

October 6, 2005

News Item

For Immediate Release:

BOMB IN AFGHANISTAN WOUNDS 3 CANADIAN SOLDIERS

CALL FOR AN INDEPENDENT PUBLIC INQUIRY ISSUED BY VANCOUVER'S
ANTIWAR COALITION

Press Contacts: Shannon Bundock 778 891 1470 and Kira Koshelanyk 778 881 6156

Three Canadian soldiers were wounded when a bomb blast went off near a Canadian military convoy on the outskirts of Kandahar, Afghanistan on October 5, 2005. Canada has recently deployed 250 soldiers to the Kandahar region, with 1000 more set to deploy in 2006. Last week Defense Minister Bill Graham warned that the move by Canadian troops from the capital of Kabul to Kandahar could boost the odds of Canadian soldiers' deaths and injuries.

"Minister Graham is correct in his estimation that death and injuries will increase, not only for soldiers, but for Afghan people as well," said Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO) co-chair Shannon Bundock. "First and foremost, these soldiers are moving outside the relative stability of Kabul into a serious war zone."

On July 14th 2005, General Rick Hillier of the Canadian Armed Forces announced in a press conference that 2000 more troops would be added to those already stationed in Afghanistan. He made it clear that these soldiers would be engaged in combat. He also stated the purpose of the Canadian military is "to be able to kill people." The injuries of October 5th prove that these troops are not on a peaceful mission, but rather are in the center of armed conflict. This development has enforced the need for Mobilization Against War and Occupation's (MAWO) recent call for an independent public inquiry into the increase in Canada's military presence in Afghanistan.

"With the degree of death and destruction that comes with occupation, the question that remains for people in Canada is 'What, if anything, are these soldiers improving in Afghanistan?'" said MAWO co-chair Kira Koshelanyk.

She went on to state, "With the absence of public and parliamentary discussion, this is one of many questions that was not asked or answered before the decision was made to increase forces." Koshelanyk continued, "We have responded to these backroom decisions by putting out a Canada-wide call for an independent public inquiry to open the question for independent, public and parliamentary debate."