Rhetoric in Canadian and American Foreign Policy Post-9/11
A Case Study of Intervention in Kosovo and Afghanistan

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Has 9/11 been a catalyst for change in Canadian Foreign Policy? Canada ascribes to a ‘human-centred’ foreign policy, compared to the US which has a decidedly non-humanitarian foreign policy. Despite this distinction, this does not assume that Canada is a ‘purely’ humanitarian actor, nor does it assume that the US is exclusively self-interested. Rather, this questions the relationship between stated policy and the operationalization of rhetoric in intervention. Therefore, this central question asks: does the foreign policy rhetoric of the United States and Canada correlate with their international action as interventionist actors? To investigate this difference, this paper will look contrast the involvement of Canada and the US in interventions in Kosovo and Afghanistan.

These cases can be compared at three levels of analysis. Domestically, comparison spans over two government with different rhetoric. With the Liberal and Conservative governments in Canada using different rhetorical justification, yet operationalizing similar policy during intervention, what does this say about the relationship between rhetoric and policy? At the state-level, Canada uses ‘humanitarian’ rhetoric, contrasted to the American post-9/11 claims for national security for intervention, yet in both Kosovo and Afghanistan, Canada and the US performed similar operations in the field. What does this say about the validity of Canada’s national rhetoric? Finally, these two cases assess the structural changes in the international system. Intervention in Kosovo occurred in the post-Cold War period, within a ‘friendly’ international system. Conversely Afghanistan is a reaction to the terrorist attacks in the US on September 11, 2001. In comparing the two cases, the central question of this paper asks; is 9/11 really a paradigm-shift for Canadian foreign policy or has the event just spurred a change in rhetoric?

Background: Kosovo

The election of Slobodan Milosevic in 1989 prompted the centralization of control over the autonomous provinces of Montenegro, Vojvodina, and Kosovo. Finding this loss of autonomy unacceptable, the leadership in Kosovo declared independence from Serbia in July 1990, spurring an enraged response by Milosevic through economic, legal, and violent means, as Albanians were displaced from jobs, villages were razed, and people killed. The crackdown by Serbia did not only foster violent oppression; rather Albanians were additionally subject to economic apartheid. Jobs were forcibly terminated, as Serbian authorities passed laws that cost hundreds of thousands of Albanians their jobs, homes, and fundamental freedoms. One report noted that by 1998, 70 per cent of ethnic Albanians were unemployed, and were forced to resort to black market dealings to make ends meet. These actions ultimately set the stage for the mass refugee movement at the start of 1998.

Between February and October 1998, an estimated 2000 Albanian civilians were killed by Serb forces. During the same timeframe, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees estimated that over 600,000 refugees had left Kosovo and fled into neighbouring countries such as Albania and Macedonia. This large scale movement prompted the international community

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2 Ibid.
4 Ibid.
to respond, however the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) was deadlocked over intervention into Kosovo. A resolution to intervene was not even tabled in the UNSC, as Russia’s long-time ties to Serbia assured the Security Council that it would veto any proposal for intervention into Kosovo.

United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1199 was adopted September 23, 1998, demanding an “immediate cease to hostilities and maintain a ceasefire in Kosovo,” furthermore calling for “Member States and others concerned to provide adequate resources for humanitarian assistance in the region and to respond promptly and generously to the UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Humanitarian Assistance Related to the Kosovo Crisis.”

Like most UN documents, this resolution did not state an ‘or else’ clause that allowed for the use of force to address violations of this resolution, in anticipation of the Russian veto. Yet this ‘or else’ clause was interpreted into the resolution by NATO forces, which immediately issued “an ACT WARN for both a limited air option and a phased air campaign in Kosovo.” NATO’s ACT WARN was a coercive measure to come into effect in the event that ethnic cleansing was not stopped in Kosovo, resulting in peace talks between Milosevic and Clinton’s special envoy Richard Holbrooke. On October 18, 1998, Holbrooke and Milosevic were able to come to agreement for the withdrawal of 5000 Serbian soldiers and allowed 2000 Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) unarmed observers into Kosovo.

Despite this outcome, NATO’s second air strike threat came in January 1999, after Serb forces broke the ceasefire with the Racak massacre, which killed 45 Albanians and further exacerbated the refugee movement out of Kosovo. Seeing a last possible solution scenario, in February of 1999, ambassadors from NATO countries, including US secretary of state Madeline Albright, KLA representatives and Serbian representatives met to discuss Kosovo’s autonomous status. These talks resulted in the Rambouillet Accord, completed on February 19, 1999 and established an agreement deadline of March 15, 1999. By the deadline date, the KLA had signed the Accord, but the Serbian government had not, and instead, Milosevic called for the full implementation of “Operation Horseshoe,” the Serbian plan for the complete cleansing of ethnic Albanians from the province of Kosovo. Milosevic’s declaration resulted in a removal of the OSCE forces from Kosovo and the beginning of the air strikes of strategic targets on March 24, 1999. These strikes, originally planned for “a few days”, continued for approximately 77 days as Milosevic refused to end Operation Horseshoe. Over eleven weeks, 800,000 more civilians were displaced and thousands were killed by both the air raids and continued Serbian attack.

Criticisms of NATO’s techniques have focused largely on the military strategy that was chosen for Operation Allied Force. First, there was no ground troops used in Kosovo over the course of the operation. Instead, anywhere from 24,000 to 40,000 troops were stationed along

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9 Ibid. The OSCE observers were deployed in late November 1998.
10 Ibid., 3.
12 Ibid.

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Kosovo’s borders and at refugee camps in neighbouring countries.\(^{13}\) Because of this strategic decision, Milosevic’s forces were able to continue the process of ethnic cleansing as outlined by Operation Horseshoe, as there were no ground forces to protect civilians from Serbian attack.\(^ {14}\) Second, the use of air strikes was also deemed to endanger the lives of non-combatants. The air force was mandated to maintain a height of over 15,000 feet, as opposed to the 10,000 feet that was standard in operations. Scholars have argued that anything higher than 10,000 feet makes targets undistinguishable, such as civilian automobiles from armored vehicles and combatant vehicles.\(^ {15}\) Another effect of the use of air strikes was that they exacerbated the flow of refugees out of Kosovo into neighbouring states. It is estimated that approximately 800,000 refugees fled Kosovo in the duration of air strikes to their end in June 1999.\(^ {16}\)

The Kosovo intervention is an important case for several reasons: first, the threat of a Russian veto in the Security Council made UN intervention a non-possibility. Rather, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) became the international body intervening on the basis of the ‘responsibility to protect’\(^ {17}\) in the ethnic cleansing situation. Second, it could be argued that Kosovo was the most successful humanitarian intervention launched in the Post-Cold War period. NATO intervened in Kosovo, with the goal of ending the ethnic cleansing and bringing Slobodan Milosevic to trial and accomplished both tasks. The end of the ethnic cleansing campaign was a direct result of the NATO air strikes and peacemaking. A third important element of the Kosovo campaign was the type of military engagement used to counter the Serbian forces. The use of strategic air strikes was a method of peacemaking that had not been used in previous humanitarian interventions as systematically as it had in Kosovo.

**Background: Afghanistan**

In contrast to Kosovo, Afghanistan has been a battleground for the major powers for over thirty years. Within the Cold War itself, it provided the backdrop for a long-drawn war between the USSR and the mujahadeen for close to ten years.\(^ {18}\) Once the USSR began its retreat, the international community lost its interest in the country, and civil war ensued within Afghanistan until 1994, when the Taliban emerged with a stronghold in the country, controlling more than 90 per cent of Afghanistan territory.\(^ {19}\) Since taking power in 1994, the Taliban have enforced stringent rules on its population, in the name of Islamic law and tradition. These include the extreme suppression of women’s rights, banning music, dancing, secular educational facilities and other activities understood to be against Islam. In addition to these social laws, the Taliban also allowed members of al Qaeda to reside and train within Afghanistan’s borders.

On September 11, 2001, 19 members of the al Qaeda network, based in Afghanistan executed a plan to hijack and drive planes into the Pentagon, the White House and the World Trade Center.\(^ {20}\) This event marked the start of the War on Terror, with the US-led coalition launching military operations in Afghanistan.

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\(^ {13}\) Please see footnote 64.

\(^ {14}\) Ibid.


\(^ {18}\) ‘Responsibility to Protect’ is a term coined by International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty document: The Responsibility to Protect.

\(^ {19}\) The Muhajadeen are seen to be Afghani freedom fighters.

Trade Centre in New York City. In response, and as a warning, on September 20, US President Bush made several demands towards the Taliban government:

Deliver to United States authorities all leaders of al-Qaida who hide in your land; release all foreign nationals; protect foreign journalists, diplomats, and aid workers; close immediately and permanently every terrorist training camp in Afghanistan and hand over every terrorist, and every person in their support structure, to appropriate authorities; give the United States full access to terrorist training camps, so we can make sure they are no longer operating.\(^\text{20}\)

Without an adequate response from the Taliban, the reaction was swift and precise, with the US and UK launching Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) against both the Taliban and al Qaida in Afghanistan within less than a month of the initial attack.\(^\text{21}\) The focus was to destroy terrorist training camps, seek and detain al Qaida suspects, and target Taliban military equipment and supply centres. Within two weeks, the OEF coalition air strikes had destroyed most of the Taliban’s air capabilities, strategic sites and supply centres. This being said, the problem found by the US-led intervention was the lack of ground support for the air campaign, which made Taliban destruction increasingly difficult.\(^\text{22}\) Instead of having American and British troops fight Taliban members, they were training and supplying anti-Taliban United Front (UF) fighters to conduct combat operations.\(^\text{23}\) An additional challenge faced by the United States was the ambiguous support from Pakistan.\(^\text{24}\) This was particularly important as reinforcements from Pakistani training camps joined the war to assist Taliban fighters against the UF. Regardless, by December, OEF forces had taken control of Kandahar airport and also introduced an Afghanistan interim government. Careful precaution was taken during the initial stages of the intervention not to destroy or harm civilian infrastructure.

In January 2002, the US was formally joined by several allies including Canada and New Zealand. The states involved in Afghanistan are involved in the reconstruction of Afghanistan under several different organizational auspices. In addition to individual states operating under Operation Enduring Freedom, in December 2001, the United Nations Security Council resolution 1389 authorized a 5,000-troop NATO International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) to enter Afghanistan. The auspices of the UN-mandate included a six-month term to “assist the Afghan Interim authority in the maintenance of security in Kabul and its surrounding areas.”\(^\text{25}\) Since this

initial conception, control of ISAF transferred from the United Kingdom to NATO and has had its mandate time period extended until October 2007.\footnote{United Nations Security Council. “UNSC 1707 (2006)" <http://www.un.org/docs/sc/unsc_resolutions06.htm>}

Recently on October 5, 2006, in addition to its control of both the North and Western regions, ISAF took control over Eastern Afghanistan, to begin overseeing the nine Provincial Reconstruction Teams in the region. Countries working under Operation Enduring Freedom are also leading PRTs, including Canada and New Zealand controlling one each. The PRT is a recent military establishment created by the United States to “improve security and to facilitate reconstruction and economic development throughout the country.”\footnote{United States, Department of State, “Fact Sheet: Provincial Reconstruction Teams” January 31, 2006 <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2006/60085.htm> (10 October 2006).}


Another major problem facing international troops in Afghanistan is the recent resurgence of Taliban and al Qaida fighters within the Southern parts of the country. Provincial Reconstruction Teams, with a mandate to rebuild, are engaged in guerrilla-style warfare with these remnants from the old regime.\footnote{ABC News, “Taliban Leader Threatens Increased Attacks” October 23, 2006. <http://abcnews.go.com/International/story?id=2600335&page=1> October 23, 2006.} Obviously, this is a serious cause for concern, as the increased use of landmines, booby traps and suicide bombs has compromised the safety of both coalition troops and citizens. Both President Karzai and other foreign diplomats have been threatened with assassination and kidnapping, in addition to the foreign civilians working in refugee camps, non-governmental organizations and support staff for military personnel.

This problem has several identifiable causes.\footnote{United Kingdom, “Afghanistan: the culmination of the Bonn process” October 26, 2005. House of Commons Library. <http://www.parliament.uk/commons/lib/research/rp2005/rp05072.pdf>. Oct 2006.} First, there has been a lack of ability to close training camps and madrassas in neighbouring state, especially Pakistan. Despite President Musharaff’s support for the War on Terror, there is a disconnect with Pakistan’s ability to enforce closing down of terrorist-friendly cells within the country.\footnote{See footnote 29.} Second, much of the animosity also comes from previously-powerful groups that have felt isolated since the fall of the Taliban. Third, with the national economy barely functioning due to security issues, the resurgence of the opium trade within the country has allowed for militant groups to fund their
anti-Coalition activities. Fourth, the resurgence of these groups have challenged the human security of several groups in the state, including women, children and the impoverished.\(^{32}\)

**Rhetoric and Practice: Kosovo**

The Canadian vision for human security-centred foreign policy was defined to recognize “that lasting stability cannot be achieved until people are protected from violent threats to their rights, safety and lives.”\(^{33}\) Therefore, with the ethnic cleansing of Albanians from Kosovo provided a clear case for the invocation of human security justification of the intervention. Canada’s position on humanitarian intervention stated, that “when conditions warrant coercive should diplomacy be used in the pursuit of the human security agenda.”\(^{34}\) Lloyd Axworthy argued, “The well being of individuals – human security – is increasingly front and centre in how we define peace and security … The crisis in Kosovo is a concrete expression of this human security dynamic at work.”\(^{35}\)

Interestingly, while Axworthy’s rhetoric was obviously biased towards human security, another Canadian government perspective came from Prime Minister Chrétien, who had a more multi-layered analysis of Kosovo. In a special debate of the House of Commons, Chrétien stated his outrage at the Milosevic regime “who are still leading a campaign of terror and destruction on innocent men, women and children in Kosovo.”\(^{36}\) In contrast to Lloyd Axworthy, Chrétien concluded that:

> It is these three elements: our values as Canadians, our national interest in a stable and secure Europe and our obligations as a founding member of NATO, that led Canada to take arms with its NATO partners.\(^{37}\)

> These elements of collective and international security to justify the intervention in Kosovo were further seen to be perpetrated by Milosevic’s violation of “commitments to NATO and the OSCE” and his ignorance to United Nations Security Council Resolutions demanding the end of hostilities in Kosovo. Chretien further argued that, “NATO has put into action the painful lesson we learned in the two world wars: that peace and stability can only be assured through effective collective security.”\(^{38}\)

In comparison with the multi-layered Canadian approach, American rhetoric was more national security oriented, despite the attempted justification the intervention in Kosovo was a reaction to the humanitarian concerns for Kosovar Albanians being cleansed by the Milosevic regime. This is apparent in the rhetoric of former President Clinton in his January 1999 State of the Union address, “… and with our NATO allies, we are pressing the Serbian government to stop its brutal repression in Kosovo -- to bring those responsible to justice, and to give the

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37 Ibid.
38 Ibid.
people of Kosovo the self-government they deserve.” This adherence to humanitarian arguments permeate Clinton’s continued rhetoric over the course of the intervention. In a speech for the Association of News Editors in April 1999, Clinton restates his appeal for the humanitarian concern in Kosovo: “We cannot simply watch as hundreds of thousands of people are brutalized, murder, raped, forced from their homes, their family histories erased, all in the name of ethnic pride and purity.” However, this does not necessarily mean that the intervention was conducted for purely humanitarian reasons, as Clinton’s concern for human security becomes obviously limited, exemplified a May 13, 1999 speech at the National Defence University. At first, he invokes these same humanitarian themes:

… we strengthen a global community grounded in cooperation and tolerance, rooted in common humanity, or will repression and brutality, rooted in ethnic, racial and religious hatreds dominate the agenda for the new century and the new millennium? Yet, this speech diverts from the previous examples, as Clinton goes on to state:

But in this age of growing international interdependence, America needs a strong and peaceful Europe more than ever as our partner for freedom and for economic progress, and our partner against terrorism, the spread of weapons of mass destruction, and instability … this is also a significant security issue, particularly because of Kosovo’s location.

Key to the thesis of this paper, it is important to show a juxtaposition of President Clinton’s statements towards the objectives surrounding the intervention as this indicates specific priorities for American foreign policy.

Understandably, the key objective of intervention was the ethnic cleansing of Kosovar Albanians by the Serbian majority. However, his emphasis on European stability, geopolitical and economic interests indicates that the intervention was not necessarily based on humanitarianism. Rather, the motivation for the intervention was the challenge to the national interests and security of the United States.

This position is reinforced by the January 2000 US After-Action Report, which identifies the geopolitical security concerns that were taken into account before the Kosovo intervention:

Undermine the successful Dayton peace process in Bosnia; re-ignite chaos in Albania; destabilize the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, with its large Albanian minority; spill over into other neighboring countries, including Bulgaria and Greece. Instability in this region had the potential to exacerbate rivalries.

42 Ibid.
43 While one example was used to show a shift in Clinton’s policy, the security concerns are actually a pervasive argument in the Administration’s Kosovo rhetoric. As discussed in the beginning sections of this paper, these examples are just meant to show the types of argumentation used by the Administration.
between Greece and Turkey, two NATO allies with significant and often distinct interests in Southern Europe.\textsuperscript{44}

Despite the strong \textit{rhetoric} from Canada about humanitarianism of this intervention, Canada’s \textit{operation} in Kosovo was a mixed-bag of humanitarian and national security concerns as Canada’s role in Kosovo was not a stereotypical peacekeeping mission. Instead, along with the US and other NATO allies, Canada was engaged in a series of air strikes against key Serbian military targets. In support of the mission, Canada pledged over 800 ground troops and 18 CF-18/A Hornet fighter-bombers to the air-strikes led by NATO.\textsuperscript{45} This being said, NATO’s air-strike approach brought the organization under attack because it caused a further humanitarian disaster. Critics cited that the air force was mandated to a height of 15,000 feet, as opposed to the 10,000 feet that was standard in operations, to ensure planes were safe in their missions. At a height of 10,000 feet, targets were indistinguishable, such as civilian automobiles from armored vehicles and combatant vehicles.\textsuperscript{46} This height also impeded the ability of NATO pilots to discern military from civilian targets as some of the ‘casualties’ of the attacks included a civilian hospital and marketplace.\textsuperscript{47} Axworthy justified the NATO air-strike method through a human security lens by arguing that,

\begin{quote}
NATO’s recourse to air strikes was precipitated by evidence that the regime of repression by the Serb government was on the rise and accelerating. … NATO’s air campaign should serve to dispel the misconception that military force and the human security agenda are mutually exclusive.\textsuperscript{48}
\end{quote}

This is not to say there was not an extensive background and research process behind Canada’s contribution to the air strike campaign. Each target was carefully deciphered and given to a military legal analyst to determine the target’s military or civilian nature. In cases where the legitimacy of a target came into question, Canada’s Force Commander would refuse the target.\textsuperscript{49} Yet, it is also important to recognize that the overwhelming concern in this case was the protection of national interests over the humanitarian concerns in Kosovo.

Therefore, after the 78-days of air strikes, Canada also committed 1,300 troops to the reconstruction and repatriation effort within Kosovo. There were three stages to the Canadian role in Kosovo. Immediately, after the air strikes, over 750,000 refugees headed back into Kosovo from neighbouring Macedonia. The initial Canadian mandate included the security and safety of returning refugees, economic reconstruction, institution-building and training. In the interim period, and associated with the rehabilitation process of states, Canada was involved as a key state in the removal of landmines from civilian areas. This proved to be an arduous task as it

\textsuperscript{44} United States, “Kosovo/Operation Allied Force After-Action Report”. P. 4.
\textsuperscript{49} Axworthy, ‘Kosovo and the Human Security Agenda’. Canada, Department of Foreign Affairs,

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was later proven that Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) members were digging up and replanting Serbian anti-personnel mines.\footnote{Mary Foster, “Kosovo and the 1997 Landmines Treaty” The Ploughshares Monitor 20:3, September 1999, <http://www.ploughshares.ca/libraries/monitor/mons99c.html>.
} Also, in the interim period, Canadian RCMP members were an integral part of the team investigating and presenting information to the International Tribunal for War Crimes.

There are several notable issues when looking at the operationalisation of the Kosovo intervention. First, there was no ground troops used in Kosovo over the course of the operation. Instead, anywhere from 24,000 to 40,000 NATO troops were stationed along Kosovo’s borders and at refugee camps in neighbouring countries. Because of this strategic decision, Milosevic’s forces were able to continue the process of ethnic cleansing as outlined by Operation Horseshoe, as there were no ground forces to protect civilians from Serbian attack.\footnote{Ibid.} Second, the use of air strikes also endangered the lives of non-combatants. As mentioned previously the height of the air strikes had the effect of exacerbating the flow of refugees from Kosovo into neighbouring states. It is estimated that 800,000 refugees fled Kosovo by the end of strikes in June 1999.\footnote{Ibid.}

Yet, despite these nationally-oriented policies, the American style of intervention is also humanitarian in its specific use of reconstruction methods. With the use of high-end technology, the strategic bombing cost NATO countries approximately \$4.63 billion dollars US.\footnote{The costs were found in a joint study undertaken by BBC and Jane’s Defence Weekly found on http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/476134.stm. The figures were presented in British Pounds at a currency rate from 1999. The conversion was done at the historical conversion rate of 1 British Pound/1.65170 USD, found at FXHistory – Historical Currency Exchange Rates. For example. 4.63 billion USD = 2.63 billion pounds. (http://www.oanda.com/convert/fxhistory).} In comparison, reconstruction of Kosovo was \$33.86 billion dollars including the cost of reconstructing sites destroyed by the bombing, which cost approximately \$4 billion dollars.\footnote{Ibid.} Rather, the bulk of the money went to costs such as rehabilitating refugees, rebuilding damaged homes and razed villages in rural Kosovo, and implementing institution-building and democratization.

Fourth, while this paper has focused on the intervention, there is also a humanitarian element to the political aspects of reconstruction. With the eventual failure of earlier negotiations with the Racik massacre in January 1999, the US attempted a second set of negotiations with the Rambouillet Process of February 1999. Rambouillet did not demand for the sovereignty of Kosovo, rather the accord outlined the implementation of self-government in Kosovo without insisting on complete sovereignty. For example, the first article of the Accord states: “All citizens in Kosovo shall enjoy, without discrimination, the equal rights and freedoms set forth in this Agreement” and “Citizens in Kosovo shall have the right to democratic self-government through legislative, executive, judicial, and other institutions established in accordance with this Agreement”\footnote{Ibid.} which included the right of representation and participation in free and fair elections.\footnote{Ibid.}

Taking both the air strike operation and the post-intervention reconstruction into account, Canada’s role in Kosovo is difficult to ascertain the direct relationship between the human
security rhetoric from the operational outcome of the intervention. However, the implications of what this means are made more clear after its comparison with the intervention in Afghanistan.

**Rhetoric and Practice: Afghanistan**

Canada’s involvement in Afghanistan is an important case because nearly half-way through the mission, the Liberal party left office after an electoral defeat to the Conservative party lead by Stephen Harper. Canada’s rhetoric during the Liberal government intervention was geared towards the emphasis of Canadian values and principles. In a speech given by Prime Minister Chrétien during the send-off of naval forces in October 2001, Chrétien articulated that troops were responsible for the promotion of Canadian values such as freedom, democracy and justice within Afghanistan. He stated: “Defend the values and principles of free and civilised people everywhere” and stated that “we are asking you to stand up for justice and do what is right, to give the fullest meaning to our values and our resolve.”

It is important to recognize the lack of definition and the abstraction of Chrétien’s objectives – Canadian values and principles. Later in the intervention, his rhetoric becomes clearly more aligned with the humanitarian nature of Canada’s role in the country, without verbally recognizing that Canada was going to fight a war in Afghanistan. Instead, the major emphasis in his speech was directed toward the social development effect of the intervention within the country. His speech to troops during his October 2003 visit to Afghanistan stated, “By establishing peace and security, you are also providing the ground work for humanitarian assistance and development programs that will help Afghanistan rebuild its economic, political and judicial institutions.” He continues:

You must take pride in the fact that the work you are doing and your sacrifices, are making a difference toward improving the quality of life of the Afghan people. The peace you have helped establish is bringing four million children, including one million girls, to school this fall -- the most in Afghan history.

In assessing Chrétien comments, he gave credence to the peace, security, development, well-digging, infrastructure and social development that came across as a product of the intervention, instead of focusing on the operational differences between Afghanistan and previous Canadian missions.

This is an important comparison between the Liberals and Conservatives are important to show the level of continuity between governments over the intervention in Afghanistan. In mid-March 2006, Prime Minister Harper conducted a trip to Afghanistan to meet with troops in the Provincial Reconstruction team in Kandahar. The nature of his speech drew a significant difference between the previous Liberal party objectives emphasised by Chrétien and Martin.

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58 Ibid.
60 Ibid.
61 In contrast to Chrétien, his successor, Prime Minister Paul Martin justified the intervention in Afghanistan with an interesting mixed adherence to human security, cooperative and security reasons.
Within the speech, Harper conveyed a few key messages. First, he drew the linkage between domestic security within Afghanistan and its influence on Canadian security. He argues, An unstable Afghanistan represents easy pickings for drug lords who would use the country as a safe haven for the production of heroin, which wreaks its own destruction on the streets of our country…. and what happens in places like Afghanistan threatens and affects all of us back home in our own country.\textsuperscript{63}

While this line of argument is present within both the Chrétien and Martin rhetoric, the anomaly within Harper’s speech is the predominance of the “national security” theme as the first issue of discussion with troops in Afghanistan. Second, Harper goes on to argue that Afghanistan presents an opportunity for Canada to take an international leadership role, as he states, “You can’t lead from the bleachers. I want Canada to be a leader … A country that really leads, not a country that just follows. That’s what you are doing.”\textsuperscript{64} In this line of rhetoric, Prime Minister Harper’s objective of leadership was not part of the previous Liberal government’s rhetoric, however he invokes this reasoning about Canada’s international role as defined by Afghanistan.

Harper’s third invocation of objectives in Afghanistan come back the humanitarian nature of the intervention and the relationship between humanitarianism and Canadian values. He reflects on the positive effect Canadian troops have had with social development efforts, including the reduction of poverty, freedom of voting, women’s rights, and access to education.

Finally, but no less important, is the great humanitarian work you’re doing. Working with the Afghan government and Afghan people to enhance their security helps them. It helps them rebuild their country to make a better life for themselves and their children.\textsuperscript{65}

In a speech to the United Nations General Assembly in September 2006, Harper reiterated the relationship between security and human development in Afghanistan. Yet, indicated by these speeches, Harper treats humanitarianism as an epiphenomenal incident to intervention:

Moreover, success cannot be assured by military means alone. This we all recognize. For success also requires a strong and unwavering civilian contribution: educators, engineers, elections advisors; direct aid and technical assistance. The list is lengthy, but the contributions essential … These two actions – rebuilding a shattered society and providing a stable security environment – go hand in glove.\textsuperscript{66}

In comparison to Canadian rhetoric, the United States, reeling from the attacks of September 11, was much more national security oriented towards Afghanistan. However,


\textsuperscript{64} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{65} Ibid.

Bush’s declaration of the War on Terror, on September 20, 2001, specifically made demands for the Taliban government of Afghanistan:

Deliver to United States authorities all the leaders of al-Qaida who hide in your land; release all foreign nationals -- including American citizens -- you have unjustly imprisoned, and protect foreign journalists, diplomats, and aid workers in your country, close immediately and permanently every terrorist training camp in Afghanistan and hand over every terrorist, and every person in their support structure, to appropriate authorities; give the United States full access to terrorist training camps, so we can make sure they are no longer operating.\(^\text{67}\)

First, in this speech it is important to note President Bush’s use of ultimatums against the Taliban government. These set of ultimatums include the demand to close all terrorist training camps, hand over all members of the *al Qaeda* network in the country, allow the US access to terrorist training camps and release all foreign nationals in Afghani jails. Bush concludes this list of demands with, “These demands are not open to negotiation or discussion. The Taliban must act and act immediately. They will hand over the terrorists, or they will share in their fate.”\(^\text{68}\)

What is important to recognize is the lack of room for negotiation or even dialogue over the demands raised by President Bush.

In addition, Bush’s rhetoric explains what he believes to be the nature of the intervention, making a distinction between Kosovo and Afghanistan, where he argued:

It will not look like the air war above Kosovo two years ago, where no ground troops were used and not a single American was lost in combat … It may include dramatic strikes, visible on television, and covert operations, secret even in success. We will starve terrorists of funding, turn them one against another, drive them from place to place, until there is no refuge or rest.

Yet, as the timeline of the intervention continued, Afghanistan started to become coached in more liberal terms. While there are several examples of this, one of the most concise was during Vice President Cheney’s visit to Afghanistan in December 2005. In his speech to US troops, Cheney’s emphasis lay in two specific areas. Initially, he drew sympathy for the difficult task undertaken by American soldiers, but then continued to emphasise the implications of these actions on the democratization of Afghanistan. He prided the country for its participation in elections and the result of the democratization:

… our coalition has stood with this nation and helped prepare the way for democratic institutions and a free society … We are proud to count Afghanistan as a free country, a fellow democracy, and a friend of the United States of America.\(^\text{69}\)

Cheney continued:


By fighting enemies, by standing with our friends, we honour both the ideals and protect the security interests of the United States. The victory of freedom in Afghanistan, as well as in Iraq, will be an inspiration to democratic reformers in other lands.70

Interestingly, Cheney’s emphasis was not on the security elements of the intervention, but rather on the liberal and democratic ones. This new invocation shows a shift in emphasis, remarked in Bush’s rhetoric during the first Presidential debate in the 2004 elections, where he makes a key reference to Afghanistan. Bush uses the example, “Ten million citizens have registered to vote. It's a phenomenal statistic, that if given a chance to be free, they will show up at the polls. Forty-one percent of those 10 million are women.” This indicates that the successes of the Afghanistan intervention has not been measured only by the reduction of terrorism or the War against the Taliban. Rather, the Bush administration sees success through the promotion of democracy and liberalism. Yet, it is just as important to recognize the lack of humanitarianism invoked as a reason for intervention.

Despite this drastic difference in rhetoric between these two states, Canada’s military intervention in Afghanistan has followed a similar trajectory to the US, starting soon after the attacks on the US in September 11, 2001. In October 2001, Canada sent approximately 900 troops to the Arabian Sea, accompanying the HMCS Charlottetown, HMCS Iroquois and a supply ship Preserver as part of a naval contingent. However, it was not until February 2002, when Canada committed land troops for an offensive campaign alongside the US and the UK and Princess Patricia’s Light Infantry landed in Afghanistan to begin their six-month rotation.

From August 2003 to the end of 2005, Canada operated in Kabul under the auspices of Operation Athena, at that time, Canadian forces left the stabilized city for Kandahar province in southern Afghanistan. In September 2006, Canada’s troop total in Afghanistan was increased to 2,500 soldiers, working within ISAF and as a Canadian Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT). Also, for support in special covert missions, Canada has also admitted to using its elite commando force, Joint Task Force 2 (JTF2), which has been working alongside US special forces covert missions in Afghanistan.71

While the mission has come under increased scrutiny by opposition members, media and the public, Canada’s role in Afghanistan has been several-fold. The intervention includes three groups of troops; those under NATO/ISAF, country troops within PRTs and the special ops and elite forces. This does not include, the anti-Taliban United Front (UF), who were responsible for on-the-ground fighting against Taliban forces. Rather, the American and other allied troops in Afghanistan were responsible for training and arming UF troops in the country. The UF campaign was speeded along through the bombing campaign of the US and UK.72 In fact, it was after the UF recovered Kabul that NATO and other troops entered the country.73

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70 Ibid.
73 Jane’s Defence Weekly, “Poor logistics and slow air war stall UF move on Kabul” October 31, 2001. Anthony Davis, Jabal Saraj, Afghanistan
The Canadian PRT in Kandahar is composed of development workers, military forces, diplomats, and civilian police.\textsuperscript{74} It is working under the mandate “... to extend the authority of the Afghanistan government in Kandahar province by promoting local stability and security, improving local governance structures, and engaging in reconstruction activities.”\textsuperscript{75} Each PRT is designed with the region in mind, assessing on a needs-basis the proportions of civilian and military staff needed within each mission. Public opinion and media scrutiny have arisen because of Canada’s mission in Kandahar is notably one of the more dangerous regions in the country. There are large strongholds of Taliban, local warlords and affiliated terror groups operating in the region. Recognize that despite the premise of the PRT to develop and reconstruct parts of Afghanistan, PRTs are in the process of war-fighting as the region must be secured before development begins. Their objective is to provide opportunities for social, economic and political re-growth in the region by engaging in discussion with local leaders, specialised training for law enforcement, judiciary, and military forces.

Other responsibilities assumed by Canada have been in development assistance. Before September 11, 2001, Canada’s financial aid package to Afghanistan was a mere $10 million dollars per year.\textsuperscript{76} Since 2001 however, the department responsible for international aid, Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), has increased its funding package to $616.5 million over eight years until 2009.\textsuperscript{77}

Similarly, one of military components used by both Canada and the US in the operation is the Psychological Operations (Psyops) and delivery of humanitarian aid within the country. For example, within six months of the initial intervention, it was estimated that US psychological warfare ops has “delivered more than 50 million leaflets, and transport crews had delivered 2.5 million humanitarian daily rations, 1,700 tons of wheat, and 328,200 blankets. More than 5,000 radios had been provided to the Afghan people.”\textsuperscript{78} In addition, images of food supplies delivered in bags clearly marked “U.S.A” are a predominant image portrayed across the country. Also, the campaign differentiating the newly elected Karzai-government and the former Taliban is run through the delivery of radio and the promotion of musical broadcasts and television that were once restricted by the Taliban.

Analysis: The Relationship Between Rhetoric and Foreign Policy

In its analysis of the compatibility of rhetoric and operationalisation of foreign policy, this paper makes three key arguments. At the domestic level, rhetoric and operations are treated very differently, which highlights several problems. First, this is indicative of a disconnect and lack of communication between the Canadian government and the military personnel on the ground. In other words, by the evidence shown in this paper, successive Canadian governments have used the operation to forward an ideological perspective on war in Afghanistan. This is obvious because of the obviously little change in Canada’s strategy within Afghanistan to reflect an actual change in priorities of the Conservative government. Canada continues to be involved with the reconstruction effort within the PRTs and has 2,286 troops dedicated to ISAF under

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{75}Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{77}Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{78}Ibid.
\end{itemize}
Operation Athena. The mandate continues to operate under the mission to promote: “A stable nation that is no longer a haven for terrorism; a country that meets the needs of its people; and a fully integrated part of the international community.”\textsuperscript{79} Conservative policies have not been necessarily distinct from previous Liberal policy, as the Conservatives just recently extended the mandate of the Canadian mission in the country.

Second, this disconnect is problematic because it has falsely led the public to believe the operation is being conducted for humanitarian reasons. Rather, humanitarianism seems to be used as a justification for a mission being conducted for other political reasons, indicative of a lack of confidence on behalf of the government. As Table 1 shows, there is a declining confidence in the Canadian public about the work done in Afghanistan, and this paper argue that this is to a large part, a product of the disconnect between rhetoric and practice. [Appendix 1]. Therefore, despite Prime Minister Harper’s emphasis on national security arguments within his speeches, such as the challenges of the drug trade, weapons of mass destruction, and terrorism, he fails to show Canadians how Afghanistan continues to be a threat to Canadian security. Yet, vis-à-vis his rhetoric, the human security effects – such as including education, health and personal liberties - of Canada’s intervention have been treated as epiphenomenal to the larger gains in Afghanistan.\textsuperscript{80}

At the structural-level, this research both agrees with, and also denies the idea that 9/11 has provided a paradigm shift for how states conduct their foreign policy. It denies there has been a paradigm shift for two reasons. First, this paper showed that despite the ‘invocation’ of September 11, both Canada and the US conducted their air-strike and reconstruction strategy in both Kosovo and Afghanistan. In other words, the means for intervention has not changed. In both cases, the states lead with air-strikes, while simultaneously training and sending local troops, the KLA and the United Front, to cover the ground battle. Then, in both cases, once ground hostilities were ceased, both states were engaged in the diplomatic, democratic and economic re-growth within Kosovo and Afghanistan.

Second, despite the invocation of “human security” rhetoric in Canada and “national security” rhetoric the US, both states have been steeped in Afghanistan, as Canadian troops have been in battlefield fighting since October 2001. Further along in the intervention, with Canadians in theatre, the engagement of both militaries is quite similar. This can be assessed through their involvement in the PRTs, relationship within ISAF and the offensive operations currently in progress in the South. In addition, the Canadian JTF2 has been instrumental in the elite level search missions for Taliban fighters. It could be argued that the similarities in their intervention strategies is a product of both states operating under NATO auspices within Afghanistan. However, this is not particularly the case for a couple reasons: first, other NATO states have chosen not to engage in the Afghanistan mission to the same degree as Canada and the US. Hence, within Afghanistan NATO membership is not a barrier to individual state decisions. Second, the PRT and JTF2 elements of the mission that have not been run by ISAF, and there under the NATO mandate until recently, and therefore states were in Afghanistan until ISAF took over operations in the South.

Yet, this paper can also argue that 9/11 has changed a few things. Despite the previous conclusions that state action and foreign policy have not changed between Kosovo and


\textsuperscript{80} Polling taken from http://www.angus-reid.com/polls/index.cfm
Afghanistan, this paper does conclude that there is a structural difference between the pre- and post-9/11 security environments, for two reasons. First, this paper concluded that the system has changed because the nature of the threat has changed. In other words, the enemy that is being fought against is different, with an altered objective, altered relationship with the invading forces and local society, altered techniques and different measurement of success. For example, Milosevic’s measuring stick to his success was to see how many ethnic Albanians he could rid from Kosovo. Milosevic ruthlessly used traditional military mechanisms to achieve his goals, using national armies to ethnically cleanse the area. In comparison, the Taliban, warlords and al Qaeda members judge their success as the pursuit of the destruction of Western civilization, as the punishment of the infidels and the pursuit of jihad. In addition, the techniques used against the intervention forces, include suicide bombing and guerrilla warfare, without the material means to engage in traditional warfare. Yet, despite this “new enemy,” intervention forces have not changed their overall strategy in intervention – showing that there has been a continuity in their strategy.

Second, in light of 9/11 period, in Afghanistan, intervention states feel like they have a larger political capital to absorb causalities within this war. Despite recent deaths of Canadian soldiers, the Conservative government increased the term of the mission until 2009. Coincidentally, it is Canada and the US that have had the largest numbers of causalities in the mission. While support for the mission remains high, governments need to be aware that this political capital is being deteriorated because of the increasing disconnect between the rhetoric and policy forcing a decline in public opinion.

In conclusion, this paper draws a disconnect between the Canadian government’s rhetoric and its intervention policy. At a time where public opinion is falling, and support for an operation like Afghanistan is dwindling within the citizenry, it is important to recognize that democratic governments have a responsibility to provide transparent and accurate information to their citizens. Therefore, in the “War on Terror” and in a post-9/11, these governments have continued to use humanitarian and democratic principles to invoke legitimacy for interventions that are anything but.
Appendix 1

Public Support for Canadian Reconstruction Efforts

Mission Extended to 2009 (May 2006)
Coalition starts offensive against Taliban (July 2006)

Canadian Troops move to Kandahar (Aug 2005)
Canadian soldier is axed when meeting with village elders (Mar 2006)
Karzai visit (Sept 2006)
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