



Cabinet

CAB (10) 480

Copy No: /

Summary of Paper

10 September 2010

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Report on Overseas Travel: Hon Dr Wayne Mapp

Portfolio

Defence

The Hon Dr Wayne Mapp recommends that Cabinet:

- 1 note the report attached to CAB (10) 480 on his travel from 17-24 August 2010 to Afghanistan, to:
 - 1.1 assist in determining the appropriate deployment to Afghanistan in 2011 and beyond;
 - 1.2 express solidarity with the members of the Provisional Reconstruction Team for their loss of Lt Tim O'Donnell DSD, killed in action on 3 August 2010;
- 2 note that he will bring recommendations to Cabinet for continued operations by the New Zealand Defence Force in Afghanistan within the context of an overall reduction in numbers deployed.

Bob Macfarlane
for Secretary of the Cabinet

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The Cabinet

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Chair,
Cabinet

REPORT ON OVERSEAS TRAVEL: HON DR WAYNE MAPP: AFGHANISTAN 17 - 24 AUGUST 2010

Proposal

1. This paper proposes that Cabinet note the report on my visit to Afghanistan 17 - 24 August 2010.

TRAVEL REPORT

2. My visit to Afghanistan was for two reasons:
 - a. To assist in determining the appropriate deployment to Afghanistan in 2011 and beyond.
 - b. To express solidarity with the members of the PRT for their loss of Lt Tim O'Donnell DSD, killed in action on 3 August 2010.
3. The visit was made in conjunction with Lt Gen Jerry Mateparae, the Chief of Defence Force (CDF). The visit to Afghanistan covered four days. It included meetings with the NZSAS in Kabul, travelling to Bamyan Province to meet with the PRT and calls in Kabul on the various Ministers of the Afghan Government, senior officials and military leaders of the NATO ISAF and UN missions in Afghanistan.
4. My key conclusions are that within two to three years the NATO/ISAF mission should enable the Afghan Government to be sustainable. Through to that time the NATO/ISAF mission will need to provide substantial support if this is to be achieved. The implication is that New Zealand's commitment will need to be sustained through 2011 and 2012, with modest reduction occurring from 2011. Abrupt departure will result in failure of our specific mission objectives. It would also affect our relationships with key NATO/ISAF nations.
5. Formal recommendations to Cabinet on appropriate contributions during 2011 and 2012 will be made in the next two months. My preliminary view is that they should be based on progressive reduction of deployments in line with the actual security conditions. However, our contributions should always be measured by our national interests in Afghanistan, and not only by the security and development situation in Afghanistan.

NZ Special Air Service

6. In Kabul I visited the NZSAS deployed as Task Force 81 (TF 81). TF 81 is partnered with the Afghan Crisis Response Unit (CRU), a Police Unit conducting special operations.

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7. The CRU has made considerable progress but is still developing capacity in key areas. It will take between one and two years before the CRU reaches full operational capability. By then it should have the command, leadership, management and training capabilities required for the unit to be self sustaining without an international partner.

8. Our mandate for TF 81 ends in March 2011. We will need to consider whether or not there should be a continuing smaller contribution to enable the CRU to be fully self-sustaining. It is considered that 25 personnel would achieve this goal.

NZ Provincial Reconstruction Team

9. The delegation was transported to Bamyan by a ^{PSR(C)1.}_{PSR(C)2} C-130H Hercules. The delegation had a ^{PSR(C)1.}_{PSR(C)2} C-130J to return us from Bamyan to Kabul. In Bamyan I met the Governor, Chief of Police and visited the PRT. My time in Bamyan included a visit to the outlying town of Nayak where the PRT has a forward Patrol Base.

10. Considerable progress has been made in the province, although slower than desirable on a number of fronts. Most of the province is secure. Insecurity remains in Bamyan's North East as graphically reinforced by the recent death of Lt Tim O'Donnell, DSD. The Afghan National Police (ANP) is progressing but is still thin on the ground and lacking depth of experience. The Afghan National Army (ANA) is not currently deployed in Bamyan province but an ANA deployment is being reconsidered for the North East when resources are available.

11. One of the issues raised is the protection of the PRT, in particular in the North East of the province. The CDF and I have considered the use of the New Zealand Light Armoured Vehicles (LAVs). He will report on this shortly. LAVs would provide greater force protection, better surveillance and targeting capability and firepower in extremis. Additional weapon capabilities are also under consideration so that New Zealand troops can better target and engage at greater range any future attacks on our patrols.

12. When the NZSAS presence in Kabul is reduced there is concern about the protection of the PRT in Bamyan. Currently the NZSAS provide reinforcement capability to the PRT. This will be an issue in the recommendations to Cabinet.

13. The PRT is now headed by a civilian and the recent deployment of a Development Coordinator is long overdue. The establishment of the New Zealand Aid Office downtown Bamyan would reinforce New Zealand's message of on-going development assistance and ultimately make the New Zealand presence less dependant of military security.

14. Of all the capabilities deployed, Police remain the most pivotal to setting the conditions for significant reduction of NZDF forces in Bamyan. It is in New Zealand's national interests to increase the number of Police trainers to ensure required capacity building at district level. I will invite the Minister of Police to consider visiting Bamyan during the coming troop changeover in October.

Afghani Leadership

15. I called on the 2nd Vice President Khalili, Minister of Defence Wardak and Minister of Interior Bismullah Khan. PSR(R)1

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16. PSR(R)1

Minister
Wardak acknowledged our request for deployment of the ANA in the North East of Bamyán. In the short term, resource limitations make this unlikely. However, overall progress with the ANA is ahead of schedule. PSR(R)1

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official."

17. Minister Khan was appointed to head the Ministry of the Interior two months ago after heading the Afghan National Army. He has reviewed the Ministry and determined his six priorities for attention: training and education followed by leadership and counter corruption. The Minister noted our requests for continuity in Police command in Bamyán province and early increase in the numbers deployed. Minister Khan believes it will take two to three years for Police to have the required capabilities.

NATO ISAF Leadership

18. I met with General Petraeus, Commander ISAF, who provided an update on the military situation. PSR(R)1

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PSR(R)1

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22. A working dinner hosted by Ambassador Eikenberry provided a useful forum for a structured discussion on Afghanistan and prospects. PSR(R)1

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25. PSR(R)1

Detainees

26. The issue of detainees received renewed prominence with a Sunday Star Times article two days prior to my departure. I immediately asked for a detailed report from NZDF, MFAT and the Solicitor General on the issue.

27. I used my visit to register New Zealand concerns in person with Afghan Ministers, Ambassadors of close allies, the Head of the ICRC in Kabul, the UN Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General, the Deputy NATO Senior Civilian Representative and our diplomatic and NZDF personnel in Kabul.

28. Afghani Ministers advised that the surveillance of detention facilities had been improving, by both Afghan officials and the international community. PSR(R)1

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"comment by foreign government official."

Similar views were expressed by officials from the UN mission, United Kingdom and United States.

29. New Zealand has been invited to join regular dialogue in Kabul of like-minded states on detainees, a step encouraged by the ICRC. I have requested the recently appointed Ambassador to take up this opportunity with support from NZDF staff. The Ambassador will also seek further engagement with the ICRC in Kabul on detainee issues.

Conclusions

30. My calls in Kabul enabled me to round out my overall picture of progress in Afghanistan. I concluded with an optimistic outlook. Kabul is noticeably more vibrant than when I visited in October 2009. People are much more relaxed and major international events such as the recent Kabul conference and Peace Jirga have been able to take place in a relatively secure Kabul, something unthinkable a year ago. At night the lights of the city visibly demonstrate progress.

31. Those I called on were almost all optimistic about Afghan prospects. There is general consensus of the need for focussed engagement by the international community over the next two to three years to build critical capacities.

32. However, it is widely acknowledged that the level of violence is likely to still go up before it tracks down. ISAF is now pushing into the heart of the insurgent dominated areas. As ISAF fights for these centres of gravity the insurgents are fighting hard for these increased stakes. Commitment to stay the course and ensure that the international community builds sufficient capacity so that we are not required to return after we leave was a consistent request. Forbearance in the face of these challenges is likely to build Afghanistan's position of strength and significantly increase the fledgling prospects for a negotiated reconciliation with the Taliban. Ultimately all realise that a political settlement, also involving regional players, is the only prospect for durable peace in Afghanistan.

33. Across the board New Zealand's contribution is recognised and valued. It was notable that at dinner the PSR(R)1

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have personnel within NATO ISAF and UNAMA they are highly valued for their contribution and their ability to "punch above their weight" within the international effort.

34. There is very important work to be done on the issue of detainees to ensure New Zealand maintains our international human rights reputation.

35. Further investment of effort in key areas such as Police training and mentoring will pay significant dividends.

36. My visit was invaluable and has assisted to ensure CDF and I have a common appreciation of the current situation on the ground and its prospects moving forward. I believe the overall outlook is optimistic and there is considerable potential for New Zealand to gain significant kudos for continuing its contribution in the short to medium term during this critical phase of capacity building in the Afghan state.

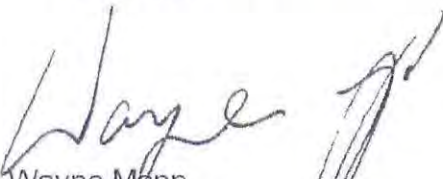
37. We are helping remove the prospect of Afghanistan once again becoming a terrorist haven and ensuring that once we leave the international community will not be faced with the bleak prospect of having to return. Staying the course in the short term will bring benefits in the longer term and reinforce our national credentials as an international player.

38. I will be taking forward issues outlined above and bring recommendations to Cabinet colleagues on future NZDF operations in Afghanistan as soon as they are more fully developed.

Recommendations

39. It is recommended that Cabinet:

- a. Note my report
- b. Note that I will bring recommendations for continued operations by the NZDF in Afghanistan within the context of an overall reduction in the numbers deployed.


Wayne Mapp
MINISTER OF DEFENCE
9 September 2010

Consultation on Cabinet and Cabinet Committee Submissions

Certification by Department:

Guidance on consultation requirements for Cabinet/Cabinet committee papers is provided in the CabGuide (see Procedures: Consultation): <http://www.cabguide.cabinetoffice.govt.nz/procedures/consultation>

Departments/agencies consulted: The attached submission has implications for the following departments/agencies whose views have been sought and are accurately reflected in the submission:

N/A

Departments/agencies informed: In addition to those listed above, the following departments/agencies have an interest in the submission and have been informed:

N/A

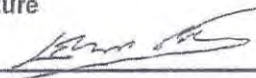
Others consulted: Other interested groups have been consulted as follows:

NIL

Name, Title, Department: Edward Poot, Office of Dr Wayne Mapp

Date: 09/09/2010

Signature



Certification by Minister:

Ministers should be prepared to update and amplify the advice below when the submission is discussed at Cabinet/Cabinet committee.

The attached proposal:

Consultation at Ministerial level

- ☐ **has been** consulted with the Minister of Finance
[required for all submissions seeking new funding]
- ☐ **has been** consulted with the following portfolio Ministers:
- ☒ **did not need** consultation with other Ministers

Discussion with National caucus

- ☐ **has been** or ☐ **will be** discussed with the government caucus
- ☒ **does not need** discussion with the government caucus

Discussion with other parties

- ☐ **has been** discussed with the following other parties represented in Parliament:
- ☐ Act Party ☐ Maori Party ☐ United Future Party
- ☐ Other [specify]
- ☐ **will be** discussed with the following other parties represented in Parliament:
- ☐ Act Party ☐ Maori Party ☐ United Future Party
- ☐ Other [specify]
- ☒ **does not need** discussion with other parties represented in Parliament

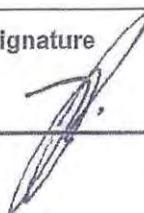
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