



## **CANADIANS ASSESS AFGHAN MISSION**

### **IT'S ABOUT WAR, NOT PEACE**

**53% of Canadians see deployment in Afghanistan as a war mission, while only 29% consider it a peace effort**

**Harper's message on mission is not clear for most Canadians (54%)**

**And Quebeckers (64%) want Canada out of Afghanistan before 2009**

*From February 20 to 21, 2007, Angus Reid Strategies conducted an online survey among a randomly selected, representative sample of 1,069 adult Canadians. The margin of error for the total sample is +3.0%, 19 times out of 20. The results have been statistically weighted according to the most current education, age, gender and region Census data to ensure a sample representative of the entire adult population of Canada. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.*

Public Release:  
National Public Opinion Poll

[TORONTO - Feb. 28, 2007] – Most Canadians think our troops in Afghanistan are fighting a war, not building peace, says a new Angus Reid Strategies poll.

Asked whether the Canadian deployment in Afghanistan is a peace or a war mission, 53% of people across Canada see the troops clearly fighting a war. British Columbia is the only province where more people see the mission as a peace effort (44%) than a war mission (40%).

Most Canadians (54%) believe the government of Stephen Harper has not effectively explained the mission. Only in Alberta are respondents evenly divided on whether the message is clear or not (42% vs. 42%).

65% of respondents across the country believe we are shouldering too much of the NATO mission headed by Canada. Quebeckers and older Canadians are particularly concerned about this. Almost three quarters of respondents in this province (73%) and 72% of respondents aged 55+ agree that Canada is taking the biggest burden of the mission.

Quebeckers are also the most interested Canadians in bringing the troops home before the commitment expires in February 2009. While 64% of respondents in Quebec want a troop withdrawal, a majority of respondents in every other province would rather leave the troops there. Other groups in tune with not completing the mission are non-Conservative voters, women, and Canadians aged 18 to 35.

On a different note, most respondents (47%) – noticeably Conservative voters – truly believe the Afghan people are benefiting from Canadian efforts. However, almost a third (32%) of all respondents are not sure how to answer this question.

**53% of Canadians see the troops as clearly fighting a war  
BC is the only province where more see the mission as a peace effort (44%) than  
a war mission (40%)**

<b>Afghanistan: peace mission or war mission?</b>							
<i>Q. In your view, is the Canadian mission in Afghanistan...</i>							
	<b>Region</b>						
	<b>Total</b>	<b>BC</b>	<b>Alberta</b>	<b>Man/Sask</b>	<b>Ontario</b>	<b>Quebec</b>	<b>Atlantic</b>
<b>A peace mission</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>24%</b>
<b>A war mission</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>59%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>17%</b>

**54% of Canadians do not believe the Harper government has adequately explained the Afghan mission**  
**Only in Alberta are respondents evenly divided on whether the message is clear or not (42% vs. 42%)**

<b>Has the government explained the Afghan mission clearly?</b>							
<i>Q. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements: The Harper government has effectively explained the mission in Afghanistan</i>							
	<b>Region</b>						
	Total	BC	Alberta	Man/Sask	Ontario	Quebec	Atlantic
Agree	27%	21%	42%	39%	29%	22%	19%
Disagree	54%	54%	42%	42%	56%	57%	65%
Not sure	18%	24%	16%	19%	15%	21%	16%

**65% of respondents think Canada is shouldering too much of the NATO mission in Afghanistan**  
**72% of respondents aged 55+ think Canada is taking the biggest burden of the mission**

<b>Is Canada handling too much of the Afghan mission?</b>										
<i>Q. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements: Canada is shouldering too much of the burden of NATO's mission in Afghanistan</i>										
		<b>Region</b>						<b>Age</b>		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>BC</b>	<b>Alberta</b>	<b>Man/Sask*</b>	<b>Ontario</b>	<b>Quebec</b>	<b>Atlantic</b>	<b>18-34</b>	<b>35-54</b>	<b>55+</b>
<b>Agree</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>72%</b>
<b>Disagree</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>16%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>12%</b>

**64% of Quebecers want Canada to bring the troops home before the Afghan commitment expires in February 2009**

<b>When should Canada bring the troops home?</b>							
<i>Q. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements: Canada should withdraw its troops from Afghanistan before their mandate ends in February 2009</i>							
	<b>Region</b>						
	<b>Total</b>	<b>BC</b>	<b>Alberta</b>	<b>Man/Sask</b>	<b>Ontario</b>	<b>Quebec</b>	<b>Atlantic</b>
<b>Agree</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>41%</b>
<b>Disagree</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>48%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>11%</b>

**47% of Conservatives believe the Afghan people are benefiting from Canadian efforts**  
**But 32% are not sure how to respond to this question**

<b>Are the Afghan people benefiting from Canadian efforts?</b>			
<i>Q. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements: The Afghan people are clearly benefiting from Canadian efforts in their country</i>			
		<b>Vote in last federal election</b>	
	Total	Conservatives	Liberals
Agree	47%	67%	34%
Disagree	20%	8%	25%
Not sure	32%	25%	40%

*The Angus Reid Forum online panel ([www.angusreidforum.com](http://www.angusreidforum.com)) is recruited via an industry-leading process that incorporates a randomized, widespread invitation approach and a triple opt-in screening procedure. The panel is maintained through state-of-the-art sampling techniques and frequent verifications of personal identity, contact information, and demographic characteristics. Moreover, Angus Reid Strategies' premier online survey platform presents respondents with highly visual, interactive, and engaging surveys, ensuring that panel members provide thoughtful and reliable responses.*

*Angus Reid Strategies is a dynamic North American full-service public affairs and market research firm which is a leader in the use of the Internet and rich media technology to collect high-quality, in-depth insights for a wide array of clients. Dr. Angus Reid and the Angus Reid Strategies team are pioneers in online research methodologies, and have been conducting online surveys since 1995. Stationed in offices in Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, and Montreal, our team of 100 research and operational specialists provide research solutions across every type and sector of research.*

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**For more information, please contact  
our spokesperson listed in the footnote.**

**Copies of this poll are available on our website:  
[www.angusreidstrategies.com](http://www.angusreidstrategies.com)**