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One Vote, One Land

ISAF MIRROR

55th Edition

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September 2009

7-12

One Vote, One Land

Photos from Election Day
Thursday, 20 August 2009

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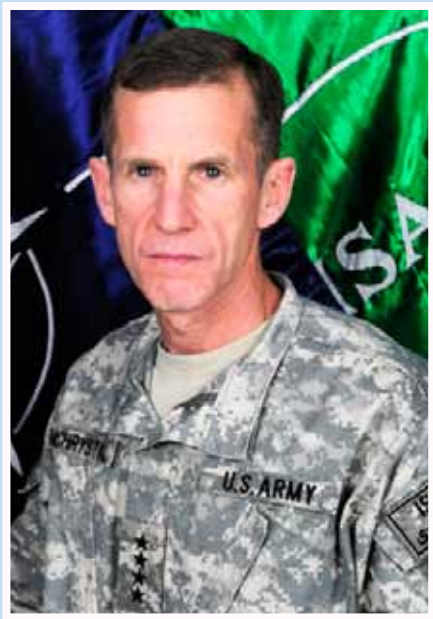
SEPTEMBER 2009

JUNE 2009

Commander's Counterinsurgency Guidance



General Stanley McChrystal
Commander, ISAF

ISAF's mission is to help the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIRoA) defeat the insurgency threatening their country. Protecting the Afghan people is the mission. The Afghan people will decide who wins this fight, and we (GIRoA and ISAF) are in a struggle for their support. Essentially, we and the insurgents are presenting an argument for the future to the people of Afghanistan: they will decide which argument is the most attractive, most convincing, and has the greatest chance of success.

The Afghan people are a diverse mix of ethnicities and tribes with strong traditions and a fierce sense of independence. We need to understand the people and see things through their eyes. It is their fears, frustrations, and expectations that we must address. We will not win simply by killing insurgents.

ISAF Counterinsurgency Guidance: Key Points

The Afghan people are the Objective. Protecting them is the mission. Focus 95% of your time building relationships with them, and together with the Afghan government, meeting their needs.

Get rid of the conventional mind-set. Focus on the people, not the militants. By earning their trust and helping an accountable GIRoA gain the support of the people, you take from the enemy what he cannot afford to lose- the control of the population

Embrace the people:

- Think before you act. Understand the consequences of your actions – how you drive, how you patrol, how you relate to people, how you help the community. View your actions through the eyes of the Afghans. If we harm Afghan civilians, we sow the seeds of our own defeat.
- Be an expert on the local situation. Build connections and hold routine jirgas. Afghan culture is founded on personal relationships. Listen to the population and adjust accordingly. Earn their trust. Develop their ownership in the solution. If they sweat for it, they will protect it.
- Be a positive force in the community; shield the people from harm; foster stability. Use local economic initiative to increase employment and give young men alternative to insurgency. Demand that CERP, CIMIC and other capabilities support these efforts. Help Afghans solve Afghan problems.

Partner with ANSF:

- Live, eat and train together, plan and operate together, depend on one another, and hold each other accountable – at all echelons down to soldier level. Treat them as equal partners in success.
- Their success is out goal. Respect them; put them in the lead and coach them to excellence.

Build Governance Capacity and Accountability:

- Facilitate and enable transparent and accountable governance from national to community level. Insist government officials serve the people; support those who do.
- Confront corrupt officials. Protecting the people requires protections from physical harm, corruption and abuse of power. With your Afghan counterparts work to change corrupt behaviour that adversely affects the people and the mission. If the be haviour does not change, demand the Afghan higher leadership take appropriate action.

Get Better Everyday:

- Learn and adapt to the environment. Keep your skills sharp. Improve daily.
- Learn how to shape the environment, and how to achieve greater effects with the people more quickly. Listen to and learn from your Afghan colleagues.
- Communicate and share ideas. Challenge the conventional wisdom if it no longer fits the environment. This is a battle of wits – learn and adapt more quickly than the insurgent.

We (GIRoA and ISAF) will succeed by transforming the environment through local security, connecting responsive and credible governance to the community leaders and the people, and facilitating compelling alternatives to the insurgency. The people will decide the contest in GIRoA's favor.

Download COIN Guidance online: http//www.nato.int/isaf/docu/official_text/counterinsurgency_guidance.pdf

NATO SECRETARY GENERAL VISITS AFGHANISTAN

Nato Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen talks with press while visiting Regional Command South on 06 August, 2009

Afghanistan
Building the new South

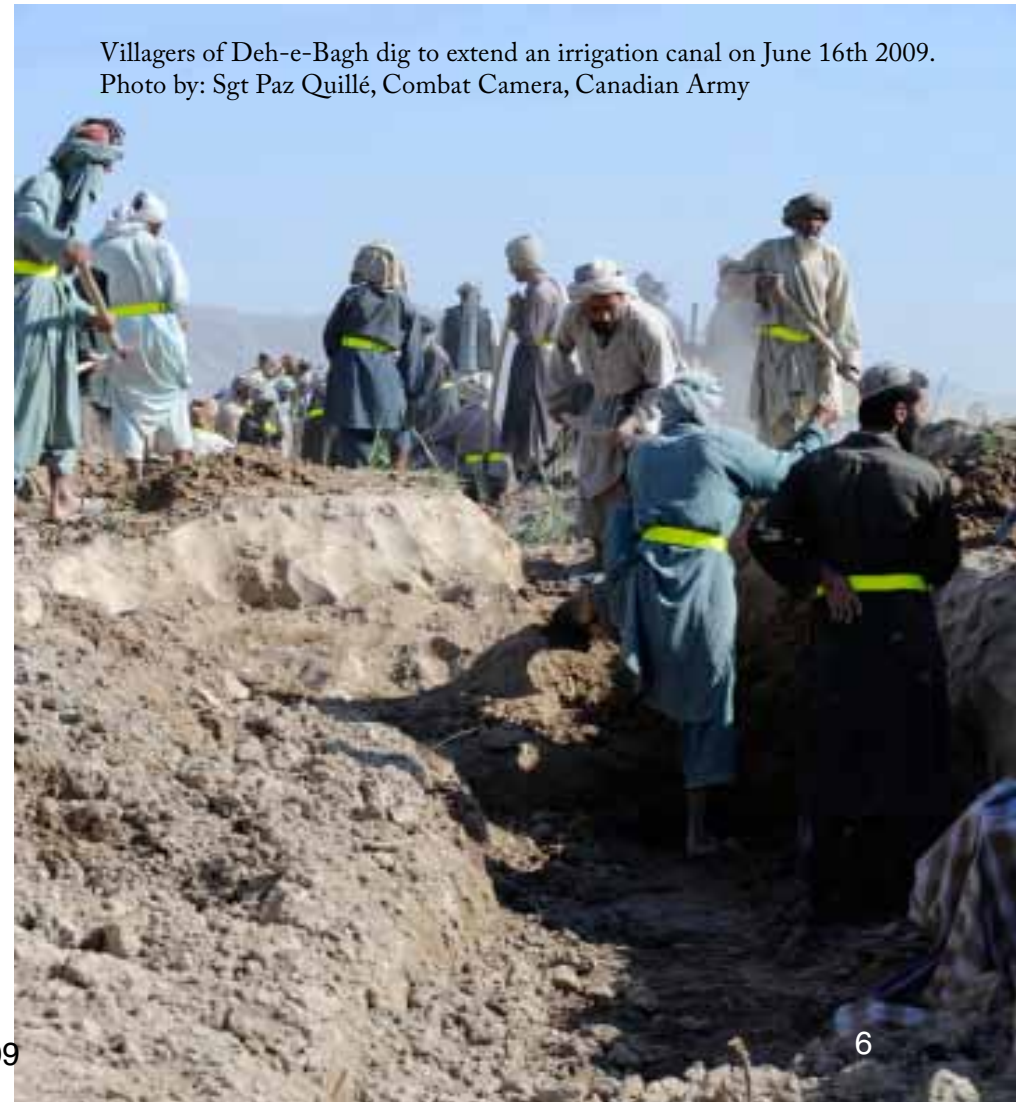
KALAY – The Only BUILD In The South.

U.S. Captain Jennifer Kellerman
Kandahar Public Affairs

A Deh-e-Bagh is a small village in Dand District, just south of Kandahar City. Approximately 900 people live there. Some work in the village, some are farmers, some commute to Kandahar City for work and others are unemployed. Slightly north-east of the village, a bright yellow compound is home to many shuras that have been held between the Dand District Leader, Amadullah Nazek, village elders, Canadian Forces and Government of Canada development coordinators that began in April. This village needed help and has been supportive of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIRoA) and ISAF efforts thus far. Deh-e-Bagh was going to be the focus of Canadian efforts over the coming months. When Task Force Kandahar Commander Brigadier General Jonathan Vance arrived in Afghanistan last February, he already had a plan on how he was going to approach the situation in his area of responsibility. With the impending arrival of additional U.S. forces in the south, Canadian forces would have an opportunity to refocus their efforts. Vance felt that intensely focused counter-insurgency efforts were crucial to best help the people of Afghanistan, which meant developing relationships with GIRoA and Afghan citizens by assisting them in rebuilding their country into one of peace and prosperity; if necessary, one village at a time. "We're trying to go from security at the end of a gun – which is defence – to human security," he explained, "Broad security means re-establishing the economic, political and social fabric". Operation KALAY I ('village' in Pasto) was to focus the full effects of all lines of operation onto a specific population with the goal of making a visible, tangible difference to their lives in the places where they sleep, work and raise their families. Instead of scattering aid projects across Kandahar Province and struggling to hold areas against the Taliban, it made greater sense to start at one point and work outward. This could not happen overnight. It had to be done slowly and in many steps, and the previously unheard-of village south of Kandahar would be the first, and epicentre of this new approach. Canadian Forces, partnered with the ANSF, began by securing the village from the insurgency. Once the insurgency was separated from the population, the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police (along with support by mentoring Canadian Forces) held the village boundaries, preventing insurgents from terrorizing the population and allowing Canadian development and reconstruction teams to come in and help. The improvements in the village were decided upon based on exhaustive analysis and countless shuras that resulted in requests from village elders. To ensure pride of ownership, investment and a sense of self betterment and hope for the future, all development was conducted by the citizens of Deh-e-Bagh with technical assistance and encouragement of stabilization teams from the Canadian Forces, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT). The BUILD phase of this much-discussed counter-insurgency approach, therefore, meant building relationships, building support, and building confidence as much as it meant building capacity. By June 23rd 2009, Afghan National Security Forces were in place and changes had begun to take form in the small village. Solar powered streetlights lined the roads, irrigation canals were remediated to better nourish farmland, and the local bazaar was open for business. A shura between BGen Vance, Mr. Ken Lewis (the Representative of Canada in Kandahar, or RoCK), District Leader Nazek, village and district elders along with other Canadian development and military representatives indicated initial success in the first step of the project. The villagers of Deh-e-Bagh were proud of the security and economic situation, and villagers of other surrounding communities were eager to become involved in securing their own neighbourhoods. The District Leader reinforced his support for this new approach in Afghanistan, and not just because it was his district that was reaping the benefits. "Three things are really important: security, development and good governance.

Major Claude Villeneuve from 55 Field Ambulance hands out candies to village children on June 7th 2009.
Photo by: Cpl Jonathan Barrette, TFK Public Affairs

The Taliban feel discouraged and defeated when they see locals working, and the community progressing". Since that milestone shura in June, the insurgency has attempted to influence Deh-e-Bagh and, in each case, they have failed. Not because the Canadian Forces were protecting it. It failed because the villagers and the security forces of the ANA and ANP were not willing to let outsiders disrupt their future. This approach is only the beginning of the process. The people of Deh-e-Bagh have taken ownership of their security and their future, and this in itself has become a critical turning point for Canadian efforts in Afghanistan. In fact, the success of this village has caused a desire, by Afghans, to see similar effects applied to neighbouring villages. Building upon this groundswell, the next step is to apply the effect throughout the Dand District. Op KALAY II, the operation designed specifically to stabilize Dand District, commenced 25 August, 2009, proudly inaugurating the only true 'build' in Southern Afghanistan. It is dangerous to announce success in Canada's new direction after such a short period; however it is a step in the right direction, a step that Canadians have been unable to pursue in the past due to stretched security forces in Kandahar Province. With the arrival of the American Stryker Combat Teams in the province, Canadian Forces elements are able to refocus their efforts in order to develop that same relationship with other villages in Kandahar Province and use their presence to help Afghans own a brighter future of security and economic growth. COMISAF Gen Stanley McChrystal praised the accomplishments in Dand and stressed that this 'Key Village Approach' was what he hoped to see more of in Afghanistan. "Everything that we do to convince these people to make a choice and make the right choice that gives them a free Afghanistan is the right step. So that is more powerful than any round we can shoot." Canadian and local media have called Deh-e-Bagh a 'model village'. This term is misleading; others want to live in a secure environment, however the lighted paved roads, irrigation canals and bright yellow paint on the District Centre may not be the same priorities for other villages. The village is not the model: the model to emulate elsewhere in Afghanistan is security, governance and reconstruction.

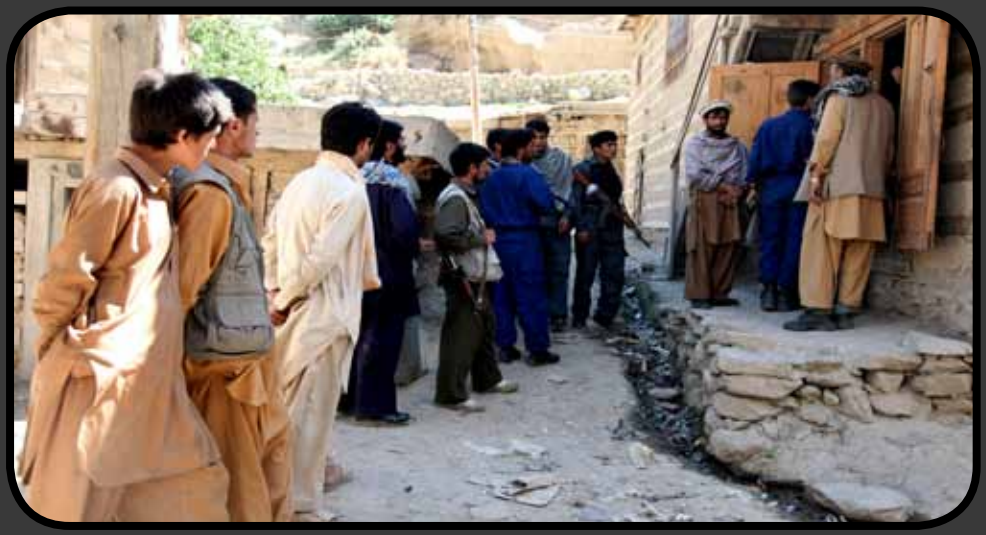


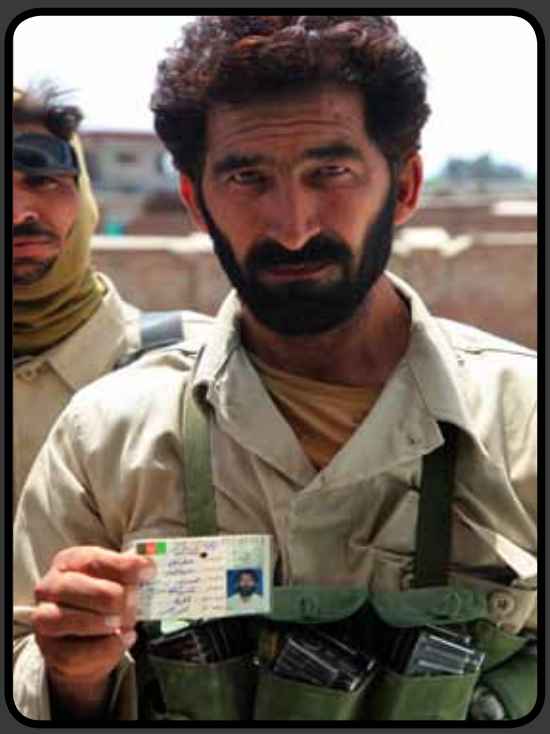
Villagers of Deh-e-Bagh dig to extend an irrigation canal on June 16th 2009.
Photo by: Sgt Paz Quillé, Combat Camera, Canadian Army

One Vote, One Land

Forward Operating Base SHANK, Afghanistan – An Afghan National Army soldier carries a box of tables to be used in the upcoming Afghan presidential elections to an ANA Air Corps Mi-17 for its flight to FOB Bermel on Aug. 17. During a two-day period, ANAAC pilots and U.S. Air Force mentors from the 438th Air Expeditionary Advisor Group delivered approximately 10,030 kilograms of ballots, polling kits, tables and chairs to remote Afghanistan locations in support of the elections. (Photo by U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Thomas Dow)

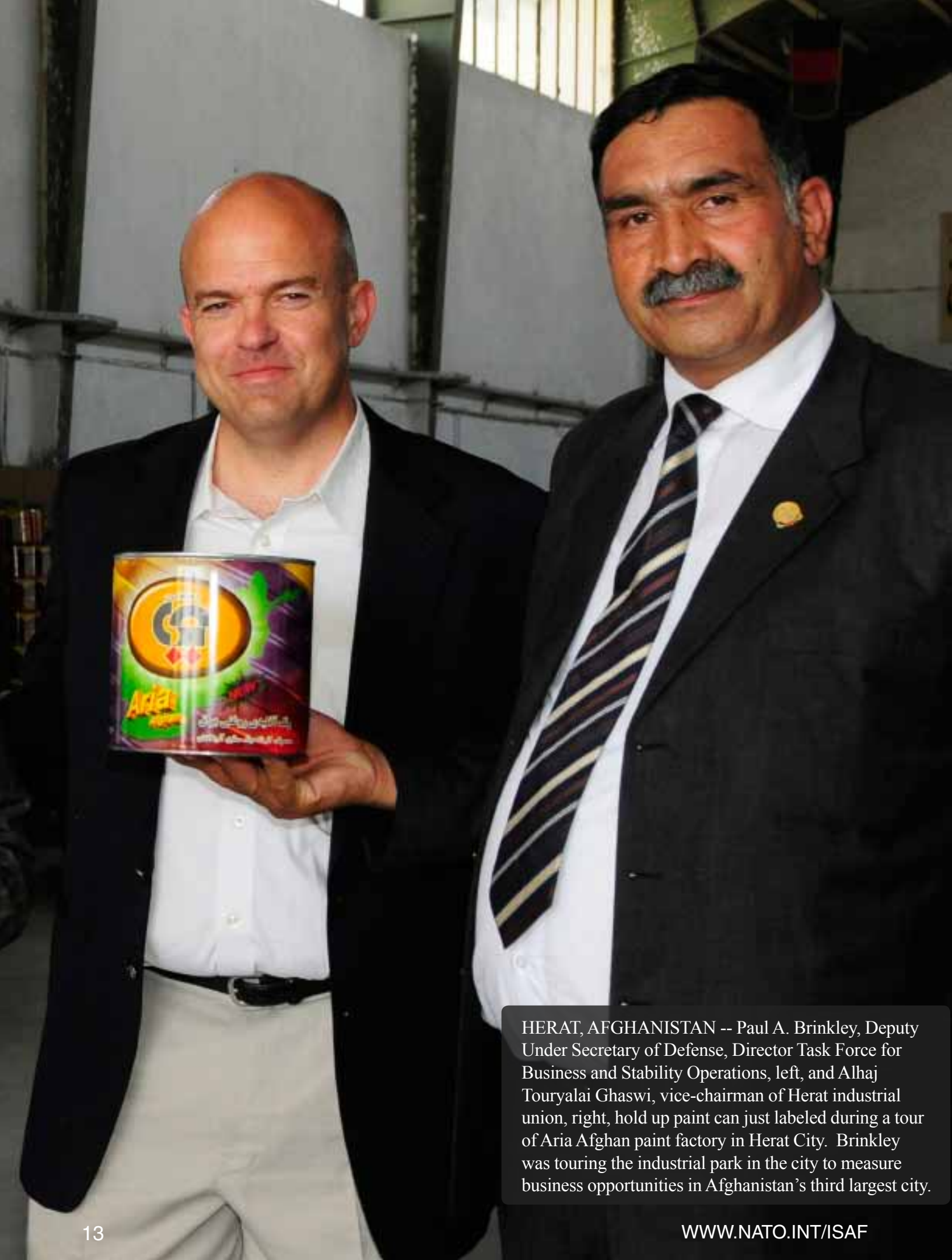
POLLING KIT





FOB ORGUN-E, Afghanistan – A group of Afghan National Army soldiers unload election ballots from an ANA Air Corps Mi-17 here Aug. 16. The election material was flown in from PRT Sharana to ensure citizens in remote locations of Afghanistan were able to vote in the upcoming elections. (Photo by U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Thomas Dow)

Kabul, Afghanistan – An Afghan woman casts her vote in the August 20, 2009 general election. This event marked the second time in Afghanistan's history that a general election has been held.



HERAT, AFGHANISTAN -- Paul A. Brinkley, Deputy Under Secretary of Defense, Director Task Force for Business and Stability Operations, left, and Alhaj Touryalai Ghaswi, vice-chairman of Herat industrial union, right, hold up paint can just labeled during a tour of Aria Afghan paint factory in Herat City. Brinkley was touring the industrial park in the city to measure business opportunities in Afghanistan's third largest city.

Business Leader Tours Herat Industry, Sees Potential for Growth

U.S. Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Riza Caporros
ISAF HQ Public Affairs

Paul A. Brinkley, Deputy Under Secretary of Defense, Director Task Force for Business and Stability Operations, toured a Herat city industrial park in July to measure business opportunities in Afghanistan's third largest city.

Joining Brinkley were other key leaders of business development, including John Cosgrave, USAID Afghanistan Development advisor, and Alhaj Touryalai Ghaswi, vice-chairman of Herat industrial union. Together they visited a food processing plant, plastics manufacturing warehouse, dairy and cotton manufacturing plants, marble plant and a paint factory, all located in the one industrial center in the city. The group also visited a steel mill before gathering for a meeting to discuss their thoughts on the industrial capabilities of the region.

Brinkley said he arrived with very little optimism because he had a very primitive image of the country, and was surprised by what he saw when he toured the Herat facilities.

"We saw half a dozen factories today and every single one of them was privately started. We've done a lot of private sector development," Brinkley said. "There's already an embedded sense of private enterprise here. That gives this country a huge head start."

Brinkley said there are many steps to take in order to get the Afghan economy thriving on its own, but Herat already shows signs of becoming a prosperous city.

"If we can work with the military to create logistics chains that move agricultural products from the south and bring the produce to places like Herat where you have factories, this will help stabilize the farm communities as well as the food processing industry here in Herat,

"Then you are uplifting the whole economy," Brinkley said.

Ghaswi said Herat can help adjoining farming villages to meet the common goal of making jobs and giving the people economic security. He emphasized his desire to have coalition help so his city would continue to show progess under the unstable conditions of the nation.

"We started an operation against the insurgency. We want to be the defender of our city, to work for ourselves is better," Ghaswi added. "Already we have 40,000 people working and we can do much more,

"We need to talk to the farmers, so they are working with Herat and the factories and we can improve our business, so that the people can forget the weapons and have peace in their lives."

Brinkley said developing the economy is one of the strongest ways for Afghanistan to fight the insurgency.

"Building an economy includes building of the people," said Brinkley. "In a war time, where there are people actively working to undermine natural economic forces, you have to aggressively promote those forces.

"It's an absolutely critical part of counterinsurgency," Brinkley continued.

"My team of business leaders have a lot of synthesis to do, thinking as a team and working to get this private economy going again. We will begin putting business expertise into different parts of the country where we can help," said Brinkley. "That will be the next step."

Brinkley established the Task Force in June 2006 with the mission to improve economic conditions for the Afghan people.

Provincial Training Center Graduates First Afghan National Police Class

U.S. Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Riza Caporros
ISAF HQ Public Affairs

The Provincial Training Center (PTC) at Forward Outlying Base Tarin Kowt, Afghanistan celebrated its opening in May with a graduation of the first police training class trained under the mentorship of Coalition forces.

Ninety-four policemen from Uruzgan province's Choro District graduated from the 8-week course, which covered skills such as patrol drills, first aid and the Afghan constitution.

Lieutenant Col. Mohammad Nabi, deputy police chief of Uruzgan province police attended the ceremony and during his speech, said how proud he was of the first graduating class of the Focus District Develop Cycle 7 Afghan National Police Basic course.

"I'm very happy that we are having this graduation," said Nabi. "These men can now do their best and support their people, so our future in Uruzgan will be successful."

Afghan Regional Security Integration Command (ARSIC) South Commanding Officer, COL Bill Hix also expressed pride for the graduating class, while discussing the importance of the day's event.

"This graduation for the policemen from the [Uruzgan province] Choro region is very important because it signifies the growing strength of the policing forces in Afghanistan," said Hix. "The opening of this facility is significant because with is, we are now able to train policemen in the south more effectively."

"With the skills they are leaving here with, they will be the face of their government to meet the basic needs of their people."

Partnering in this effort were Australian military members as well as civilian contractors brought to the PTC to help guide the Afghans leading the classes.

"The mentorship ideology proves very successful here in this enviroment," said Allan Spencer, Tarin Kowt PTC Lead Mentor. "The classes were facilitated by Afghan Police who were under guidance of coalition force mentors. What the instructors learn from the coalition force mentors, they passed on to their students and hopefully the cycle continues once they return to the work force."

"I am very proud to return to work and use my skills to help protect my people," said Muhammed, Uruzgan policeman and PTC graduate.

Uruzgan Province Provincial Lead Mentor, LTC Matthew Bjelobrk, observed this first class of Afghan National Police from its infancy and said, "they were off to a rocky start, but picked it up really well and in the end, exceeded our expectations."

Bjelobrk also said that PTC Tarin Kowt, "is only the beginning."

"This is just a baseline,"he explained. "Here we give them the basic tools they need, but after they leave here, that is when the important part of the mentorship comes into play. By applying the skills they learned here into their workplace, they will develop into a full-fledged police."

Hix added, "It's all about building capacity for the police. Now we want to move forward and improve their police force so they can eventually take control of their country. That will happen through training and mentoring of the promulgated standard across the police force that reflects what policing should be."

Fahidad, an Afghan instructor for the PTC praised the efforts of the coalition forces to strengthen the Afghan National Police force. "They offered us good training and good advice," said Fahidad. "[Because of them], we will have abilities to police against the enemies of our people."

When asked what advice he offers to the graduates as they leave, COL Hix replied, "Your first responsibility is to protect the people that you serve." The graduates will return to their homes and places of employment to utilize their renewed policing skills.

U.S. Marines Secure Southern Most Point Of Operations In Afghanistan

U.S. Navy Lieutenant Dave Hecht
ISAF HQ Public Affairs

Helmand Province – After a 10-hour bumpy, dusty drive through the desert, the United States Marine Corps has now secured the southernmost point of operations in Helmand Province and begun construction on what will be the largest Combat Outpost (COP) ever built by Combat Logistics Batallion-8 out of Camp Lejuene, North Carolina. "This is the tip of the spear. Right now we are the farthest south Marine Unit in Afghanistan," said Capt. Chris Annunziata of Norfolk, Va. Everything that happens south of the river depends on us." Within minutes of bulldozer and excavators being unloaded from flatbed trucks, construction began on COP Payne, which overlooks the Helmand river valley. According to Annunziata, the onsite officer in charge of the construction project, building the COP will take just 96 hours to complete. The COP will serve as a logistical center for all operations that will eventually take place south of the river, along the border with Pakistan. By the end of the first day of construction, a 10-foot wall of dirt and gravel surrounded the 600 foot by 600 foot compound and a burn pit was dug for garbage disposal. At the same time, other crews are working on a fording site across the Helmand River and fortifying Khan Necsion, a former Taliban stronghold, that will now be handed over to the district governor. "I have the best equipped and most motivated Marines," said Annunziata. "These men and women are true professionals and I couldn't be more proud of them." The Marines carried out their work under the oppressive Afghan sun with temperatures soaring into the 120s. Across the river, a curious lone rancher and his herd of cattle watched as COB Payne took shape. He was the only Afghan seen since the Marines departed Forward Operating Base Dwyer the night before in a convoy of of 35 trucks and armored vehicles. They drove through 112 kilometers of barren desert where no roads currently exist. "I wasn't expecting any contact with insurgents on the drive down here," said convoy commander, LT Tabitha Pinter of Detroit, Michigan. "This was a complete surprise. The enemy had no idea we were coming and they had no idea we'd take the route we took."

Radio Adernach Brings German Troops Closer To Home

U.S. Navy Petty Officer First Class Ryan Tabios
ISAF HQ Public Affairs

Internet, telephone and letters are the usual forms of communication for troops and their family and friends back home while deployed to various regions in Afghanistan.

Troops in Camp Marmal have an alternate way of communication when the internet is down or the waiting lines for phones are unbearable and that is through Radio Adernach, a live radio show aimed at bringing German troops closer to home.

"Families who are having difficulty communicating with loved ones here in Afghanistan send us messages and we in turn broadcast them to the troops," said 1st Lt. Julia. "They can call the show and get a possibility to talk and receive a greeting from their families."

The radio show is broadcast throughout Afghanistan and reaches out to German Soldiers in Kabul, Kunduz and various Provincial Reconstruction Teams.

"Often we go out of the camp and do our job," said Julia. "We try to include all the troops, it is for everyone."

During the two-and-a-half hour show, music, world and local news, events and introduction of new personnel are sent over the radio waves.

"Soldiers who do not have the ability to read current events can listen to our show and be informed," said Julia. "We try to focus a lot on what the German troops are doing here in Afghanistan.

"Such as who is here, learn who does what and who is in what position," Julia added. "They also get to know who they can talk to if they have a problem and the various happenings within the camp."

The radio personalities change throughout the week with personnel alternating roles as moderators or news broadcasters, and even soldiers alike have a chance to be an honorary disc jockey for an hour.

"Soldiers come to us daily and they do a show," said Julia. "They have a certain theme and play the songs they want to hear for that hour. It's great to know that they like our job and give them a chance to do the same as we do on a daily basis. "

According to Julia, aside from entertaining the troops the show brings moral.

"The feeling that they [soldiers] are not forgotten is important," said Julia. "Being able to hear something from their families and knowing that they are doing a good job does a lot for their morale."

While being a radio disc jockey is not so bad of a job while deployed, according to Julia, aside from meeting new people, the music makes it even better.

"I love music," said Julia. "I can hear it every day and I am happy to be able to meet the soldiers here and know that they appreciate what I do, it's great."

Building Bridges For Progress

Regional Command North
Public Affairs

This bridge symbolizes the German-Afghan friendship. It stands for the freedom, the success, the independence and the territorial integrity of Afghanistan, emphasized Col. (GS) Sven Korweslühr during his speech to numerous invited Afghan dignitaries on the occasion of the opening of the bridge over the Kokcha in Feyzabad on 30 July 2009. Among the participants were the German ambassador Hans-Werner Hauk, the Afghan Minister of Public Works, Safari, the Governor of Badakhshan, Ahmadi, as well as Admiral Borsboom, Deputy Chief of Staff Stability, from Heaquarters ISAF in Kabul. The construction of the bridge became necessary as the city of Feyzabad has grown enormously on both sides of Kokcha River in recent years. On the one hand, the river is the artery of life for the entire province of Badakhshan, on the other hand it's a natural border which is almost impossible to cross as the river is up to 200m wide. In particular, the river separates the inhabitants of the village Isari and the provincial capital Feyzabad due to the fact that the next bridge to cross the river is a one-hour drive away. The economic boom which will go hand-in-hand with the extension of Feyzabad Airport, will be hampered less by the poor traffic connection as goods from the surrounding provinces must be delivered via complicated detours. The implementation of the project is a good example of the Afghan-German cooperation and the collaboration of different ministries with the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Feyzabad. The construction supervision was provided by the German Association for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) which works closely with the PRT. The Achmad Wali Construction Company was awarded the contract for the construction of the bridge and employed up to 150 workers from the vicinity. In the second stage of construction, the Afghan National Army and German military engineers erected the steel structure that was fabricated by Mabey & Johnson from Great Britain. Now, the bridge traverses the Kokcha over a length of 150m and was built in only four months. "People are most grateful for the bridge as the Kokcha used to separate them. If you lived in Isari and wanted to cross the river in order to trade your goods you had to invest at least half a day", says construction engineer Hamidullah. The steel bridge is 150m long, 9m high and can carry up to 40 tons. The total costs of the bridge amount to 5,000,000€. The use of the bridge reduces the travel times remarkably and facilitates traffic, trade and economy. In case of emergency when every second counts people reach the hospital in Feyzabad much faster. The times when villagers used self-made rafts to cross the Kokcha are certainly a thing of the past.

Supply Drop to Shouz Valley School Promotes Counter-Insurgency

U.S. Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Riza Caporros
ISAF HQ Public Affairs

Members of the 207th Corps Afghan National Army and members of the Afghan National Police and a U.S. military humanitarian aid team, brought backpacks, hygiene items and shoes for students of a school in Kheyrabad village of western Afghanistan, July 18, in an effort to help children of the poverty-stricken area, as well as "win the hearts and minds" of those living in the village.

The school, located in the northeastern area of the valley, has 300 students, 70 which are female.

U.S. Army Capt Kenneth H. Bath, commanding officer for coalition base at Camp Shouz, described the squalor conditions the school is in and the obvious needs of the teacher and students.

"The structure was heavily damaged (in 2007) and as a result there is no roof covering on either end of the building. The children have no desks, books, paper," described Bath. "Basically it is the equivalent to an abandoned building."

Masoed Qhazida, head teacher, said the children are always excited when they know the Afghan National Police, Afghan National Army or coalition forces come, because they know they are bringing them things they want and need.

One little boy, approximate age of 5, said he liked playing kickball with the soldiers.

Quazida also praised his students for their diligence to come to school each day stating, "many of them are coming by foot for one hour to be here, and they want to learn so much. That's why I think the are really interested to go to school."

U.S. Navy ENS Ron Kolpak, Humanitarian and Civil Affairs officer for the ARSIC-West S-9 (civil military operations) department says these types of visits to the locals means more than just giving them items they need.

"We like to do these types of projects because it benefit the most people," said Kolpak.

"We truly are using this as another tool in non-kenetic counter-insurgency."

Capt Kenneth W. Bath, commanding officer for Camp Shouz, explained it in this way, "If this country is to change, it's got to start with the education. It's easy to recruit uneducated people because they don't understand the reality of the world, so then it's very easy for insurgents to come in and sway them."

KHEYRABAD VILLAGE, AFGHANISTAN – Students attending a school in Kheyrabad village in the northeastern region of Shouz Valley stand in line waiting to receive supplies brought to their school July 18, during a humanitarian aid drop by ARSIC-W Humanitarian Aid and Civil Affairs team, members of the Afghan National Army 207th Corps and the Afghan National Police.

KHEYRABAD VILLAGE, AFGHANISTAN – U.S. Navy Chief Hospital Corpsman(SW/AW) Eddie Couillard, spins a soccer ball on his finger for two Afghan children during a humanitarian aid drop to their school. Couillard served as team medic during the July 18 mission to bring supplies to school located in the Kheyrabad village of western Afghanistan.

From The EYES Of Our Troops

Submit your photos for possible inclusion in the next update of your ISAF Mirror. Please send in any high resolution pics that you have taken along with all available information, and we will try to incude it in our next update.

Please submit your photos to:
isafmedia@ymail.com

Seize and Maintain the Initiative

Continuously Incorporate Lessons Learned Into Operations Order To Be More Effective Than The Enemy