, as to how we're doing?

MGen Stuart Beare: I had no opportunity to interact with Afghans, to see their perspective. But I can represent the orientation of the force on the ground as being one that is...people use the expression “hearts and minds”, but you're not necessarily trying to win hearts and minds here. That's a pretty tall order. You're trying to create tolerance of the international forces, to assist them, and create in them intolerance for the folks who are standing between them and progress. So clearly, that battle of the mind is going on.

Our command teams, in our engagement with all forces in Afghanistan, be they civil or military, are trying to create intolerance for the insurgency and tolerance for a future that will be a better future for the people of Afghanistan. We're providing tools for our people to help them do that, including printing capabilities, broadcast capabilities, and other things, to communicate to Afghans and stakeholders beyond Afghans in that area.

Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh: Thank you.

The Chair: Good. Right on time. Thank you very much.

Mr. Bachand.

[Translation]

Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[English]

You'll need your translation device.

[Translation]

MGen Stuart Beare: If you speak slowly, sir, I will understand.

Mr. Claude Bachand: Okay, I will speak slowly.

MGen Stuart Beare: I used to go to your military college.

Mr. Claude Bachand: I believe I only have five or seven minutes.

[English]

The Chair: We'll be generous.

[Translation]

Mr. Claude Bachand: All right.

First of all, I find it a bit difficult to understand the diagrams. I should have looked at them before hand, but I must confess that I did not have enough time to do so. Are the reserves included in each of the units that you describe as far as the 18-month training is concerned? Do they start and finish along with everyone else?

MGen Stuart Beare: The reservists are always given individual and collective training within the land forces. Those who decide to join an operational force for deployment have a higher level of training. They can therefore join the tactical group for the rest of the trip, so that they can be deployed.

Mr. Claude Bachand: All right.

Of the 2,050 soldiers who are in Afghanistan, how many are reservists?

MGen Stuart Beare: According to our figures, they represent 15 per cent.

Mr. Claude Bachand: That would mean about 500 people.

MGen Stuart Beare: About 300 people. We have to keep them at this level because of our capacity.

Mr. Claude Bachand: Could you explain the composition of the group in Afghanistan? We are often told that for each infantry soldier in a theatre of operations, there are five or six soldiers behind to keep the theatre of operations functional. If there are 2,000 soldiers in Afghanistan, does that mean that approximately 500 or 600 are soldiers and the others are there to support them? How does it work?

MGen Stuart Beare: The diagram that I provided to you shows the comprehensive contribution of the various units. Several units have their own mission in the Afghanistan intervention. The team in Kabul which is helping create the national government is composed of about 15 people. This team has its own mission and there is no overhead. The team training the Afghan army in Kabul is composed of 25 to 30 people in all. There is no overhead for this team either. The tactical group that carries out most of the manoeuvre operations outside the camp includes about 1,500 soldiers in all, and most of the soldiers leave the camp on a regular basis in order to conduct external operations.

Mr. Claude Bachand: When they leave the camp, are they followed by mechanics, or chefs, for example? People must follow them when they are involved in such an escape.

MGen Stuart Beare: They would like to be followed by chefs.

Mr. Claude Bachand: That is not the case?

MGen Stuart Beare: No, they bring their meals in a bag.

Mr. Claude Bachand: Do any mechanics follow them should they have any vehicle breakdowns, for example?

MGen Stuart Beare: Absolutely. Our soldiers provide all the support. Because of the threats present in the Kandahar region, we must insure that it is our military forces that are providing the support.

• (1615)

Mr. Claude Bachand: I have already been in theatres of operations. You often see civilians or private companies such as ATCO Frontec.

MGen Stuart Beare: As there were in Bosnia.

Mr. Claude Bachand: Exactly.

Are there any in Kandahar? Are there any civilians who are working there? Are you responsible for their training before deployment?

MGen Stuart Beare: No, they're under the control of other members of the Canadian Forces. We share the training provided by the civilians with our international partners in Kandahar.

Mr. Claude Bachand: On your second diagram, you show that there is basic training. Does “low level soldier training” mean recruitment and the first 13 weeks, or does it mean something else?

MGen Stuart Beare: No, this is basic training for every rank. When you are made a major, you receive the training to learn the duties of a major. Then you receive special training for your area of expertise, because you join the full team in order to contribute to the group.

Mr. Claude Bachand: Is it true that there is currently a shortage of instructors because many have been deployed to theatres of operations? This criticism is often made. Do you agree with it? Are you often grappling with this problem?

MGen Stuart Beare: As the Commander Land Force Doctrine and Training, I am responsible for the individual training of all members of the force.

It is not that we have an insufficient number of instructors for the mission. The problem is rather trying to achieve a balance between the size of our training force, the size of our operational force and what remains in Canada, because the rest of the army needs training as well. It's a capacity issue.

Mr. Claude Bachand: Yes.

MGen Stuart Beare: We have to take some leaders from our units and send them to our schools in order to train all of our soldiers. In a period of growth, we send more instructors and leaders to our schools.

The growth rate in our training centres is linked to the pace of growth in our operational forces and in our units here, in Canada.

Mr. Claude Bachand: So you are preparing the next group, over an 18-month period, so that they can take over in Kandahar.

Should the government ask you to start another theatre of operations, would we currently have the capacity to go elsewhere other than Kandahar?

MGen Stuart Beare: In terms of quality, yes. The quality of our people is always guaranteed. We have two operational fields. The second group is trained to the required level so that it can be deployed following a certain number of days of advance notice. Nevertheless, in terms of quantity, we do not have the same capacity.

Mr. Claude Bachand: All right.

MGen Stuart Beare: The force is much smaller than what we have in Kandahar. If there were another deployment, that obviously would put additional pressure on training...

Mr. Claude Bachand: Stress.

MGen Stuart Beare: ...because we would have to replace our soldiers in, let us say, six or twelve months.

[English]

The Chair: Thank you.

Ms. Black.

• (1620)

Ms. Dawn Black (New Westminster—Coquitlam, NDP): Thank you very much.

Thank you very much for your presentation. We all appreciate your taking the time to come to share your expertise with us.

When you were responding to Mr. Dosanjh you talked about this being a counter-insurgency mission. From my understanding that's

not something the Canadian Forces have had a lot of experience with. The kinds of things we're intervening in internationally are different now. You talked about the baseline training and then the training to deal with the changing circumstances around IEDs and suicide bombers and terrorists, so I wanted to ask you, specifically at a tactical level, how do you do that? It seems to me it's a very dangerous situation, very hard to determine, and I'd really appreciate some information on that.

MGen Stuart Beare: If I described the mission as counter-insurgency, I'm not describing it accurately. The mission is a capacity-building mission to get Afghanistan to a point in its being—

Ms. Dawn Black: No, I understand all that. But now you're really dealing with counter-insurgency.

MGen Stuart Beare: Absolutely. There are multiple dimensions to the delivery of the mission, and, as I pointed out, the mission elements are more than only the fighting battle group that is there. There is a national capacity-building effort, the national training effort, the PRT effort, and the battle group.

To live in a counter-insurgency environment and to perform those operations—if I may regress a bit, I was in Bosnia. We were applying our effort to capacity building in Bosnia, but in a different environment. And because it's a counter-insurgency environment with the nature of the threat, we have adapted our baseline, as well as the specific mission training, to be able to ensure that our people have experienced that before they deploy, experienced it in their training before they see it in operations.

What that implies, in specific terms, is that when our soldiers and our leaders are engaged in their individual training, they're not being presented a training scenario that is the old "Warsaw Pact coming across the East German border" scenario. They're being presented a failed-state scenario, within which you find paramilitary forces, former military forces, terrorist extremist forces, crime and corruption, as well as the non-combatants living in the battle spaces, as well as all the international actors who would be there. So we are now treating that as normal; that's no longer abnormal.

What is complicating is the methods that are being used by the opponents. So what we do in that particular case is to introduce their methods in our baseline training, so we are accustomed to seeing that in our military training. Then for specific threats in a specific theatre, we ensure that we deliver that to our soldiers well on the journey, before they get there, and they see it in practice before they get there—like the IED threat, for example. Our soldiers now treat as normal, failed and failing state scenarios. We treat as normal multiple threats, be it a counter-insurgency, be it an insurgency, be it failed military, be it across-the-border threats, and we adapt them to the specific mission. The Warsaw Pact-type scenarios are no longer our baseline.

Ms. Dawn Black: It must be very difficult.

MGen Stuart Beare: But we're an army of veterans, in the sense that since 1989-90, when the wall came down and we started experiencing the world for what it really was, our leaders are wearing their CVs on their chests in terms of the ribbons or the places they've been in and the environments they've been exposed to. The young master corporal of 1992 is now the chief warrant officer of 2006 and has had these different experiences. So, fortunately, we're finding our own investment in our leaders is bringing that back to our institution, and then when our young men or women join our military—

Ms. Dawn Black: They benefit from that.

MGen Stuart Beare: They certainly do, as does the whole institution.

Ms. Dawn Black: In terms of when this mission stops being under Operation Enduring Freedom and transfers over to the ISAF NATO-led mission, what do you perceive to be the changes, particularly in terms of the rules of engagement?

MGen Stuart Beare: I can't speak to the specific rules of engagement. I would expect there would be no difference in terms of what Canada has authorized as the rules of engagement for its forces and those with which we've trained.

I'm not sure what the differences will be in terms of the day-to-day operational activity of the force on the ground. That's really a national command issue between the battle group commander, the brigade commander, the multinational command we're working with, and also the Canada Command here back at Expeditionary Forces Command in Canada. So I wouldn't expect to see a lot of change. What I would hope to see, because it's a much more multinational force, is that we'll have a much more multinational engagement in the mission.

Ms. Dawn Black: My final question. I'm sure you understand that we hope to do a report from everything we are told by all the witnesses who are appearing and our study on what's happening in Afghanistan. I wonder if you have any specific recommendations for this committee.

MGen Stuart Beare: I believe it's public record that such interventions aren't a matter of any one force—military, civilian, governmental, NGO, IO. It's an all-of-government and in many ways it's an all-of-country engagement in something as complicated as an Afghanistan-like scenario. So ensuring, as we plan to intervene in failed and failing state-type scenarios, that we apply to the best of our capacity and ability a whole-of-government, whole-of-Canada approach within the international community to get into a realigned state, which suits the people on the ground as opposed to an end state

that satisfies our perception, is really our business. Again, the 1990s and the turn of this century have taught us that this is what's required to get done. Bosnia is still going on, as an example. It's not done yet.

• (1625)

Ms. Dawn Black: Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Hawn.

Mr. Laurie Hawn (Edmonton Centre, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, General Beare, for being here. It's good to see you again. I'd like to get back to your role in Land Force Doctrine and Training. With the reduction in the size of the force over many, many years—a couple of decades—it has been more difficult to put together cohesive units that live together all the time, and you highlighted that, outlining some of the patchwork. That's not a derogatory term, but there's a bit of patchworking going on for each of these deployments.

What extra challenge does that present to you? Do you see a day when, hopefully, in my view, we might have regiments that are in fact complete and robust enough to just be in that state of readiness more or less continuously?

MGen Stuart Beare: In the first instance, we need to fix the “hollow army”. I believe that's a term that has been used in many fora. The hollow army is one where you have battalions in which you may have three companies, but if you ever try to deploy, you could maybe get two out of the three to deploy, because of people who are injured or who are absent on training and other duties. So we need to fix the hollow army by making the building blocks of that army bigger. That's job one.

Secondly, we want to build more building blocks—companies, squadrons, batteries, and the like—such that when you want to commit one to operations, it only takes one to commit to operations.

Finally, we need to continue to expand the capacity around those things that prepare them, train them, and sustain them: our training centres, our schoolhouses, and the like.

So growth is definitely in our best interests to allow us to be sustainable just at the rate we're performing now and to take away some of the frictions of actually having what has been described by some as a hollow army in terms of one equals one.

Mr. Laurie Hawn: So it's a matter of people, equipment, time, and ultimately money—or initially money.

The reserve component is important to what we're doing operationally, obviously. What are the challenges to maintaining this?

There are about 300 reservists over there right now. Reservists, of course, have a special challenge; they have a civilian life, too. Do you see any real difficulty or potentially insurmountable challenges to keep that reserve component up on a continuous rotational basis?

MGen Stuart Beare: At this rate, it's sustainable, but again, if you want to push out—let's say you want to go from 300 to 400—the number of reserve soldiers behind that has to be exponentially larger, because of course it's not a one-for-one proposition anymore.

I don't have the official numbers. It may take 10 part-time soldiers to create one volunteer for a six-month or year-long engagement, as an example. It's not a one-for-one ratio, so we do need to grow the capacity of our reserve force in its numbers if we want to grow more reservists who can participate in sustained operations overseas.

At the same time, the duration of their engagement is a challenge. With the complexity of the environment we're operating in, the gap or the journey from a baseline to a deployable status is that much more demanding. So we're requiring our people to sign up earlier and for a bit longer before we deploy them, if they're going from the reserve force to the regular force to something as complicated as Afghanistan.

In Bosnia, however, our reserve force carried the load for that mission for the majority of its final years, because, again, its complexity was down and the level of time required to get from a volunteer baseline to a deployment level was less.

• (1630)

Mr. Laurie Hawn: Getting back to Wainwright specifically for a second, I was in Cold Lake a couple of weeks ago and flying the advanced F-18 simulator. We were talking about the ability to link Cold Lake with Wainwright, with navy units, with allied units, whether it's U.S., British, or whatever, to fight the battle, that kind of thing. How far away are we from that? What distribution between these emulators—we don't call them simulators anymore, I guess—and live training are you experiencing in Wainwright right now?

MGen Stuart Beare: When we put our next task force into training in Wainwright this fall, it will be fully instrumented, which means every soldier, every vehicle, and every communication system will be connected to the weapon effects simulation system that allows us to track where they are, what they're doing, how they're doing, their engagements, their communications, their decision-making, and record that and play it back to them so they can observe on their own how well they're performing.

Mr. Laurie Hawn: Who lives, who dies.

MGen Stuart Beare: Who lives, who dies, and if you said you went left but you actually went right...all these sorts of things. You don't get to lie to the weapon effects simulation system.

Wainwright is just a culminating point for the journey of training. These simulators will be found in our garrisons, so people can use them before they get there, and in our schoolhouses so they can use them there before they get there as well. They're complemented by the computer systems where you train without necessarily going to the field—computer-assisted training.

So within the land force, we're modernizing at a rapid rate. Within the Canadian Forces, we're working to integrate land, sea, and air so that you can actually fight in Wainwright with real troops, and you're connected to a brigade headquarters that has a virtual multinational partner and you can connect to maritime forces off British Columbia and make them look like they're actually providing you support from the sea, without actually having to be there.

Mr. Laurie Hawn: I'm just going to put words in your mouth here—we're going to visit Afghanistan, probably in October. Would you suggest a good follow-up to that visit would be a visit to the training centre in Wainwright, just to see how the training centre emulates Afghanistan?

MGen Stuart Beare: I would highly recommend it, if you're interested, to see what they do in the theatre. To see the culminating point of their training journey in Wainwright, at our Manoeuvre Training Centre, would be very enlightening. It's enlightening for me when I do it. I see them in theatre, I come back and shape change, or reshape how we're actually producing that culminating training event at the Manoeuvre Training Centre.

Mr. Laurie Hawn: How quickly can you take a lesson learned in Afghanistan and turn that into a training event in Wainwright?

MGen Stuart Beare: The time it takes to click “send” on an e-mail. The IED, the improvised explosive device, has been an attention grabber for everybody, for a lot of obvious reasons. With initial reports coming out of Kandahar, we're able to apply those lessons and observations to our materiel procurement here in Ottawa, to our training design at our army training headquarters, to putting scenarios into our training schoolhouses so that people are being presented with the same type of problem; and ultimately, to train our opposing force, those who are replicating the bad guys in our Manoeuvre Training Centre in Wainwright. They'll now adapt to replicate what the bad guys are doing overseas and pull it right into the training centre.

Mr. Laurie Hawn: So there's an R and D component capability there as well for developing the tactics in Wainwright, and you can turn around and go back to Afghanistan with them.

MGen Stuart Beare: We do that as well, yes. One of my outstations is the army's lessons learned centre. I have an army lessons learned team living in Kandahar right now. They connect right back to me as frequently as necessary to institutionalize necessary changes.

Mr. Laurie Hawn: Is that happening daily, weekly?

MGen Stuart Beare: It's daily contact among the staff, and when it's a barnburner—in other words, something that gets everybody's attention—and I have one of those no less than once a month, it results in a direction to change from the army.

Mr. Laurie Hawn: Without detail—

The Chair: Mr. Hawn, I'm going to have to cut you off, I'm afraid. We'll come back on the second round.

We have Mr. Steckle, and then we'll go Conservative—the government—the Bloc, back to Conservative, back to the Liberals.

Mr. Steckle, you're on.

Mr. Paul Steckle (Huron—Bruce, Lib.): General Beare, thank you for coming. I'm not a regular on this committee, but I have an interest in that part of the world because I've had a family member in that part of the world for a good many years.

When they make the attempt to bring these insurgents into the line of fire so they get rid of these guys, we're talking about a border issue, where these people have cell groups in Pakistan. Is there anything we can do, or is there cooperation between the Afghani and Pakistani governments in terms of working and having these people exposed, making the job for you people a lot easier? You're trying to dig these guys out of holes, and you really don't know who the enemy is. This is a theatre of combat; this is not peacekeeping. We may as well call it the way it is.

We might say there is, but I'm just wondering, is there truly cooperation between the Pakistani and the Afghani government leadership in trying to drive the Taliban out of these areas?

• (1635)

MGen Stuart Beare: I regret I can't be an authority on answering that question. When we spoke eight weeks ago, I can tell you the brigade commander, Brigadier-General David Fraser, was engaged with his chain of command, who are actively engaged in that cross-border issue. So it's not being ignored by anybody. How effective that is, I can't speak to, sir.

Mr. Paul Steckle: When you need further assistance in certain command operations, who gives the orders? Canada has 2,000 people, or however many we have there; other countries have their people there. Obviously, we're not all doing the same job. There are so many command operations. Who puts the call out for the type of people we need? Who makes that call? Is it NATO that does it? Does the United States do that? Who does that?

MGen Stuart Beare: I can't speak to the specifics on who, as in persons, or what, as in institutions.

Mr. Paul Steckle: Where does the order of command come from?

MGen Stuart Beare: At the end of the day, an appeal for Canadian Forces contribution in terms of military capacity would be managed by National Defence Headquarters, Chief of the Defence Staff, and the Canadian Expeditionary Forces Command.

In terms of a decision to go or not to go, and with what, to do what, is clearly a Government of Canada decision. The dialogue between the commander of the Canadian Forces, the CDF, and the government on that is ongoing. So we're responsive to, first and always, the Government of Canada.

When we get into a theatre we adapt to the local command-and-control climate to ensure that we are unified in purpose with the folks we're working with, and we're always loyal to the *raison d'être* that sent us there from the Government of Canada through National Defence to our troops in the field at the same time.

Mr. Paul Steckle: So someone would have a catalogue of the equipment that Canada has and the equipment that Britain would have available. If you needed more armoured vehicles, they would know where to go to get those.

MGen Stuart Beare: They'd never have anything that precise, sir. They'd have an idea, and they certainly know what qualities they're looking for, but the intent is not for them to ask, and in our doctrine that we train on with our NATO partners, we train so that in force-providing, in mission requirements, you don't ask for tanks, you ask for capability. You don't ask for airplanes, you ask for capability.

The capability required for this mission is this: to project power across this space, to do these types of operational activities in this climate. And they allow military forces to then recommend force packages, which are then decided by military commanders on advice to governments.

Mr. Paul Steckle: The minister has certain goals set for increasing the military personnel. Where are we at in terms of recruitment? Is the recruitment going according to plan, or is there a need to put extra effort into encouraging...? What's happening on that front?

MGen Stuart Beare: I believe the Chief of Defence has said that next to operations, recruiting is job one. We don't take recruiting for granted. We are always attracting our successors. As a matter of fact, I think our professional obligation is to create our successors so that the defence of Canada mission can be performed by people younger than us when we get older.

So recruiting is job one beyond delivering operations. We met our 2005-06 targets, I'm led to believe based on former expansion numbers, and we're working like crazy to make sure we get not just the numbers to maintain our strength this year, but to grow. As a trainer, we are actually creating more capacity to train more recruits, and that capacity is already starting to be used. We are actually running two more basic recruit courses as an army on top of what St. Jean does as a recruit school, because they're already above their capacity, and that's going on in Valcartier right now.

• (1640)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Steckle.

Mr. Calkins.

Mr. Blaine Calkins (Wetaskiwin, CPC): Thank you. And thank you, General, for being here.

I'm just going to continue on in that vein of questioning. There has been progress made, I know, with recruitment, but the Auditor General came out and basically said in a statement here that plans to expand the forces are at risk. Her May 16 report showed that only about 4,700 recruits make it through the process every year. I'm wondering what's being done in order to sustain our commitment in Afghanistan and fulfill other obligations.

How many recruits would we need? Is that 4,700 enough, or do we need to increase that? It's not just growing the forces, it's replacing people who are retiring as well, so is that number enough? You said you met your targets. Maybe that question has already been answered, but are we meeting the long-term targets or do we need to have higher numbers on an annual basis?

MGen Stuart Beare: Last year we met the targets for maintaining our number and for the expansion we committed to last year, so it was an expansion target last year. This year, that expansion target is growing by virtue of a new declaration to grow by even more than we had been ordered to a year ago. So we're adapting to a larger growth target.

The number of years it will take is going to be the number of years it will take, frankly, and I can't give you a hard number on that. But the Chief of Defence took all of his leadership, general officers and flag officers, for a two-day session and caused us to look at ourselves to ask ourselves the question, if Canadians aren't coming to us, why not? If we're losing them between the time we attract them and the time we try to enroll them, why? If we're losing them in the first three to five months of their training, why? The last thing we want to do is lose someone who wants to be part of us.

So the amount of introspection that's going on in terms of how we attract and how we recruit, and then how we train and retain our

people, is at the highest I've ever seen it. The Chief of Military Personnel, who is the fellow charged with managing the human resources of the Canadian Forces, is working very hard.

Mr. Blaine Calkins: The report goes on to say that "National Defence needs to improve its recruiting efforts to attract candidates who have not traditionally considered careers in the military". That's what we've just been talking about. I want you to elaborate on that a little more, if you don't mind.

There are a number of programs for aboriginal youth, and one successful program called Bold Eagle that comes out of my riding in a community near Wetaskiwin. I was wondering if you could elaborate on whether there are any special efforts to recruit aboriginal Canadians.

MGen Stuart Beare: Yes. The two programs that peak and trough, depending on the capacity we have to deliver them, are Bold Eagle and Tommy Prince. Bold Eagle attracts reserve soldiers and Tommy Prince attracts them into the regular army. That's just for the army; I'm not talking about the maritime or air forces. The answer is, yes, we are working hard to attract, recruit, and enroll members of all communities across the country, including aboriginals.

Bold Eagle doesn't get you a full-time soldier; it gets you a reserve soldier. We hope it creates a network of positive experiences and essentially expands the network of more positive experiences for more people to be attracted to join us.

Our recruiting centres are deliberately no longer looking at their communities as if they're all one. Communities are communities of communities. They're orienting the recruiting drive to target—maybe that's not a good word—to communicate with communities in their culture and in their language to bring them to us. We're asking them to join a national institution called the Canadian Forces. We're not trying to sell them a bill of goods here. We adapt or communicate, in the language and in the methods that appeal to those communities, our profession as a Canadian institution to attract them to us, without having to treat everybody the same in terms of the method of communication.

In British Columbia, we have a hugely successful program that speaks to the Indo-Canadian community and specifically communicates with them and to them through methods and outreach programs that work for them. But the minute a young man or woman of that community joins us, they're joining a national institution. If we can accommodate them, as we are doing with dress and ceremonial factors, then all the more power to them and all the more power to us.

• (1645)

Mr. Blaine Calkins: Okay. Thanks.

The army has the new Canadian Manoeuvre Training Centre in Wainwright. Being a member of Parliament from Alberta, I'm fairly familiar with the terrain. Being a person who hasn't seen Afghanistan but has seen the pictures, the terrain looks more like the west side of Alberta than the east of Alberta, which is where Wainwright is. Could you elaborate on how the training at Wainwright overcomes some of the minuses of the terrain factor that some of the soldiers in Afghanistan would have to deal with?

MGen Stuart Beare: Sir, I believe you're intending to go to Afghanistan. When you get to Kandahar, it doesn't look anything like the Rocky Mountains. It's flat and hot.

Mr. Blaine Calkins: No, but the border with Pakistan is where the current mission is.

MGen Stuart Beare: Some of our operations go there.

Mr. Blaine Calkins: Yes.

MGen Stuart Beare: You're absolutely right. Essentially, they have all terrains. They have high plateaus, deserts, mountains, greenery, and sand.

In terms of our capacity to live in those environments, in the mountains and in the deserts, basically on our own, without support, our baseline training provides that. If we need specialist skills for mountain operations, we train individuals in those skills. They get that and take that with them. Mountain operations have those individuals on the team.

The most important thing to replicate in Wainwright isn't necessarily the terrain. It's what I call the "human environment" or the "conflict environment". Our folks aren't trying to overcome mountains, fields, and deserts. That's only where they're living. They're actually challenged to overcome the human conditions where they're operating.

In the case of an Afghanistan mission, they're presented with a replication of the Afghani environment. They see civilians, farmers, and commercial trade. They're presented with confrontational scenarios as represented by corrupt officials, the dispossessed, terrorist extremists, and the Taliban. That's what Wainwright allows us to do.

As a matter of fact, this year we've actually awarded a contract to a company in the United States to role-play specific actors on the battle space. We want it to be very professionally done, and they'll be starting to do that this fall in Wainwright. This is a method the U.S. military has been using for quite some time.

That's the replication we're really focusing on.

The Chair: Thank you, sir.

Mr. Bouchard.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Robert Bouchard (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, BQ): Thank you for your presentation and for being here.

Earlier, my colleague asked you a question about the number of soldiers that could be engaged in offensive action. I did not really understand your answer, but I would like to question you further on this matter.

Could you tell us the number of soldiers who are at the front, meaning those who are pursuing the Taliban and those who are truly engaged in offensive actions? Are there 200, 300 or more soldiers?

Mgén Stuart Beare: More than 1,000.

Mr. Robert Bouchard: More than 1,000?

MGen Stuart Beare: That is correct, because you have to include all of those who are participating in operations outside of the camp. We have three infantry companies, each one with between 130 and 140 soldiers. During a deployment, they all participate. They are supported by the artillery which locates the shooting.

[*English*]

the forward observation officer.

[*Translation*]

The artillery provides the guns that support our troops on manoeuvres. Our engineers enable the soldiers to travel over ground in mined territory or if there is a threat of imitative electronic deception. They protect the troops. The team responsible for air surveillance provide a visual image of the terrain in front of the troops. All of these forces are therefore involved in the manoeuvres. At the end of the day, it may be that only one or two combat soldiers have done the work enabling them to...

• (1650)

Mr. Robert Bouchard: ...to detain...

MGen Stuart Beare: ...to detain an adversary. In the end, perhaps only two soldiers were required to do this job, but the entire force will have supported them, operationally, by providing medical care in the event of injury, providing communications, intelligence or firepower. The tactical group comprises approximately 1,500 people who are deployed on the ground, working together in order to achieve the same objective.

Moreover, the national command, which constitutes the chain of command providing contact with Ottawa, includes about 200 people. It provides intelligence to the forces. In addition, there is the national support group which provides supplies and support to our soldiers.

Indeed, we don't make any distinction between the combat soldier and the support soldier. They are all soldiers, they all participate in the same operation. We do a lot of manoeuvres in Kandahar, if we compare ourselves to our colleagues in allied forces.

It is difficult to provide you with figures, because it is difficult to make a distinction between those who are part of this group and those who are not. Most of the 1,500 soldiers in the tactical groups work outside of the camp.

Mr. Robert Bouchard: Thank you.

You appear to be relying on many Canadian bases to obtain the number of soldiers required for our mission in Afghanistan. Do you believe that you are asking for the maximum number?

I will ask my question another way. If we were to consider all of the military resources of Canada, how would you qualify your requirement for soldiers? Since there are more than 2,000 soldiers in Afghanistan and considering all of our staff in Canada, would you say that you have a heavy, normal or regular, or small demand?

MGen Stuart Beare: There are nearly 18,000 members of the Canadian land forces. We provide 4,000 soldiers per year to foreign operations. This is a planning number. When we have a mission such as the one in Afghanistan, we adjust our figures so that we can achieve the operational objectives based on our capacities in Canada. So we deploy nearly 4,000 soldiers per year for one mission, the mission in Afghanistan. There are two rotations per year. We do more than just participate in foreign operations.

As I said at the outset, we are experiencing a period of growth, a period of transformation. We still have the responsibility of supporting the basic force in order to be able to participate in this type of mission abroad or in Canada over the next five to ten years. That all takes work.

All Canadian Forces are involved in these four tasks. As for the land forces specifically, these four tasks keep us very busy: support for generating forces, operations, transformation and growth.

As I said earlier, we need to expand the basic force. We want to increase the number of our units. Given the growth which is now allowed in the Canadian Forces, I am confident that we will be able to do this. Meanwhile, we always have to maintain a balance between the operations in Canada and those abroad.

So I will not tell you that those soldiers that we deploy are not ready.

•(1655)

[English]

The Chair: Thank you.

We'll have to move on.

Ms. Gallant, and then Mr. McGuire.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and through you, to the witness.

In terms of training new recruits, what's the determining rate factor now? In other words, what is the greatest challenge the Canadian Forces must overcome at this point in time in getting a new recruit up to fighting capability?

MGen Stuart Beare: There are things we are seeking to do. Number one is accelerate the time from a person being interested to being signed up. Then we're seeking to accelerate the time from being signed up to being a trained recruit—which is almost an

oxymoron, in the sense that you're no longer a recruit, but you're in and employable—from the time you start your recruit training to the time you're employable in your trade.

Some trades could take a number of years. To train a pilot or a submariner takes years. So we are trying to accelerate the initial training period, which is just the recruit training—the “welcome to the uniform” stuff—to get the recruit into the hands of the army, navy, and air force, in order to train them in their specific skill quicker.

So it's attract more, sign them up more quickly, and get them through the basic training more quickly. They are not able to be deployed until they are trained in their specific trade in the army, infantry, artillery, engineer, signals, and so on, and until they've joined their teams in the units earmarked for operations.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: If we want to pinpoint the obstacle in getting to these various stages, would it be the number of trainers or positions available? What are the key obstacles we must overcome in order to speed these processes up?

MGen Stuart Beare: In the first instance, it's making sure as an institution that we change the way we think about how we attract people. The second is in our own bureaucracy, to go aggressively after the institutional barriers to getting people signed up quickly.

We have the challenge of citizenship and security clearances; we have all these necessary checks and balances that need to be tackled in order to allow us to enroll a person as a member in the Canadian Forces. The minute they sign on the line, we are obligated to them, as they are obligated to us.

So these challenges exist, they have been identified, and they are being tackled. But they do take the time they take.

In terms of production, we have not yet achieved the size of the training institutions we need to support and expand the CF. So we need not only to grow the field forces but at the same time grow the training institutions that allow us to create those field forces. We're not there yet.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: To what extent is emphasis placed on avoiding collateral damage or civilian casualties? For example, in assessing performance on the simulating devices that you mentioned earlier, how is the trainee's mark affected if they accidentally shoot a civilian in the...? Do they have marks subtracted? What happens?

MGen Stuart Beare: In terms of individual training, when you're being taught a new skill, the school will provide you with scenarios that will challenge you. If you're a rifleman who is conducting infantry operations and you do something wrong, it will come back to you. The best teacher is failure under a controlled school environment. Having been presented with a failure, in judgment or otherwise, you have that fed back to you in a learning environment, which allows you to learn, internalize, and then go forward.

In Wainwright, for the collective training, you have a rifle company that is trying to clear through a town that has some insurgents in it; the insurgents, soldiers, and non-combatants are instrumented, and the minute anyone uses weapons-type force against a non-combatant, it flags up on our screen. It's a significant training event that is fed back, not just to the individual but to the whole team. How did you get into this circumstance? Why are you in this circumstance? What were you thinking when you did this? What would you do differently next time? We feed that back into our training scenarios as well.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: So there is a fair amount of emphasis put on avoiding civilian casualties.

MGen Stuart Beare: Absolutely. We're oriented to succeed in the mission. This went contrary to that.

• (1700)

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: To the extent that it's permissible, please tell us about the Peace through Strength program, which I believe offers the Taliban immunity from prosecution in exchange for cooperation. Can you tell us anything about that?

MGen Stuart Beare: That I can't do, because I don't know.

The Chair: You're just about out of time, Ms. Gallant.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The Chair: Mr. McGuire, and then Mr. Hiebert.

Hon. Joe McGuire (Egmont, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

There's not very much left to ask.

Are you part of the group that's training the new Afghani army to take your place when the allies go?

MGen Stuart Beare: We train the soldiers who deploy...and then train the Afghani army. That's correct.

I am not personally involved in the relationship with the Afghani army in Afghanistan.

Hon. Joe McGuire: So you're training the officers?

MGen Stuart Beare: We're training the officers—the warrant officers and their leaders—who deploy to Kabul, at the national training centre. Through our training system we train the soldiers who are working alongside the Afghan National Army and national police. As of this summer, we will be deploying an observer military liaison team that will live with an Afghani battalion and provide enabling support from the ally forces.

We're interacting with the Afghan National Army at the national training centre, which trains their basic officers and basic soldiers. We are operating alongside the national army and national police. We're embedding Canadian professionals, officers, and NCOs into an Afghani battalion starting this summer and fall, to coach and mentor them as well.

Hon. Joe McGuire: Are all the allies doing this? Are you all doing the Wainwright model, with each other and with the Afghani army?

MGen Stuart Beare: We would be unable to train the Afghanis to our level of sophistication. The training they need is provided to them in Afghanistan. We are actually taking the best practices, vis-à-vis the Wainwright model, of our national allies, in particular the

British and the Americans, to do the training. The sophistication, in terms of instrumentation, is the latest of its kind in the world. We are with them, or even beyond them, in some of our capabilities.

In terms of training the Afghan National Army, it's their country, it's their culture, and we're adapting to them.

Hon. Joe McGuire: Are they helping to train you and the allies?

MGen Stuart Beare: They're certainly helping to teach us. I wouldn't say they're helping to train us.

Hon. Joe McGuire: Well, that's teach.

MGen Stuart Beare: Absolutely. Culture, the way you see the space you're working in—it's their country. They can identify good and bad much better than we can.

In terms of actually bringing all the physical and non-physical influencers to them, we do that well.

Hon. Joe McGuire: Is there an air force being trained in Afghanistan—an Afghani Air Force?

MGen Stuart Beare: I would be speculating. I believe the answer is yes, but it's not by us.

The Chair: You have some time left, Joe.

Hon. Joe McGuire: That's good.

The Chair: We'll go to Mr. Hiebert.

Mr. Russ Hiebert (South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale, CPC): Thank you.

Thank you for being here.

My first question has to do with what additional training, over and above the normal training you would be part of, the Afghanistan mission has generated for you at this time.

MGen Stuart Beare: It hasn't generated any surprises since we've been engaged. I'd say that 9/11 was a bit of a turning point in our collective consciousness. We've been adapting our training, education, and professional development, really, since the Cold War and when the wall came down. We've seen the world for what it is: intra-state as opposed to inter-state as the norm; complex conflict as opposed to red versus blue, good guy versus bad guy, and those simple scenarios. We've been adapting to that over a number of years.

I'd say that the real load in our training and professional development is in making sure that we, as professional soldiers, understand insurgency. Where does it come from? What motivates it? What enables it? How do you act against it? When I ask how you act against it, I don't mean how we as the military act against it, but how you create an environment that opposes the insurgency, the environment being the one created by local authorities, local police, and others. That's one.

The other one is raising the level of what we expect a soldier to be capable of doing. It is a lot easier for a rifle company commander of 150 soldiers to line them up and advance as a team than it is to send a pair into a building, supported by another pair across the street who are dealing with an angry cop, supported by an intelligence system with a source who is telling you where the bad guy is. The level of complexity has gone up.

What it requires us to do is make sure that our soldiers at all ranks are absolutely competent in their core skills—they bring those with them—can adapt them to the environment within which they're going to operate, and are confident not just in themselves but in their teammates.

This is why, if you look at it as a blank sheet of paper, the training journey would seem to be onerous, but actually it's required. Counter-insurgency has given us a new level of work to focus on and has made us make sure we create the confidence and competence, at the lowest possible level, to operate independently of chains of command in a very complicated environment.

• (1705)

Mr. Russ Hiebert: How much time do I have left?

The Chair: You have two minutes.

Mr. Russ Hiebert: I'll skip to my last question, then.

What are the main resource requirements for the future that you would need to ensure that our land training facilities can be sustained and that the calibre and the level required by our Canadian soldiers continues to dominate the opposition? Basically, what more needs to be invested in your area of expertise so that we can seek higher levels of excellence?

MGen Stuart Beare: First is people. We need to ensure that we don't have to tap into other parts of the organization to run a training system.

Second is partners. The nature of operations today—the whole of government, the three Ds, pick a term—requires us to have our partners and us working alongside each other before we actually get there. We need to do more on that front.

Finally, it's the kit. The quality of equipment we use overseas is the best of its kind in the world. We don't have enough quantity back home, which means we can't leave it all in one place; it needs to move to the training audiences as we designate different task forces to take a lead. We need to change the scale of our equipment back here in Canada, grow it where we're limited, and make sure it's in every place we need it, not just in some places so it has to move around over time.

Those would be my big three.

The Chair: We go to Mr. Dosanjh, and that will end this second round. We'll see how much time we have after that.

Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh: You were talking about recruitment and retention. As I was listening, you really didn't answer the most important question. Why is it that you lose people between the time of recruitment and the completion of training, or shortly after they're fully trained? Why are you not getting enough in the first place, in terms of recruits? You didn't answer that question.

MGen Stuart Beare: The answer is that from the time a person applies to the time we sign them up, whatever slows that down, that's what's doing it, sir. I think what's slowing it down is, in part, our own practices, which are being challenged by us now, and in part issues of governance, which we can't do much about: security screening, citizenship, and the like.

Really, once you have them on a hook, you have to reel them in and get them signed up. What's slowing that down right now is security clearances, health issues, and other factors.

Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh: Is that what you mean by your own practices?

MGen Stuart Beare: Yes, our practices or institutions.

When we get them into the training system, however, then we have full control. If we lose them in training, it's not for lack of our effort or lack of their will. At some point or another, what you think you're joining and what you're actually in comes to your mind. What's most important is not asking people why they joined, but why they stayed. What we find is that the ones who stayed understood early on in their training what they were really getting into and said, I'm okay with that.

Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh: Thank you.

The Chair: We still have some time left, if you wish to go into the third round.

Mr. Hawn.

• (1710)

Mr. Laurie Hawn: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

You brought up the challenge of citizenship a couple of times. What is your challenge with citizenship?

MGen Stuart Beare: Right now, we require folks seeking to enroll in the Canadian Forces to have no less than landed immigrant status. I can't speak specifically to where that comes from. Whether it's a question of legislation or departmental policy or whatever, I don't know at this stage of the game. But that is an issue. There are folks who would seek to be in our army but can't actually wait the year or two years it takes to get landed immigrant status. That's an example of one barrier to rapid enrollment for those who want to be part of us.

Mr. Laurie Hawn: The reason I ask that question is very specific. I've got a private member's bill that's designed to accelerate that by accelerating a person's citizenship by a day for every day they serve in the Canadian Forces, enrolling them prior to their being citizens.

It's worked well in other countries. Are you familiar with the experience in France and the United States where this has been done to a fairly large extent?

MGen Stuart Beare: No, sir, I'm not. But anything that accelerates it is a good thing.

Mr. Laurie Hawn: Okay.

MGen Stuart Beare: The Australian army, as an example, will hire you in a week, because they know what they're getting when they go after people. They'll cover all the rest of that; they'll catch up to it later. It's really extraordinary when they hire a trained military man from another country of their choice in a week. Colleagues of mine have actually taken that route.

The Chair: Mr. Dosanjh.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Claude Bachand: Is it not my turn? Was he not finished?
[*English*]

The Chair: Nobody spoke up when we missed his spot.

Mr. Claude Bachand: What's that?

The Chair: The order for proceeding is Liberal, Conservative, and Bloc.

Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh: Thank you—

The Chair: There was nobody speaking up when we went to the Conservatives, so now if Mr. Dosanjh wants to...

Mr. Claude Bachand: Well, he just spoke a few minutes ago.

The Chair: Yes, but when we ended the second round, it was strange, as we had started the round with a Liberal and ended it with a Liberal. I don't know how we did that.

Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh: If you give me a moment, I'll actually finish very quickly.

I wasn't going to ask this question, but I'm intrigued. I don't know about this practice of taking in people as immigrants, or as prospective immigrants, and processing them and making them soldiers in the army or military. That raises a whole host of questions. And I ask this reluctantly.

I was born and raised in India, and I know that Nepalese Gurkhas are found in the Indian army and the British army; they are great soldiers, but they are essentially fighting for pay, though I didn't want to use that term. As an individual, I'm really concerned about this thrust that we may have, that we should get people coming into

this country just to be part of our military. I think people come into the country to be part of the country. While being in the military is a great way of serving the country, I don't know whether you have all of the prerequisites of being able to integrate into the military as a person from this country, if you simply come in to be part of the military. I have serious concerns.

MGen Stuart Beare: Yes, sir, and if I represented that as the aim, that's not correct. The aim is to accelerate the journey for people who wish to belong to the military and who are on a journey to citizenship. That's the aim, sir.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Bachand.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Claude Bachand: Academics tell us that the generals are still fighting the last war, but in my opinion, that is not the picture that you are painting.

As far as the Land Force Doctrine and Training System is concerned, I read that this is taking place in Kingston and in many schools. You mentioned the school in Wainwright, but there is also one in Gagetown.

First of all, are you the one who establishes the doctrine and training, or is this done by another general?

MGen Stuart Beare: I work in partnership with the director general responsible for land force capacity renewal. We are partners in the Doctrine and Training System. The link between doctrine, training and operations is unification. Lessons learned under my control have a direct bearing on the drafting of the doctrine.

We are a small group of chiefs who focus only on the doctrine of land forces. The staff colleges and the lessons learned are the link between that and our training centres.

• (1715)

Mr. Claude Bachand: We have seen what is going on in some schools, such as the one in Gagetown. Earlier, I was somewhat surprised to hear you talk about the artillery. I would imagine that you were referring specifically to mortar, etc., because the big guns that fire at 15 kilometres probably do not exist anymore. The armed vehicles and others constitute, in my opinion, technology and doctrine that no longer are adaptive to the current situation. And yet, we still see this being talked about in the schools.

Are we not making mistakes when we, for example, train people to operate armed vehicles when, in fact, we no longer need them in Afghanistan? Are such mistakes occurring?

MGen Stuart Beare: If you view that as an error, yes. However, we consider that it is the very basis of land training which gives Canadians the option to assign part of the military to resolve a crisis occurring somewhere. There is no guarantee that we will always be facing situations like the one in Afghanistan. So we have a basic capacity to fight in a contemporary setting, and we can, because of this basic capacity, take a tactical team, like the one currently in Afghanistan, and adapt it to a specific mission. This is the point where we are at now. We do not want our army to be trained solely for the purpose of participating in the mission in Afghanistan.

Mr. Claude Bachand: Thank you.

[*English*]

The Chair: Thank you.

With time running out, we'd like to thank you, sir, for being here. You answered the questions very capably, as we thought you would, and I think it added a lot to our knowledge of the situation and exactly how our troops are prepared when they go over there and get into the live situations they're in.

Thank you very much.

We're going to take a very short, one-minute pause before we get into committee business, so that we can wish our guests goodbye.

MGen Stuart Beare: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

• (1717) _____ (Pause) _____

• (1721)

The Chair: I'd like to call the meeting back to order, please.

Well, that was quick. Thank you very much.

First of all, committee, I'd like to thank you all for giving me this opportunity. I talked to all the parties about giving me a few minutes to address a situation that arose out of a previous meeting. If you give me a few minutes, I'd like to recap what happened and then see if the resolution I have developed is acceptable to you. I'd like to address the events of June 8, first of all, and then the June 13 committee meetings.

First I want to assure Mr. Bachand and all members that my vacating the chair at the June 8 meeting was not part of a prearranged scheme to adjourn the meeting early. I have not played, I am not playing, and I will not play those kinds of games with this committee; however, the motion to adjourn early was presented, it was handled properly by Mr. Bachand and the clerk, and it was passed.

From that early adjournment motion, there were two motions presented by Ms. Black at the June 13 meeting. One motion dealt with potential future dilatory motions; it was eventually withdrawn. The motion in question in my mind is the one in which Ms. Black asked for an apology to be sent to the witnesses.

After reviewing the motion, I sought advice, researched the acceptability of that motion, and received some varying options and opinions. The clerk had ruled the motion acceptable, based on his research and advice he had received, and rightly so. I have been told by some that the motion was admissible and by others that it was not. What I should have done, the more so because of the conflicting

views of the committee members, was left these arguments to the committee.

First of all, Mr. Bachand, I want to assure you that exposing you to that original situation was not my intent.

To Ms. Black, I'd like to circulate to the committee a letter that I have prepared for your perusal and for input. The letter is being passed out; I'll wait until it's handed out to everybody.

What I would do is this: we'd have the list of witnesses who were here, and under the heading there, the witness's name would be entered.

I would like to apologize for the early adjournment of the June 8th meeting of the Standing Committee on National Defence.

I appreciate the fact that, at the Committee's request, you took time out of your busy schedule to appear at the meeting to offer your perspective on the issue we are studying. In many cases, witnesses use the question and answer portion of these meetings to make points they did not have time to make during their ten-minute presentation.

Any information you would have presented in the remaining scheduled time of the meeting and that you were unable to present because of the early adjournment, I invite you to submit to the committee as written evidence to be used in the preparation of our final report.

Once again, please accept my apology and I thank you for taking the time to appear at our committee and presenting your views.

That will be over my signature.

Ladies and gentlemen, that's the path I would like to pursue. I would suppose, Ms. Black, that because it was your motion, you may wish to comment.

• (1725)

Ms. Dawn Black: What is the status of the motion now, or do you plan on presenting the motion to the committee again as well?

The Chair: I suppose if this avenue is not acceptable, that's what I'm saying: the motion that I ruled out of order is now back in play. This is an offer I'm making to take care of that issue, as I indicated.

Ms. Dawn Black: I'd be interested in hearing the opinions of some of the other people around the table.

The Chair: Let's start, then, with our usual process—first the official opposition, and then the Bloc, and then the Conservatives, if they wish.

Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh: Thank you.

Obviously this was a very important issue, and we were planning to support Ms. Black's motion.

I think given the nature of the letter and what the chair has said, and unless Ms. Black insists otherwise, I'd be inclined to go with this and leave the motion as abandoned, unless you really want to ask people to come back, in a sense, and present themselves for questioning. They might not want to come back; that's the only other thing left. This letter takes care of all the other issues you raised.

The Chair: Mr. Bachand.

[Translation]

Mr. Claude Bachand: I am not as complaisant as my colleague.

Mr. Chairman, with all due respect, you were not here when these things occurred. The resolution and Ms. Black's motion clearly states that the committee, and not the chair, apologizes. The committee is apologizing for the poor conduct of the Conservative members. They were the ones who voted in favour of the motion to adjourn. No one on this side of the table did that. As a result of the way that the matter was then resolved, there was even talk about the opposition demanding the resignation of the chair because, in my opinion, we cannot treat witnesses in that manner, and try to then hide the fact and say that we did not know what happened. That is not tolerable. Given the entire procedure, we will set the resolution aside and accept your letter of apology.

I would have liked to adopt the motion today, because the conduct of the Conservative members of the committee is really at issue. You had to be here to have seen it. It was done abruptly. I feel that the witnesses were not treated properly.

If we do not want to politicize the committee too much, we have to get off on the right foot. I am prepared to accept your apology, I know that you were not involved in that. You will agree with me, however, that it is curious that you came to see me in the lobby on Monday in order to tell me that you had nothing to do with it and then, the following day, you stated that the resolution being discussed was not in order.

If my friends from the Liberal Party want to be complacent, so be it, but I think that we will be heading towards other problems. It is good of you, Mr. Chairman, to accept this responsibility and to say that it was your fault, when you in fact were not there. For that matter, perhaps I should be the one writing a letter of apology, because I was chairing the meeting.

I would have preferred the motion to have been left as is. If it is not to be, we will be voting in favour of the motion on the table. You have a letter of apology and a motion. I do not know what is on the table, but if it is the motion, I will vote for it. If it is the other motion, I will vote against it because it seems to me that another very important factor is involved. Apologizing to the committee members and witnesses does not amount to very much, but it would have been polite to have called these witnesses back and asked them to complete their testimony.

That is not what is said in the chairman's letter today. It states that because of the meeting ending so quickly, we were inviting them to forward their information to the committee in the form of a brief. That means that the Conservative members, once they have a majority and don't want to hear certain testimony, will put an end to the meeting and ask the witnesses to send the remainder of their presentation to us in writing. That is not how I'm hoping to treat witnesses.

Personally, I would prefer the first motion to remain on the table, but I will see how things unfold before I decide how I will vote.

• (1730)

[English]

The Chair: In response, Mr. Bachand, I think the issue I'm addressing is my action to declare the apology motion out of order.

Now the issue of the German motion was put, it was passed, and that's the way it should stand.

But maybe if I could let Ms. Black have her...

Mr. Hawn.

Mr. Laurie Hawn: I think this is a sincere attempt on the chair's part, and certainly on our part, to take an unfortunate incident that happened quickly and put it behind us, so we can move on with the business of the committee in a reasonable way. I think we all have to accept that we have to operate on a certain level of good faith and not presuppose what might happen at some time in the future. Something happened that obviously caused some angst amongst various folks, and that's clearly acknowledged. For me, I'd like to put this behind us in a reasonably compromising fashion and as quickly as possible, so we can move on to the real business of the committee.

The Chair: Mr. Dosanjh.

Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh: May I make a very friendly suggestion?

If my Bloc colleagues would agree, perhaps the letter can be amended to give the witnesses a choice to either complete their testimony in writing, or if they wish to come back, to do so and be subjected to questioning. As I understand it, that's all that was left. Am I right?

A voice: Yes.

Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh: If you leave that to the witnesses, they can either come back or simply write additional material to submit to the committee. That way, you've overcome the hesitation that our Bloc colleagues have.

I leave that as a suggestion.

The Chair: I'm just trying to follow the list here.

Mr. McGuire.

Hon. Joe McGuire: Claude has made some very good points that what we do here today and how we're going to handle what happened on the eighth is really going to colour how the committee is going to function in the future.

We had two motions coming from the adjournment of that meeting. One was the dilatory one, which was claimed to need unanimous consent when it actually didn't need unanimous consent. The other one...as she rightly said, the committee should have asked for the input once you made your decision, if they agreed with your decision.

Now, I think both of those motions should be reintroduced and voted on. I think that's one way to address what was done that day. Both of these motions were perfectly in order and should have been voted on then, instead of this rigmarole we've been through. And besides that, the way the witnesses were...20 more minutes would have finished the witnesses. There was no great big rush. We were just about done, and we could have gotten through it quite easily without anything untoward happening.

Claude was in the chair, and he was as shocked as the witnesses that this happened so quickly.

I think if we're going to act as a group, a common frontier, to do what we can for the armed forces in this country, then we should wipe the slate clean, begin anew, and deal with these motions—get them behind us and let's proceed with our work from there.

The Chair: Ms. Black.

Ms. Dawn Black: It's interesting to hear the conversation around the table, and I appreciate what Laurie said about good faith. I would like to be able to feel that we could operate here in good faith. I particularly feel I was misled at the meeting on June 13. I can put that behind me. That's fine. But it's very difficult to then adopt a feeling of good faith for all of the committee work.

I think what Claude and Joe have said is important, that we put the motions forward in the way they were presented and we vote on them today. That would in fact clear the air, so to speak.

I think it's important that when we communicate with the witnesses who were dismissed in such a cavalier fashion, we indicate to them that this is not the way we hope to conduct our business in the future. I think we owe them that, and I appreciate the suggestion that we invite them to come back, if they wish, to finish off the rest of the time.

You know, they were only given a couple of days' notice when they were asked to come, because someone else had been dropped off the witness agenda, and I think they made a very valiant effort to be here and fill that space for us. It makes it even worse that they were sort of told that they were no longer welcome to participate in the committee.

So I think after listening to both Claude and Joe, I would like the motions to stand again.

• (1735)

The Chair: Okay. Well, I suppose I've opened that by trying to put this letter forward to deal with one of the motions we didn't deal with.

I would really like to get this handled today because of all the things you've said, to move on with this committee. I'm fully willing—I guess that's the right word—to take the responsibility. I feel that if I had not left the first meeting and hadn't been caught in that position, we wouldn't be here today, for various reasons. But we are.

Now, the dilatory motion, Ms. Black, I have some problems with, quite frankly—and I guess if we get them back on the table, then we can discuss them. I feel it would tie the hands of the committee in the future, and I'm not sure.... And the other one—

Ms. Dawn Black: I'm prepared to listen to that.

The Chair: We're over time.

Does everybody have a few minutes to do this? I would sure like to get it done today.

As the chair, I'm going to reintroduce these two motions that we dealt with on June 13. One was a motion to stop any further dilatory motions from being tabled.

Ms. Black moved that the chair accept no dilatory motions while the committee is hearing witnesses.

Are there any comments?

Mr. Calkins.

Mr. Blaine Calkins: So everybody knows, I'm not trying to escalate things here, but as a new person, I wonder if a motion that was already dealt with and considered done, or dealt with at a previous meeting, still has to go through the 48-hour notice. Or can the motion be re-addressed?

I'm wondering that, from a procedural perspective.

The Chair: I understand from the committee clerk that we're considering committee business, and if the wish is here to do it, we can get it done.

Mr. Blaine Calkins: Thank you.

Ms. Dawn Black: Mr. Chair, I understand that people have some real concerns about this kind of motion, that it would tie the hands of the committee in other instances where perhaps we wouldn't want the hands of the committee tied. So I'm prepared to withdraw that motion and move on to the second motion.

The Chair: Okay. That motion has been withdrawn. Thank you, Ms. Black, for that.

Does everybody have a copy of the second motion?

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Andrew Chaplin): No, they do not. They will in a moment.

The Chair: The second motion states that the committee apologize to Gerry Barr, president and chief executive officer, and Erin Simpson, policy officer with the Canadian Council for International Cooperation; Kevin McCourt, senior vice-president of Care Canada; and Steven Staples, director, security programs, of the Polaris Institute for the behaviour of the Conservative members of the committee on June 8, 2006.

If you all have that motion, I have a letter prepared. It is amendable, or if it satisfies the committee, then we should start with that. Or if you want to start afresh, if this motion does pass, we can have the clerk or someone draw up a new one, whatever your wishes are.

The motion has been presented. Is there any discussion on that motion?

Mr. Hawn.

Mr. Laurie Hawn: To reiterate that, with perhaps some amendments, I believe the letter would satisfy that, and I would intend to vote against the motion on that basis.

The Chair: Mr. Bachand.

• (1740)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Claude Bachand: I would be in favour of voting on the motion and including the letter. However, I feel that it is important — and I think that other people may be in agreement with me — that we invite the witnesses to come back in order to complete their testimony if they wish. We will not say that they have to come back. They may be annoyed and may not want to come back. Nevertheless, it seems to me that it is only natural and ethical that we apologize and tell them that we made a mistake. As Joe was saying, 20 minutes were remaining. So if they want to come back and complete their testimony, they can do so. Otherwise, they can send it in writing to us. I would, however, at least like to give them an opportunity to come back and complete their testimony before the committee.

[*English*]

The Chair: Thanks for that.

Mr. Hiebert.

Mr. Russ Hiebert: I would agree with my colleague from the Bloc, that that would be an appropriate step to take, and I would support that sort of approach.

The Chair: Is there anything else, any further discussion?

Hon. Joe McGuire: Would Claude like to put his name on the letter also, seeing he was in the chair at the time?

The Chair: I'm certainly prepared to sign it as the chair of the committee.

Hon. Joe McGuire: Yes.

The Chair: I'm not sure that Mr. Bachand wishes to—

Mr. Claude Bachand: It will be hard for me to apologize for what I did.

The Chair: What was that?

Mr. Claude Bachand: It would be very difficult for me to apologize for what I did. I didn't have a choice. There was not even discussion. There was no discussion.

The Chair: There was no discussion.

Mr. Claude Bachand: As proposed already, I would rather leave the chair to do that letter.

The Chair: All those in favour of the motion that we apologize, please indicate.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: All those in favour of the letter that has been presented being altered to include the possibility of them coming back to fill their 20 minutes, please indicate.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Thank you, committee. I appreciate that very much.

This meeting is adjourned.

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