



COPS IN KABUL

A NEWFOUNDLAND PEACEKEEPER IN AFGHANISTAN

WILLIAM C. MALONE



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To my parents, Bill and Exie Malone, I love you and miss you.
There is not a day that goes by that I do not think about you.

To my wonderful family—Nola, Brittany, Taylor, Sydney, Laura,
Jeannette, and Ty—I love you all.

To all of the men and women in the Canadian policing community and their families who volunteered and served our country with distinction, it was an honour to be counted among you.

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INTRODUCTION

Everyone remembers where they were on September 11, 2001. I was in northern New Brunswick as part of the RCMP Public Order Team in the midst of a lobster fishing dispute in Burnt Church. As I was getting ready for work, I was watching CNN and saw two planes slam into the World Trade Center. It certainly piqued my interest, and my immediate thought was that it was some sort of a trailer for an upcoming movie. As I continued watching, I realized that the events I had just witnessed were real and were going to change the world forever. Little did I know at that time that ten years later I would be at the very epicentre of terrorism, in the country where Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda had trained and prepared nineteen hijackers to fly four planes into the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and a farmer's field in Pennsylvania.

A great deal has been written since those horrible events. The attacks that occurred that day will go down in history as some of the most heinous crimes ever committed on North American soil. It changed our world and made us realize that we were not beyond the reach of terrorism. It was no longer something that happened “over there” or to someone else—it was happening right here on our doorstep. Ever since that day, the Western world has been on high alert, at DefCon 1,¹ so to speak, in a perpetual state of hyper-vigilance, studying the adversary and taking the offensive to groups like al Qaeda and other like-minded entities. This heightened sense of vigilance has not dissipated over the years and still continues today.

This one event galvanized the Western world, and everyone, including Canada, rallied around the cause, mobilizing its military and police personnel and sending them to the coal face of the terrorist threat in Afghanistan. This effort was to help stem the tide of insurgency and build

¹ Defence Readiness Conditions used by the United States Armed Forces; DEFCON Scale 1-5, 1 being the highest

the capacity and the capability of the Afghan National Security Forces² to handle this ongoing threat.

The term CivPol is the acronym used to describe civilian police who have been deployed to the many trouble spots around the globe. Canada's first civilian police mission took place in 1989 when we sent a contingent of officers to the newly formed country of Namibia. The purpose of that deployment, and every one since, including Afghanistan, has been to help bring about peace, security, and the rule of law by training indigenous police forces in policing techniques that are used in democratic societies. Our police training has always tried to incorporate the cultural attributes of the countries in which we have worked, and this has not always been easy. The underpinning of these peacekeeping and training missions has always been based on the nine principles of policing developed by Sir Robert Peel in the early 1800s.³ These tried and tested principles are considered the foundation in building the public trust between the police and those they have been sworn to protect.

When I thought about volunteering for the mission, I broached the issue with a number of friends and colleagues, who were not shy in providing feedback. They asked me, "Why are you going over there? It's a mess!" Or, "It's a complete waste of time. They're completely uncivilized." A few folks looked at me and bluntly asked, "Are you out of your mind?" It wasn't the first time I'd heard those types of sentiments. I heard the same thing when I decided to serve on a United Nations mission in Haiti in 1996. But once the bug of international policing and peacekeeping gets into your blood, you are hooked and you want to help as many people as you can, regardless of where that may take you.

The underlying motive for most of us who worked in Afghanistan can be directly linked to the initial reason that we all became police officers, which is the desire to help others, regardless of race, colour, creed, sexual orientation, or socio-economic status. It's in our DNA. It is what we do and who we are, regardless of where that help may be needed. Canada has always been known as a country of peacekeepers and peacemakers, and we wanted to carry on with this time-honoured tradition. Many of the officers from the Afghan mission were of the view, "Our Afghan police colleagues need our help, so let's go and try our best to help them."

There are a number of people who believe the entire mission was a waste of time and that all the progress and advances we made will not be sustainable. Perhaps. But I am of the view that if we do not go to places

2 ANSF includes the Afghan National Army and the Afghan National Police.

3 Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Peel

like Afghanistan to render assistance, the problems they are facing, such as terrorism, insurgency, and organized crime, will inevitably come to visit us on Canadian soil. We would be naive to think otherwise. We have already seen the devastation and suffering that occurred in the United States on September 11, 2001. I firmly believe that the military, the diplomats, the police, and the financial resources deployed by the Canadian government and our allies have made a difference. The work done by Canada and its international partners has and will continue to make a difference in the lives of many Afghans if they remain committed to improving their own country. Whether or not that difference is sustainable remains to be seen. History will be the judge of that.

Since returning from Afghanistan in June of 2012, I have listened to politicians and ordinary Canadians talk about the great and courageous work of the Canadian Armed Forces, which is indeed warranted and well-deserved. They fought valiantly in very difficult conditions and spent a great deal of time and energy to bring about peace to this far-off land. Their efforts continue today as they battle against ISIS in places like Iraq and Syria. Much to my surprise, I have heard very little about the contribution of the other men and women in uniform—the Canadian civilian policing community—who, along with their military and diplomatic counterparts, did exceptional, tireless, and courageous work since the initial deployment in 2003. The Canadian police mission and the contributions of the nearly 300 police officers⁴ from across our great nation have been relegated to a footnote in most historical accounts of the Canadian mission. For some reason this has gotten lost along the way. It is my hope that this book will help Canadians and others around the world to better understand and appreciate the complexities and difficulties of the environment and the hard work done by Canadian police officers and our international counterparts who served during the eleven-year mission. In the pages that follow, I hope that you, the reader, will gain a greater understanding of Canada's contribution to the Afghan police training mission.

Note: Any views, opinions, errors, or omissions expressed in this book are solely those of the author. They are based on the author's experiences and best recollection of events and do not reflect those of the Government of Canada, the North American Treaty Organization, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, or any other Canadian police agency who participated in this mission.

4 See Annex A for a list of all Canadian civilian police officers who served in Afghanistan.
Source: International Police Operations Branch, Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

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CHRONOLOGY OF KEY HISTORIC EVENTS⁵

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| 1747 | The country of Afghanistan was founded as a modern state by Pashtun Ahmad Shāh Durrānī. He built the country by including parts of Iran, Central Asia, and parts of present-day India. |
| 1776 | Afghan capital moves from Kandahār to Kabul. |
| 1839–1842 | First Anglo-Afghan War. |
| 1857 | Indian mutiny. British imperial rule is established in India, replacing the Mughal Empire. This leads to a crisis in Islamic politics within the subcontinent. |
| 1878–1880 | Second Anglo-Afghan War. The war ends with the signing of the Treaty of Gandamak. |
| 1880–1901 | Reign of King Abdur Rahman (a.k.a. The Iron Amir). |
| 1919 | Third Anglo-Afghan War. Kabul attempts to recruit tribes on the British side of the Durand Line. Afghanistan ultimately gains its independence. |
| 1919–1929 | Rule of Amānullāh Khān. He attempted to push through reforms too quickly, which resulted in tribal uprisings that he could not control. As a result, he abdicated his throne in 1929 and went into exile. He was later assassinated. |
| 1933–1973 | Reign of Mohammed Zahir Shah. He was later overthrown by his cousin, Mohammed Daoud Khan, in a bloodless military coup in 1973. |

⁵ Source: *Ghosts of Afghanistan: The Haunted Battleground* by Jonathan Steele

- 1973–1978 Rule of Daoud Khan.
- 1978 The People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) stages a coup.
- 1979 Soviet troops arrive. Babrak Karmal installed as the new Afghan leader.
- 1985 Mikhail Gorbachev, Soviet president, decides to withdraw troops from Afghanistan.
- 1986 Babrak Karmal is replaced by Mohammed Najibullah.
- 1988 Agreement is reached between the US and Soviet Union in Geneva on the withdrawal of Soviet troops.
- 1989 On February 15, the last Soviet troops leave Afghanistan, which leads to an intensified civil war.
- 1992 In April of 1992, the Najibullah government falls and mujahideen forces enter Kabul.
- 1994 The Taliban occupy Kandahār.
- 1996 May: Osama bin Laden is invited by the mujahideen to return to Afghanistan and takes up residence in the Taliban heartland of Kandahār.
September: Kabul falls to the Taliban.
- 2001 After the September 11 attacks, the United States demands that Osama bin Laden be turned over to them. The Taliban refuse. In October, US President George W. Bush launches attacks on Afghanistan. The Taliban are ousted from power, and the Bonn Agreement is signed in December of that year.
- 2002 January: Operation Anaconda is launched. The military pressure causes the Taliban and al Qaeda insurgents to retreat from Afghanistan into Pakistan.
March: Initial International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) troops begin to arrive in Kabul. June: Transitional government installed in Kabul.
- 2004 Hamid Karzai (Pashtun) is elected president of Afghanistan.
- 2009 March: US President Barack Obama authorizes a surge of 19,000 additional US troops. In November, President Karzai is re-elected to a second five-year term in office.

- In December, the US sends an additional 30,000 troops into Afghanistan.
- 2011 May 2: Osama bin Laden is killed by US Navy SEALs in Abbottabad, Pakistan. President Obama announces the withdrawal of 33,000 US troops by September of 2012.
- 2013 March: Canadian police and military mission in Afghanistan concludes.
- 2014 September 21: Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai (Pashtun) is elected president of Afghanistan.

TURKMENISTAN

UZBEKISTAN

TAJIKISTAN CHINA

PAKISTAN

IRAN

AFGHANISTAN

PROVINCES



Kabul



Kabul International Airport

KIA North

KIA South

Camp Souter

Camp Phoenix

Jalalabad Road

Amir Amir Khan Road

Takhta Pul Road

Esteghla Road

Tajikistan Road

Airport Road

Terminal Road

Airport Road

Airport Road

Massoud Circle

Shah Daraq Road

Bibi Mahru Road

Mainwala Road

Salang War Road

Salang War Road

Salang War Road

Salang War Road

Salang War Road

Salang War Road

Qalla-e-Fatullah Road

Taimani Road

Kollia Pustha Road

Shahid Road

Sulhi Road

Zarghina Road

Almad Zaher Road

Ustad Rabbani Road

Ustad Rabbani Road

Ustad Rabbani Road

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Ustad Rabbani Road

Market Road

Taimani Project Road

Forty Meter Road

Salang War Road

Salang War Road

Salang War Road

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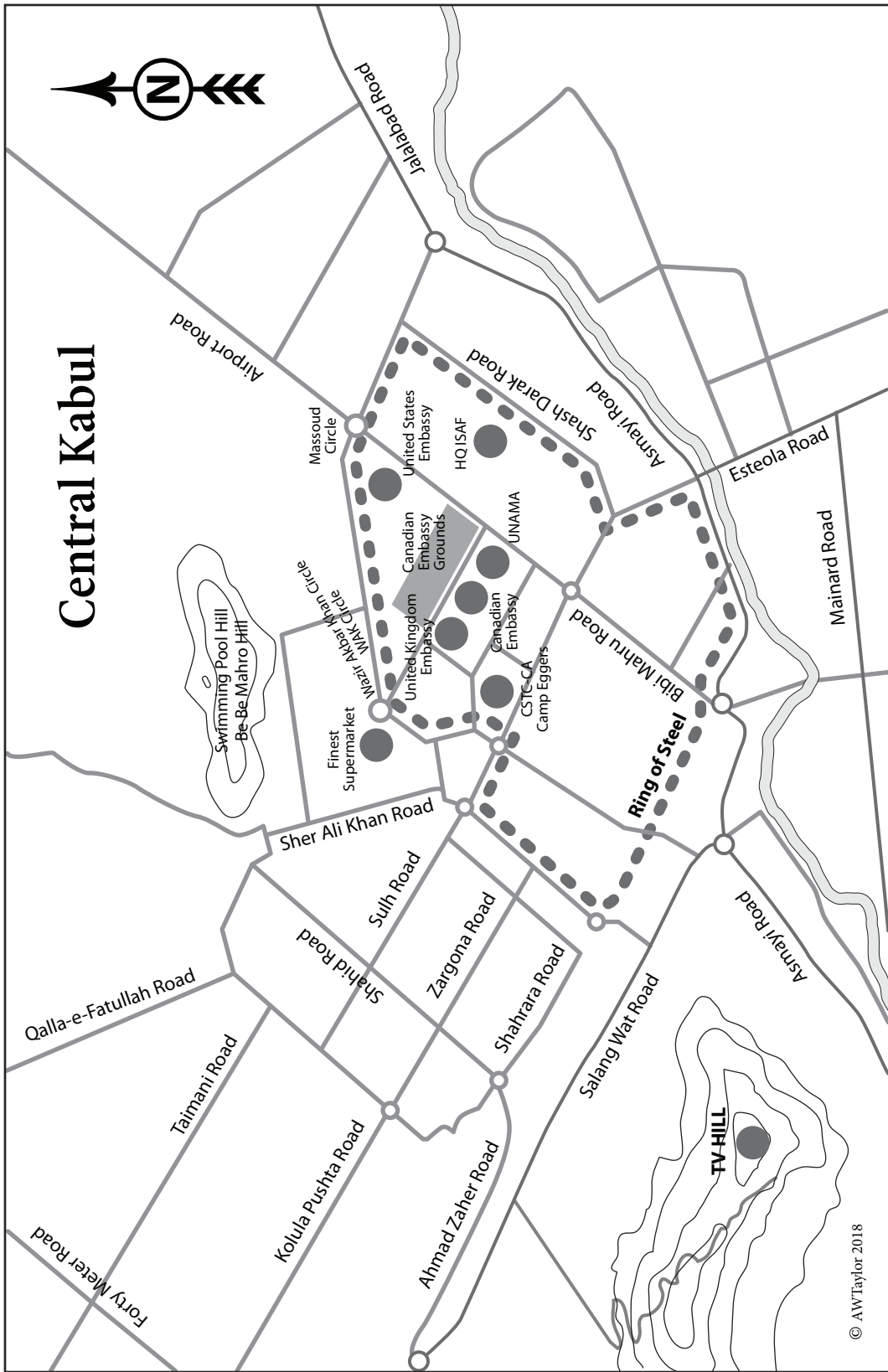
Hotel Inter-Continental

Green Village

TV HILL

- 1 CSTC-CA Camp Eggers
- 2 United Kingdom Embassy
- 3 Canadian Embassy
- 4 UNAMA
- 5 United States Embassy
- 6 HQ ISAF
- 7 Finest Supermarket

Central Kabul



CHAPTER 1

THE MISSION

*A small body of determined spirits fired by an unquenchable faith
in their mission can alter the course of history.*

— Mahatma Gandhi

FOR NATO FORCES, the Taliban initially appeared to be a disorganized and primitive rabble of black-turbaned nomads. However, over the course of the Afghan conflict, the West has learned that their initial impressions could not have been further from the truth. These men were a battle-hardened, elusive group who have proven to be a very worthy, intelligent, and dangerous adversary. They constitute a complex and asymmetric threat because they do not wear uniforms and are able to blend in easily with their fellow Afghans. They frequently launch guerilla-type attacks during the day and then resort to the delivery of night letters⁶ to their fellow citizens, warning them not to work or co-operate with foreigners (a.k.a. infidels⁷) or any Afghan government agencies. Their use of asymmetric warfare tactics in the course of the conflict has been very effective and deadly. Afghans who join the police, as well as their families, are especially vulnerable to these constant threats of violence. Despite the threats, Afghans and the international community know that it is vitally important to recruit, staff, train, and retain a competent and professional police force in order to maintain a safe and secure environment. This has proven to be easier said than done.

Similar to the approach in Iraq, the US counter-insurgency strategy in Afghanistan has been “clear, hold, build, and return to the Afghans.” On the face of it, it seems like a straightforward strategy. However, the chal-

⁶ Anonymous letters which were delivered at night to intimidate people. This was a technique preferred by the Taliban.

⁷ Definition: a person who does not believe in religion or in a particular religion

lenge has been in the implementation, which is where most strategies have failed. The primary goal was to bring services to ordinary Afghans within a few weeks. In principle it sounds great, but it is patently unreasonable to expect to have basic services, democracy, good governance, and the rule of law in such a short time frame. While the military approach was noble in its intent, it was unrealistic. You could not simply add water and *poof*: an instant infrastructure, a competent police force, and an organized community ecosystem appears in which everyone is now enlightened and understands and follows the rules. I'd had a similar experience with the Haitian National Police in the mid-1990s, so I knew that the commitment would have to cover a longer term, at least a generation, in order to have any chance of systemic change and having a positive impact on the country, its people, and its institutions. One of the biggest hurdles to overcome would be the building of trust between the community and the police. In the absence of this, it all becomes an exercise in futility.

One of the primary guiding documents for the Afghan mission has been the Bonn Agreement, which was negotiated and signed in Bonn, Germany, in 2001. The meetings in Germany were attended by eighty-five countries and fifteen international organizations to broaden the cooperative arrangement between Afghanistan and the international community. From 2015–2024, this road map is designed to take them from transition to transformation, reaffirming commitments to building regional co-operation, human rights, governance, security, rule of law, and developing social and economic institutions.

As part of this framework, a number of countries made specific commitments to lead the Security Sector Reform and the rebuilding efforts of Afghan institutions. The division of labour regarding Security Sector Reform among the international community resulted in Italy focusing on the judiciary, the United Kingdom overseeing counter-narcotics, the Germans and European Union Police (EUPOL) taking on the responsibility of the police, and the United States concentrating on the military. While these were the designated lanes, there was an overlap of training programs among the donor countries. This was a challenging environment given the numerous training programs and initiatives to be tracked and coordinated. *"In retrospect, this division of labour and burden sharing between nations was done with little attention to expertise, experience, or resources, and there was no mechanism to ensure a coordinated approach to reform efforts."*⁸

8 United States Institute of Peace www.usip.org Special Report 227, August 2009, Afghanistan's Police—The Weak Link in Security Sector Reform, p.2

The guiding policy document for the deployment of Canadian police officers to Afghanistan was the Canadian Police Agreement, otherwise known as the CPA. The purpose of Canada's participation in the mission was to "*... help Afghans rebuild their country as a stable, democratic, and self-sufficient society.*" Canada, along with dozens of other nations and international organizations, was engaged at the request of the democratically elected Afghan government to work within the United Nations (UN)-mandated, North American Treaty Organization (NATO)-led mission to bring about security, peace, and the rule of law in the Central Asian nation.

Canada's participation in this mission started in October 2001 with the Canadian Special Forces Joint Task Force 2 (JTF-2). In late January, early February 2002, our special forces were followed by Canadian regular forces who set up shop in Kandahār. The Canadian policing community entered the mission in 2003, and we were initially deployed to Kabul as part of the United Nations Assistance Mission—Afghanistan (UNAMA) and then into Kandahār Province in 2005 to reinforce the basic policing skills of the Afghan National Police as part of the Canadian Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT). During their time in Kandahār, Canadian police officers worked on the front lines with their Canadian military counterparts and the Afghan National Police. This approach was very effective. However, this deployment structure was significantly modified in July of 2011 when the Government of Canada decided that the military/ combat mission in southern Afghanistan would come to an end. From that point onward, Canadian police officers would continue the training mission from the Afghan capital, Kabul, and additional locations in the northern part of the country.

Canada's police had made significant investments in reforming the Afghan National Police in the Kandahār area, and it was essential that strategic consideration be given to ensure that these efforts were sustained during and after the transition from Kandahār to Kabul. A great deal of blood, sweat, and tears had been expended to bring about change in the policing environment in southern Afghanistan. Everyone wanted to make sure that the gains Canada had made were not lost. The unfortunate reality was that as soon as Canadian police officers left southern Afghanistan, our influence began to wane and eventually disappear because we were no longer there to look after the programs that had been instituted.

Our country brought a lot of expertise to the police reform efforts in Afghanistan. This expertise was highly valued by our key allies and part-

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