

March 2nd 2006
News Item
For Immediate Release:

Vancouver Anti-War Coalition Responds to Tenth Canadian Soldier Death in Afghanistan
CANADA OUT OF AFGHANISTAN NOW!
STOP THE CANADIAN WAR DRIVE!
INDEPENDENT PUBLIC INQUIRY INTO CANADA'S OCCUPATION OF AFGHANISTAN!

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EMERGENCY RALLY AGAINST THE CANADIAN OCCUPATION OF AFGHANISTAN

Thursday March 2nd
4pm
Canada Forces Recruitment Centre
1070 W. Georgia St Vancouver

EMERGENCY PRESS CONFERENCE

Thursday March 2nd
3:45pm
Canada Forces Recruitment Centre
1070 W. Georgia St Vancouver

On the morning of Thursday March 2nd, Canadian Cpl. Paul James Davis of Bridgewater Nova Scotia died when his military vehicle "flipped over" during a "routine patrol" in Kandahar Afghanistan. Seven others were injured in the crash, including BC-local Mark Taylor from Prince Rupert. Cpl. Davis is the tenth Canadian soldier to die in the increasingly violent "combat mission" that is Canada's occupation of Afghanistan.

Vancouver's anti-war coalition, Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO) has called an emergency press conference and picket line action at the Canadian Forces Recruitment Centre in downtown Vancouver to respond to Davis's death with a CALL FOR AN INDEPENDENT PUBLIC INQUIRY INTO CANADA'S OCCUPATION OF AFGHANISTAN and the demand: CANADA OUT OF AFGHANISTAN!

MAWO's Acting-Secretary and Spokesperson Nita Palmer explained Davis's death in the context of the escalating Canadian war drive in Afghanistan: "The new Canadian war drive is in full swing," she said, "As of February 28th there are 2,300 Canadian troops on the ground in Afghanistan, mostly in the heavy combat area of Kandahar. Already we are seeing that Canada's 'top soldier' Rick Hillier's predictions about this combat mission are coming true – Canadian soldiers are coming home in body bags."

Also on February 28th, Canadian Brigadier-General David Fraser took command of the entire NATO International Security Assistance Force, including the 2,300 Canadian soldiers as well as British, Dutch, and US troops. Upon taking over command of these forces, Fraser told CTV that he would lead the occupation forces in to the Afghan peoples' "sanctuaries." He said, "We're going into their yard. We're going to start kicking them."

A major opinion poll released last week by CTV and the Globe and Mail found that 62% of respondents in Canada are against the 2,000 strong deployment of Canadian troops to Afghanistan. The same poll found that nearly a third of those who support the deployment would change their minds if the numbers of Canadian troops coming home in body bags increased significantly.

New Prime Minister Stephen Harper responded to this poll on the floor of the House of Commons, saying, "This is a critical mission; it's important for global security."

MAWO and the picketers in front of the Canada Forces Recruitment Centre have a different view. They see the mission in Afghanistan as an occupation that has killed over ten thousand innocent people, dropped the life expectancy of all Afghan people by four and a half years, decimated an already miserable education system, destroyed practically all the basic infrastructure of Afghanistan, and made life for women even worse than under the Taliban. They take the mounting deaths of Canadian soldiers as evidence of Canada's destructive role in Afghanistan.