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Resource Guide

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***News in Review*, February 2010**

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(Length: 16:30)

2. The Road to the Winter Olympics

(Length: 14:16)

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4. Canada's Amazing Neptune Project

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RICHARD COLVIN AND THE AFGHAN DETAINEES (Length: 16:30)

In November, a Canadian diplomat triggered a political firestorm on Parliament Hill. Richard Colvin told a committee that Canadian troops had been handing over prisoners to Afghan authorities, even though the government knew they might be tortured. The government denied it but refused to hand over documents, and then suspended Parliament. In this *News in Review* story we'll look at the allegations and at the government's controversial decision.

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THE ROAD TO THE WINTER OLYMPICS (Length: 14:16)

This month Canada will play host to the world when the Winter Olympics open in Vancouver. During the Games the spotlight will be on the athletes. But it has taken years of work by thousands of Canadians to prepare for the event. In this *News in Review* story we'll look at the long road to the Winter Games, the challenges, and the controversies.

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On Christmas Day 2009, a young Nigerian man allegedly tried to blow up an airliner as it prepared to land in Detroit. The man was subdued by other passengers before he could set off explosive material sewed into his underwear. But the incident triggered a security scare at airports all over the world. In this *News in Review* story we'll look at what happened and at what is being done to try to make air travel safer.

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Although humans have travelled all the way to the moon and back, the bottom of the sea remains largely unexplored. Now some Canadian scientists are doing something about that by placing sensors and cameras on the seabed off Vancouver Island. In this *News in Review* story we'll look at the NEPTUNE Canada project and at some of the amazing images those cameras have been capturing.

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RICHARD COLVIN AND THE AFGHAN DETAINEES

Introduction



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Focus

This CBC *News in Review* story examines the allegations about the torture of Afghan detainees made by Canadian diplomat Richard Colvin. We'll explore what he said, how others reacted to his testimony, and Prime Minister Stephen Harper's controversial decision to prorogue Parliament.

Did you know . . .

Prime Minister Harper did not announce the decision to prorogue Parliament himself. He had his press secretary, Dmitry Soudas, make the announcement.

On November 18, 2009, before a parliamentary subcommittee hearing, a Canadian diplomat named Richard Colvin made some stunning allegations. Colvin claimed that Afghan resistance fighters taken prisoner by Canadian troops had subsequently been tortured after being turned over to Afghan security forces. He also charged that senior Canadian military and political figures were aware that these abuses—which are against international law—had been taking place since 2006. He further testified that these officials had taken no action to halt the abuse.

Colvin's bombshell testimony set off a chain reaction in Ottawa, with prominent individuals such as retired Canadian Forces chief of staff Rick Hillier, Defence Minister Peter MacKay, and even Prime Minister Stephen Harper himself rejecting the accusations and casting doubt on the validity of Colvin's evidence. For their part, opposition politicians, including Liberal leader Michael Ignatieff, Bloc Québécois chief Gilles Duceppe, and the NDP's Jack Layton, all called on the government to initiate a full-scale inquiry into the truth of Colvin's disturbing testimony.

However, instead of acceding to the opposition's demands to set up a parliamentary committee to investigate the Colvin affair, Harper decided at the end of December to prorogue—or

suspend—the current session of Parliament beyond its customary Christmas break. Instead of reconvening on January 25, 2010, Parliament would not meet again until March 3, 2010.

Harper claimed that his decision to prorogue Parliament had nothing to do with the exploding controversy over the Afghan detainees. Instead, he stated that prorogation was a normal parliamentary procedure, and that the government needed extra time to “recalibrate” its policy priorities. But his political opponents and many media commentators were quick to suggest that Harper's real motive was that he wanted to avoid having to face potentially damaging fallout from Colvin's accusations. They believed that he had moved to prorogue in order to head off any further revelations of government negligence in the Afghan detainee issue.

At the same time, a growing grassroots movement against prorogation was inspired by Christopher White, a young University of Alberta student. White started a Facebook group to promote his cause, and his protest quickly gathered momentum. By late January 2010, over 200 000 Canadians had joined the group “Canadians against Proroguing Parliament,” and thousands of people took to the streets in protest in a number of cities on January 23.

To Consider

1. Why were diplomat Richard Colvin's allegations of abuse of Afghan detainees captured by Canadian forces so explosive?
2. What reason did Prime Minister Stephen Harper give for his decision to prorogue Parliament?
3. According to Harper's critics, what was the real reason for his decision?
4. Why is Facebook becoming such an important way of mobilizing people concerned about a political issue like prorogation?

RICHARD COLVIN AND THE AFGHAN DETAINEES

Video Review

Quote

"I think the polls have been pretty clear that the detainee issue is not at the top of the radar for most Canadians. What's on the radar is the economy . . ." — Prime Minister Stephen Harper, as quoted in the *National Post*, January 5, 2010

Quote

"We need to kick and scream at this insult to democracy—because that is what it is. We need to support each other, efforts by other parties, non-political leadership. Harper's move . . . is premised on the assumption that enough Canadians simply do not care about democracy or the role of Parliament. . . . In the interests of democracy, let's hope this time his cynicism has miscalculated." — Elizabeth May, Green Party Leader, *Toronto Star*, January 1, 2010

Pre-viewing Questions

Make notes in response to the following questions. Then select a partner, or form a small group, and discuss your responses.

1. Do you believe there are certain conditions under which prisoners detained during war should be able to be tortured? Why?

2. If there are international laws and treaties that prohibit torture, should not Canada and all countries have to abide by those laws and treaties? Explain.

3. If you found out that Canadian soldiers or civilians were taken prisoner and tortured by Afghan authorities, how would you feel? Is the torture of Canadians any different from the torture of Afghans?

Viewing Questions

As you watch the video respond to the questions in the spaces provided.

1. At the beginning of the war in Afghanistan, what did the Canadian military do with any prisoners they captured?

2. Why did they change that policy?

3. According to diplomat Richard Colvin, how many of the Afghan prisoners turned over to Afghan authorities were likely tortured?

4. Why did some members of Parliament challenge Colvin's testimony?

5. Do you believe their criticism of Colvin's testimony was valid? Why?

6. How did cabinet members in Prime Minister Harper's government, and senior military officials, react to Colvin's testimony?

7. After weeks of denying any knowledge of torture, why would General Walter Natynczyk change his testimony?

8. What strategy did the Harper government take to try to silence the opposition?

9. Why did Prime Minister Harper say he decided to prorogue Parliament?

10. What do critics give as the reason(s) for his decision?

11. How did Canadian citizens respond to the decision to prorogue? Provide specific examples.

12. Why was Terry Pozniack, the mother of a Canadian Forces soldier who was soon to be sent to Afghanistan, particularly upset by Harper's decision to prorogue Parliament?

Post-viewing Activities

1. Join your partner or small group again and review the responses you made to the Pre-viewing Questions. Have your responses changed now that you've watched the video? Explain in what ways they have or have not.

2. What impact, if any, will Prime Minister Harper's decision to prorogue Parliament have on his government's chances of victory in the next federal election, which may take place sometime in 2010?

RICHARD COLVIN AND THE AFGHAN DETAINEES

The Colvin Affair

“Canadian military officials don’t send individuals off to be tortured.” — Prime Minister Stephen Harper, April 25, 2007, *The Globe and Mail*, November 19, 2009

“That was indeed our official policy. But behind the military’s wall of secrecy, that, unfortunately, is exactly what we were doing.” — Canadian diplomat Richard Colvin, referring to Harper’s statement before a parliamentary committee, November 18, 2009, *The Globe and Mail*, November 19, 2009

Prior to his blockbuster testimony before a parliamentary subcommittee hearing on November 18, 2009, Richard Colvin was hardly a household name to most Canadians. A career diplomat with a distinguished 15-year record of service, Colvin is currently the deputy head of security and intelligence at the Canadian embassy in Washington.

But it was his experience as part of Canada’s mission to Afghanistan for 17 months in 2006 and 2007 that Colvin was referring to when he made his sensational charges of Afghan detainee abuse—specifically that Canadian troops serving in Afghanistan had routinely handed over detained insurgents to Afghan security forces, where they were almost always subjected to torture in order to extract information from them.

His Testimony

Colvin also pointed to a disturbing pattern of indifference and obstruction from senior political and military officials in Afghanistan and in Ottawa. Colvin claimed that on numerous occasions he tried to warn officials that this abuse—contrary to international laws that Canada supports—was taking place on a regular basis.

Colvin argued that the Canadian government’s and military’s “complicity in torture” of Afghan detainees was undermining the country’s efforts to subdue the Taliban and gain the confidence of the Afghan people, especially in the troubled southern province of Kandahar. In his words, “instead of winning hearts and minds, we caused Kandaharis to fear the foreigners. Canada’s detainee practices alienated us from the population and strengthened the insurgency” (*The Globe and Mail*, November 19, 2009).

In his testimony Colvin claimed that, beginning in May 2006, he had informed senior military officials such as Lieutenant-General Michel Gauthier, then commander of the Canadian Expeditionary Force. He stated that Gauthier would almost certainly have relayed this information to the then Canadian Defence Staff commander General Rick Hillier in Ottawa.

He also alleged that his efforts to inform his diplomatic superiors and their political masters were routinely thwarted or ignored. He named a number of prominent figures, including David Mulroney, the former deputy minister of the government’s Afghan task force; Colleen Swords, a former deputy minister with the international security branch of the Department of Foreign Affairs; and David Sproule, then the Canadian ambassador to Afghanistan, as parties to what he alleged was a deliberate effort to cover up his warnings about the torture of detainees.

Response to His Testimony

Colvin’s sensational charges were met with denial and dismissal from the people he named and those at the top of the chain of command, including Hillier

Did you know . . .

In an interview with Peter Mansbridge of CBC's *The National* on January 5, 2010, Prime Minister Stephen Harper said that he did not think most Canadians were very concerned about the alleged torture of Afghan detainees, and were instead far more preoccupied with the state of the economy and the government's plans to deal with it when Parliament resumes on March 3, 2010.

Quote

"What he has been saying is what I've heard from my people." — Malalai Joya, a human rights activist and former Afghan parliament member, CBC News, November 26, 2009

and Defence Minister Peter MacKay. Hillier dismissed Colvin's testimony as "bull." He denied being made aware the potential abuse of Afghan detainees had ever occurred. In his words, although "we always had concerns" about the transfer of prisoners to Afghan authorities, "no smoking gun ever caught my attention" (*Toronto Star*, November 20, 2009).

MacKay sought to cast doubt on the credibility of Colvin's assertions, wondering why the diplomat had never raised the issue personally with him. He also counter-attacked by charging that Colvin's evidence would give a propaganda advantage to the Taliban in its campaign against Canadian forces. He suggested that Colvin was gullible to believe the claims of captured Taliban fighters that they had been tortured when there was no solid evidence this had ever taken place.

Support for Colvin

As a result of his headline-grabbing allegations, Richard Colvin was transformed from an "invisible man" to a celebrity and high-profile whistleblower of government misdeeds. His friends and colleagues in the diplomatic community regard him as a "consummate professional" and hardly as someone who would stake his reputation and future professional career on a set of reckless and unfounded allegations against prominent political and military officials. One long-time associate, who asked to

remain anonymous, described him as "a beta, not an alpha. He doesn't seek the spotlight. He's never the guy you would notice in the room" (*The Globe and Mail*, November 21, 2009).

Despite the heated denials of Colvin's claims by senior government and military officials, his accusations have more than a ring of truth to journalists who have covered the Afghan conflict. Graeme Smith of *The Globe and Mail* wrote in an editorial that he had "assembled substantial evidence of such torture" (November 20, 2009).

Colvin's many acquaintances in the diplomatic corps were quick to extend support to their embattled colleague. For example, Michael Semple, who served with the European Union's mission in Afghanistan at the same time that Colvin was there—and is considered an expert on the country's politics—was "totally flabbergasted" by the attacks on Colvin's credibility coming from Defence Minister Peter MacKay and other government officials. Echoing this view, Norine Macdonald, president of the International Council on Security and Development, an agency that operates field offices in three Afghan cities, commented that, "Richard Colvin is what I would call an old-fashioned Canadian diplomat—mild-mannered, sincere, admired and respected. He genuinely believes what it says in the civil service manual about representing Canada and Canadian values" (*The Globe and Mail*, November 21, 2009).

Analysis

1. What evidence is there to support Richard Colvin's claims that Afghan detainees captured by Canadian forces suffered torture after being transferred to that country's security agency? What evidence is there to refute it?
2. Why did the "Colvin affair" attract so much political and media attention after his testimony to a parliamentary committee on the alleged torture of Afghan detainees?
3. Do you agree with Stephen Harper's quote in the margin box that Canadians aren't that concerned about the alleged torture of Afghan detainees? Explain.

RICHARD COLVIN AND THE AFGHAN DETAINEES

Profile of Richard Colvin

Further Research

On December 16, 2009, in response to criticism of his testimony, Richard Colvin submitted another 16 pages of documentation showing when and how senior officials were notified of concerns about the torture of Afghan detainees. Read the supplemental report at www.cbc.ca/news/pdf/further-evidence-special-committee.pdf.

Richard Colvin was born in 1969 in Coventry, England, and moved with his family to Canada at the age of 16. The family settled in Waterdown, Ontario, where his father was an executive with the farm equipment manufacturer Massey Ferguson. His inspiration to follow a diplomatic career was an uncle who had served in the British Foreign Service. To prepare himself for the rigorous Foreign Service Examination, which every Canadian seeking a diplomatic position abroad must pass, he studied international relations and Russian at the University of Toronto.

After failing the examination on his first attempt, he moved to Moscow and found a job with USSR Business Reports, where he worked as a reporter for one year. He then returned to Canada where he completed a master's degree in journalism at the University of Western Ontario in London, graduating at the top of his class. In 1992, he wrote the Foreign Service exam for a second time, on this occasion ranking first among the 7 000 applicants for Canadian diplomatic posts and finally clinching a position.

As a diplomat, Colvin was drawn to global conflict zones where Canada maintained a political or military presence because he enjoyed the “intensity” of such postings. Prior to his time in Afghanistan, he served in Sri Lanka, Moscow, and the Palestinian territories. After the end of his first marriage to a Russian woman he had met in Moscow he returned to Canada in 2005 and took a desk job in Calgary, developing “long-term” plans for the Department of Foreign Affairs.

He quickly became bored with this and jumped at the opportunity to work in Afghanistan, a country he knew practically nothing about at the time. There he assumed important responsibilities as head of the political section at the Canadian embassy in Kabul and *chargés d'affaires*, or deputy ambassador, standing in for Ambassador David Sproule during his many absences from the country. It was during this tour of duty that he first became aware of what he claims was the routine transfer of Afghan insurgents captured by Canadian forces to the Afghan National Directorate of Security, an agency notorious for its regular use of torture on those who fall into its hands.

Follow-up

In a small group, discuss the following questions.

1. Do you believe Richard Colvin's allegations? Why or why not?
2. What makes some people believable and others not? Is it personality characteristics, experience, attitude, reputation, or something else?
3. Why would a diplomat like Colvin make public statements like these if they were not true? Is there anything he stands to gain from making such allegations?

RICHARD COLVIN AND THE AFGHAN DETAINEES

The Use of Torture

Did you know . . .

Some historians believe that the decision by the United States to drop the atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, or the Allied “saturation bombing” of German cities at the close of the war, could today be regarded as war crimes and crimes against humanity, since they especially targeted innocent civilians.

At the end of the Second World War, widespread evidence of the abuse and torture of prisoners of war (POWs) surfaced. When German soldiers were confronted with evidence that POWs in their captivity had been subjected to extremely brutal treatment, the soldiers claimed “they were only following orders” from senior officers. Similarly, Japanese military and political authorities excused their own mistreatment of Allied POWs—including Canadians captured after the fall of Hong Kong in 1941—by pleading that they were unaware of such incidents.

Neither of these justifications is given any recognition in international treaties outlawing the abuse of POWs that have been enacted since the Second World War. Ever since the Nuremberg War Crimes trials, held shortly after the end of the Second World War, the principle that countries engaged in conflict should not torture or otherwise mistreat POWs has been widely acknowledged.

Crimes against Humanity

In 2000, the Canadian Parliament passed the Crimes against Humanity and War Crimes Act. One of its clauses stipulates that if allegations of torture of POWs are made, then it is the duty of those officials acting in a position of “superior responsibility” to investigate the claims immediately. This law specifies two areas of responsibility: the military commander on the ground and a non-military person in authority, such as a senior government official. It also states that such individuals are liable to criminal charges should they fail to take all necessary measures to prevent such offences or pursue a full investigation of them.

In the decades following the end of the Second World War, there have been many cases where POWs have been tortured or mistreated—for example in the conflict that raged in the former Yugoslavia in the early 1990s. The United Nations’ International Criminal Tribunal on the Former Yugoslavia found senior Serbian political and military leaders, including former president Slobodan Milosevic and General Radko Mladic, guilty of war crimes because they knew or should have known about the torture and killing of Bosnian Muslim POWs in their hands but failed to take action to prevent it.

Diplomat Richard Colvin stated before a Canadian parliamentary subcommittee in November 2009 that between April 2006 and October 2007 he had expressed his concerns about the torture of detainees transferred from Canadian forces to the Afghan security agency to about 70 high-ranking military and government officials. Prior to Colvin’s testimony, there were a number of reports from media sources, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and even other countries with troops fighting in Afghanistan that the torture of these detainees was taking place despite Canadian government denials. If Colvin’s allegations are valid, then according to experts such as Robin Rowland, a CBC News producer with a background in international law and the history of war crimes, a number of senior Canadian military and government officials could theoretically be indicted as war criminals and brought before an international tribunal (“Knowing about war crimes,” CBC News, www.cbc.ca/canada/story/2009/11/23/f-knowingaboutwarcrimes.html).

Quote

"Are we the kind of people who don't care when people are tortured, or are we the kind of people who do?" — Thomas Walkom, *Toronto Star* columnist, November 28, 2009

Quote

". . . turning prisoners over to the authorities of the sovereign nation that the United Nations and NATO had come to support was certainly not an unreasonable decision." —Major-General Lewis Mackenzie (retired), *The Globe and Mail*, November 25, 2009

However, Rowland and others who have studied recent incidents of allegations of abuse of POWs, or "illegal enemy combatants" as they have been called since the "war on terror" after the attacks of September 11, 2001, are extremely skeptical that any such tribunal might ever be convened to investigate the behaviour of the U.S. and other Western nations operating in Afghanistan and Iraq. This is because of another principle that emerged in the aftermath of the Second World War—that of "victor's justice." This means that the winning side in a conflict is in a superior position to judge the actions of the vanquished, but not vice versa.

One of the perhaps unfortunate results of the "war on terror" has been the blurring of the line regarding who constitutes a prisoner of war and whether or not they are entitled to the protection of international treaties. The U.S., for example, has consistently defended its right to detain for an indefinite period in the Guantanamo Bay detention centre "illegal enemy combatants" believed to be linked to Al Qaeda.

Many commentators are disturbed by Colvin's allegations that Canadian forces in Afghanistan knew that their prisoners were likely to be tortured after being turned over to that country's brutal

security agency. *Globe and Mail* writer Rick Salutin argues that Canada's alleged complicity into the torture of Afghan detainees, "provides one more proof, a uniquely Canadian one, that the war on terror has become the chief incubator of terror, and recruitment for it, post-9/11" (November 20, 2009).

However, other voices have sought to put the Colvin affair into perspective by arguing that Canadian forces fighting in Afghanistan face a different kind of war, where the line between potential enemy fighters and innocent civilians is frequently difficult to determine. Historian J.L. Granatstein argues that supporters of Colvin are "stomping on the flag" and giving aid and comfort to Canada's enemies in Afghanistan by dwelling on his to-date unproven allegations of torture of detainees (*The Globe and Mail*, January 5, 2010). And retired Major-General Lewis Mackenzie, who once commanded a Canadian United Nations peacekeeping force in Bosnia, does not support calls that the Harper government should mount a full-scale inquiry into Colvin's allegations. Instead, he believes that the whole matter could be better handled by the Military Police Complaints Commission, an independent, quasi-judicial agency established in 1998.

Activities

1. Why did the treatment of POWs become such a major international issue after the Second World War and as a result of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia in the early 1990s?
2. How has the "war on terror" after the attacks of September 11, 2001, changed perspectives on POWs and the rights to which they should be entitled under international law?
3. Summarize the viewpoints of the four commentators on the issue of the alleged torture of Afghan detainees and Canada's possible complicity in it. Which of them do you agree with, and why?
4. What do you think would be the best way for the Canadian government and military to deal with this issue?

RICHARD COLVIN AND THE AFGHAN DETAINEES

Prorogation of Parliament

Prime Minister Stephen Harper's December 31, 2009, decision to prorogue, or suspend, the current session of Parliament until March 3, 2010, touched off a great deal of controversy among Canadian political figures, media commentators, and ordinary citizens. Below you will find a selection of reactions to Harper's decision. For each quote, indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the comment. Then state your reason(s) for your position.

"Mr. Harper is a competent tactician with a ruthless streak. He bars most ministers from talking to the media; he has axed some independent watchdogs; he has binned campaign promises to make government more open and accountable. Now he is subjecting Parliament to prime-ministerial whim. He may be right that most Canadians care more about the luge [a reference to the February 2010 Winter Olympics] than the legislature, but that is surely only true while their decent system of government is in good hands. They may soon conclude that it isn't." — "Harper goes prorogue," *The Economist*, January 9, 2010

Strongly agree _____ **Agree** _____ **Disagree** _____ **Strongly disagree** _____

Reasons _____

"This decision is about one thing and one thing only—avoiding the scrutiny of Parliament at a time when this government is facing tough questions about their conduct in covering up the detainee scandal. Mr. Harper is showing his disregard for the democratic institutions of our country. Harper is showing that his first impulse when he is in trouble is to shut down Parliament." — Opposition Leader Michael Ignatieff, quoted in "Commons shut down, opposition furious," *Toronto Star*, December 31, 2009

Strongly agree _____ **Agree** _____ **Disagree** _____ **Strongly disagree** _____

Reasons _____

"This kind of thing can't happen in the U.S. or most other parliaments—it's the kind of thing you hear of in dictatorships. It's a slap in the face and it's a denial of the democratic process. He has absolutely no good reason to prorogue the House." — NDP Leader Jack Layton, quoted in "Commons shut down, opposition furious," *Toronto Star*, December 31, 2009

Strongly agree _____ **Agree** _____ **Disagree** _____ **Strongly disagree** _____

Reasons _____

“Political calculation is clearly behind the decision to prorogue. The Conservatives are hoping to bask in the glow of Olympic glory while dodging the mess and scrutiny of lawmaking. . . . Canada’s democracy should not be conducted solely on the basis of convenience for the governing party. If the debate over detainees cannot be carried out in Parliament, then it should continue among Canadians at large. On this and other important issues, the government cannot delay accountability forever.” — “Democracy diminished, accountability avoided,” *The Globe and Mail*, December 31, 2009

Strongly agree _____ **Agree** _____ **Disagree** _____ **Strongly disagree** _____

Reasons _____

“While most Canadians couldn’t have defined the word *prorogue* a year ago, the term for suspending Parliament seems to be seeping into the public psyche. Some of the response to the parliamentary shutdown appears to fly in the face of predictions that Canadians are too bored or apathetic to care whether federal politicians have disappeared from the capital.” — Susan Delacourt and Richard J. Brennan, “Grassroots fury greets shuttered Parliament,” *Toronto Star*, January 5, 2010

Strongly agree _____ **Agree** _____ **Disagree** _____ **Strongly disagree** _____

Reasons _____

“Ordinary Canadians don’t consider prorogation to be a big issue. I know it’s a big issue with the Ottawa media elite and some of the elites in our country, but I got to tell you if the reaction in my constituency is any indication, I’ve had maybe three dozen e-mails. It may not be what the chattering classes want, but we’re not here to govern on behalf of the chattering classes.” — Industry Minister Tony Clement, quoted in “Academics slam suspension of Parliament,” CBC News, www.cbc.ca/politics/story/2010/01/11/prorogue-protest-professors/html

Strongly agree _____ **Agree** _____ **Disagree** _____ **Strongly disagree** _____

Reasons _____

“We can’t use prorogation to run from our problems. Canada knows that that can’t happen and we’re making sure that they all know that too.” — Brendan Sommerhalder, an organizer of the Halifax, Nova Scotia, anti-prorogation rally, January 23, 2010, quoted in “Thousands protest Parliament’s suspension” CBC News, www.cbc.ca/politics/story/2010/01/23/prorogue-protests.html

Strongly agree _____ **Agree** _____ **Disagree** _____ **Strongly disagree** _____

Reasons _____

RICHARD COLVIN AND THE AFGHAN DETAINEES

Technology and Democracy

In late October 2003, a heartbroken Harvard University student named Mark Zuckerberg was looking for something to distract him from a recent break-up with his girlfriend. He went online, posting his thoughts and some pictures for his friends to share and add their comments. This was the origin of Facebook, a social media site that now includes over 350 million people worldwide—12 million in Canada alone—many of them between the ages of 18 and 30. Zuckerberg and his partners are now very wealthy, and Facebook has become one of the most popular sites on the World Wide Web.

While most members use it to post news about their personal activities and keep in touch with friends, Facebook, along with other new social media sites like MySpace and Twitter, has recently become a forum for social and political activism. For many people, it has replaced e-mail and text messaging as a method of communication. And it provides a venue for bringing like-minded people together in support of a particular cause and keeping each other informed of events as they unfold.

Grassroots Opposition to Prorogation of Parliament

Canada saw a dramatic demonstration of this new information-age phenomenon in the days following the announcement that Prime Minister Stephen Harper had decided to prorogue Parliament on December 31, 2009. Christopher White, an anthropology student at the University of Alberta was still in his pajamas when he learned of Harper's decision. "My first reaction was anger," he said, "and then this time I was like 'OK, I should really do something about it instead of going and having cereal'" (CBC News,

www.cbc.ca/politics/story/2010/01/14/facebook-group-prorogation.html). What White did was create a Facebook group called Canadians against Proroguing Parliament, (CAPP) a site where people opposed to Harper's action could join to express their views and suggest ways to put pressure on their MPs to go back to work.

White's site quickly "went viral," to use the term referring to an instant Internet sensation. Within a week, over 40 000 Canadians had joined CAPP, and by January 23, the date the organization had set for a co-ordinated round of anti-prorogation rallies across Canada, over 200 000 people had signed on. This made CAPP by far the biggest politically oriented Facebook group ever to emerge in Canada, with more members than the total number of people belonging to the Conservative, Liberal, NDP, Green, and Bloc Quebecois leaders' Facebook groups combined. Clearly this was a new phenomenon in Canadian politics, belying the notion that most people, especially youth, were apathetic and cynical about the actions of their political leaders, believing there was not much they could do to influence public issues.

However, some media and political commentators were initially skeptical about the impact and significance of CAPP. Conservative spokespersons pointed to polls taken shortly after Harper's announcement indicating that most people were either not aware of prorogation or did not care much about it. But these polling numbers shifted dramatically in the weeks that followed, and by late January an EKOS poll found that almost two-thirds of respondents believed that Harper's decision to prorogue Parliament was

“undemocratic,” while almost half of them held the view that the government was “moving in the wrong direction” (“Prorogation tightens gap between Tories, Liberals,” CBC News www.cbc.ca/politics/story/2010/01/13/ekos-conservatives-liberals-poll-prorogation-suspension.html).

The same poll revealed that the Conservative lead over the Liberals, which had been as high as 15 per cent before prorogation, had now evaporated, and the two parties were in a virtual dead heat in their respective levels of popular support. While it is not possible to establish a direct cause-and-effect relationship, these major shifts in public opinion were occurring at the same time that thousands of people were joining the CAPP Facebook site daily.

National Post correspondent Matt Gurney argued that, “Facebook groups are just about the dumbest way to advocate a political cause” (*The Globe and Mail*, January 11, 2010), but the success of CAPP in rallying Canadians of all ages and backgrounds against prorogation seemed to suggest otherwise. David Evans, a journalist with *The Globe and Mail* (January 11, 2010), suggested that Prime Minister Harper and his Conservative government were ignoring social media groups like CAPP “at their peril,” because they were underestimating the depth and breadth of public opposition and outrage at their decision to suspend Parliament. Evans pointed to the fact that Harper’s prorogation announcement was made just before New Year’s, perhaps deliberately timed to attract little public attention as people planned for the holiday. But Facebook groups like CAPP break this pattern, keeping “old” news stories alive and continuing to fuel public awareness and anger as new members log on to the site.

What do we know about the Canadians

who are joining CAPP and participating in anti-prorogation rallies? A study by the prestigious Rideau institute, titled “Facebook and Prorogation” (January 21, 2010), interviewed 340 members to find out. The study found that despite widespread impressions that Facebook is popular mostly with young people, members of CAPP spanned all age groups. For many of its older members, it was the first time they had ever signed on to a Facebook group. It also found that CAPP members were more politically informed than average Canadians and far more likely to vote in federal elections. When asked about their motives for joining the group, most people indicated that they felt that prorogation was undemocratic and that Parliament should have remained in session in order to investigate the Afghan detainee issue more fully. A large majority of the CAPP members surveyed stated that they believed joining the group and participating in demonstrations would have a positive impact and compel the government to reconsider its move to prorogue Parliament.

CAPP organizers held their collective breaths as they planned cross-Canada rallies for January 23, 2010. How many of those who had signed on to the site would actually brave the cold Canadian weather on a Saturday afternoon and take to the streets to protest prorogation? Some skeptics in the media had suggested that the demonstrations would flop, because “joining a Facebook group is easy, while marching is hard” (“Thousands protest Parliament’s suspension,” CBC News, www.cbc.ca/politics/story/2010/01/23/prorogue-protests.html).

But the rallies were a huge success, exceeding even their organizers’ expectations, with thousands of people participating in rallies in over 60 cities and towns across the country. On the

steps of the House of Commons in Ottawa, over 3 500 people gathered to hear political leaders like Michael Ignatieff, Jack Layton, and Elizabeth May denounce Harper's move and call for an immediate resumption of Parliament. As Sonya Stranger, aged 18, commented while taking part in the Regina protest, "it's about the masses and their voice being heard. You know, representation of the masses, and that's not what's happening right now"

(CBC News, www.cbc.ca/politics/story/2010/01/23/prorogue-protests.html).

If Stranger's views are indicative of the feelings of CAPP members—of all ages and walks of life—then the coming months could be somewhat difficult for the Harper government as it attempts to justify to the Canadian people its controversial decision to prorogue Parliament.

Activities

1. Can social media sites like Facebook play a significant role in involving young people in the political process? Why or why not?
2. Why did some political and media commentators dismiss the Facebook group Canadians against Proroguing Parliament when it was first formed? Were their dismissals justified? Why or why not?
3. Will Facebook sites and demonstrations have any impact on the government's decision to prorogue Parliament? Why or why not?
4. Would you join a political group on Facebook or become involved in a political protest organized via Facebook? Why or why not?

RICHARD COLVIN AND THE AFGHAN DETAINEES

Activity: Position Paper

Further Research

A good guide to writing a position paper can be found at: www.sfu.ca/mns/130d1/WritingaPositionPaper.htm

What is a Position Paper?

A position paper is like one side of a debate, only in written form. It is a piece of writing that presents an opinion or point of view on an important public issue. For this reason, it is sometimes referred to as an “opinion piece.” Newspaper columnists express their views on issues such as the Afghan detainee affair or Prime Minister Harper’s decision to prorogue Parliament through what are known as “op-ed” columns that appear in daily newspapers in Canada and other countries. Some of these, by journalists like the *Toronto Star’s* Thomas Walkom or *The Globe and Mail’s* Rick Salutin have been referred to in this *News in Review* story. Unlike news reports, op-ed pieces or position papers do not have to be neutral or unbiased. Instead, they are expected to take a position on a controversial issue and present a series of arguments in support of it. Sometimes position papers will also present counter-arguments that might be advanced to the point of view being expressed, in order to refute them.

Your Task

Your assignment is to write a position paper on whether or not the prime minister of Canada should have the power to prorogue Parliament any time he or she wishes. In researching your position paper, you may wish to consult resources such as newspaper and magazine articles and online information. Some of the sources cited in this story may be helpful to you in doing your research.

Format

- The position paper should consist of an introductory paragraph in which you state your thesis or the point of view that you will be developing throughout the paper (i.e., the prime minister should or should not have the power to prorogue Parliament any time he or she wishes).
- Following the introduction, the body of your paper should consist of at least three paragraphs, each one presenting a different argument supporting your position. These points must be supported by evidence or facts and can also refer to recognized authorities (political or media commentators, for example) who have presented similar arguments to the ones you are including in your position paper.
- After you have presented your three main arguments, your paper should end with a conclusion in which you briefly restate your argument and perhaps appeal to your readers to take action on the issue if they feel so inclined.

Your position paper may contain direct quotes from sources you have used in your research. If it does, then these sources must be cited using the proper format. You may also wish to include a short bibliography or list of sources you cited or drew on in the preparation of your paper.

Your teacher may wish to provide you with more detailed instructions about how to research and write a position paper, what citation format he or she wishes you to use and the length of the paper.

THE ROAD TO THE WINTER OLYMPICS

Introduction



Download the mp3 of this Introduction at newsinreview.cbclearning.ca.

Focus

After seven years of planning and preparation, the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics are finally here. This *News in Review* story looks at how Canadian organizers, athletes, and some members of the public worked for—and against—the Games' success.

Quote

"My only concern about [Vancouver] now is that their Games might be better than my Games in Lillehammer."
— Gerhard Heiberg, CEO of the organizing committee of the 1994 Winter Olympics in Lillehammer, considered by many to be the best Winter Games ever staged (*The Globe and Mail*, October 8, 2009)

For only the third time in history, Canada is hosting the Olympic Games. Vancouver is now the centre of one of the biggest televised events of 2010.

On the whole, preparations for the Games have gone well. All venues were completed well ahead of schedule. The Olympic Village is one of the most attractive in recent history—well on its way to becoming a Vancouver landmark. Ticket sales have exceeded expectations. Applications to fill the thousands of volunteer positions were three times the number of positions available. The highway between the two main venues, Vancouver and Whistler, has been widened to accommodate additional traffic. A new public transit line links Vancouver International airport with the downtown. Vancouver is ready.

Canada's athletes are also ready. Own the Podium, a program begun in 2005 to improve Canadian medal chances in Vancouver, has funnelled increased funding into development and training for competitors. Another program, Top Secret, has used new technologies to refine training methods and develop new equipment. Canada's goals are simple: to win more medals than any other country at the Olympics and to place among the top three gold medal winners at the Paralympic Games.

For Discussion

It's probably fair to admit that \$3-billion is a lot of money for a country the size of Canada to spend on hosting an athletic event. Do you feel it is worth it? Are there advantages that come to Canada from hosting such an event? Could the money be better spent elsewhere?

However, some of the preparations have not been without controversy. Construction cost overruns have been significant, especially at the Olympic Village. Taxpayers could be on the hook for millions of dollars and therefore paying for the Games for years to come.

Local civil rights associations have objected to some legislation and bylaws associated with the Games that they consider to be attacks on free speech and civil rights. Some Aboriginal groups, despite the official presence of four First Nations as hosts of the Games, object to the Olympics taking place on traditional lands.

Security at the Games has also been a concern. The price for the security forces, originally estimated at \$175-million, is now expected to be nearly \$1-billion. In a time of recession, there are many Canadians who argue that this money could have been better spent elsewhere.

The final cost of the Games is estimated by most observers to be in the range of \$3- to \$4-billion. Whether or not the Olympics are worth that kind of outlay is a topic that will likely be argued long after the Games are over. The response of many Canadians to that question may well depend on our athletes' final medal totals.

THE ROAD TO THE WINTER OLYMPICS

Video Review

Answer the questions in the spaces provided.

1. When did Vancouver win its bid to host the 2010 Olympics?

2. What was the estimated cost of building new facilities and renovating existing ones?

3. For how long have Canadian athletes had a “home field” advantage in training for the Olympics?

4. What was the percentage increase in construction costs at the Olympic venues?

5. What arguments were protestors against the Games, and average citizens, making?

6. What is the anticipated cost for security at the Games?

7. How long did it take Montreal to pay off its debt from the 1976 Olympic Games?

8. What are some of the problems that have been generated by the government’s attempt to get the homeless off Vancouver’s streets?

9. How have local businesses been coping with these problems?

10. a) How many people carried the Olympic torch?

b) How many kilometres did they travel?

11. What materials are being used (in place of snow) to build some of the snowboarding courses?

For Discussion

1. Security costs for the Games were originally estimated at \$175-million. It is now believed that they will come in at close to \$1-billion. Why do you think the original estimate might have been so much lower?

2. An opinion poll held in October 2009 asked Canadians if they were excited about the upcoming Olympic Games. Among Canadians, 54 per cent said they were either not very excited or not excited at all. Only 14 per cent said they were very excited. In British Columbia, 71 per cent of those surveyed said they were not very excited or not excited at all. Nine per cent said they were very excited.

How would you explain these results? Shouldn't the hosts of the Olympics be the most excited people in the country?

3. Many Olympics observers have said that Vancouver 2010 has the potential to be the most successful Winter Olympics ever. What would you say are the components of a successful Winter Olympics?

THE ROAD TO THE WINTER OLYMPICS

Gearing Up for the Games

Definition

The term *carbon neutral* means that if you add polluting emissions to the atmosphere, you can effectively subtract them by purchasing “carbon offsets.” Carbon offsets are credits for emission reductions achieved by projects such as wind farms, solar installations, or energy efficiency retrofits. You can purchase these credits and apply them to your own emissions to reduce your net climate impact.

Further Research

The Web site of Millennium Water (the Olympic Village) is at www.millenniumwater.com. The City of Vancouver’s Web site for the Olympic Village is at <http://vancouver.ca/olympicvillage/index.htm>.

Preparing for the 2010 Winter Olympics has required hard work by thousands of people. Venues for the various sports needed to be rebuilt or renovated. Housing for the athletes had to be constructed. Efficient transportation for athletes and spectators had to be assured. Security for the Games was a special concern. All these preparations were further complicated by the Vancouver Organizing Committee’s (VANOC) desire to make the Games themselves carbon neutral. In this section we look at some of the challenges faced by the organizers in preparing for the competitions.

Facilities

In 2006, Rod Mickleburgh—the former British Columbia deputy minister of transportation—took over as director of the Games construction program. Working with a \$580-million budget (construction costs were initially budgeted at \$470-million), Mickleburgh pushed contractors hard. The Olympic venues were finished a full year ahead of time, and within budget. For two years, athletes were able to train in the very facilities in which they would compete during the Olympic Games.

Not all construction projects went as smoothly as Mickleburgh’s. The Olympic Village in Vancouver turned into a major headache for both VANOC and Vancouver city council. The property, known as Millennium Water, was planned to be sold as a mixed-income residential community after the Games. The cost of constructing the village soon went \$100-million over budget, and the private companies financing the development refused to advance additional money to the

developer. The city was forced to take over financing because it had guaranteed the village to the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

By this point, taxpayers in Vancouver had advanced about \$850-million for the Village and provided another \$320-million for roads and other public projects. The energy-efficient Village was completed and delivered to VANOC on schedule. The developers are optimistic that construction costs will be recovered and the loan paid back when the condominium units are sold after the Games. However, units planned as low-cost public housing may end up also being sold as condominiums.

Security

At the 1972 Munich Olympics, gunmen opened fire and killed a number of Israeli athletes. Ever since that tragedy, security has been a major concern for Games organizers. Vancouver’s security detail was massive and included 1 800 police officers, 5 200 RCMP officers, and thousands of military personnel. In addition, 5 000 temporary security personnel were recruited and trained by Contemporary Security Canada, a new company put together by Aeroguard Group, a private security firm. It joined with a U.S. firm and a second Canadian company to win the job of staffing checkpoints and monitoring metal detectors at all Olympic venues.

When Vancouver first bid for the Games, security costs were estimated at about \$175-million. Costs are now expected to be almost \$1-billion.

Workers

VANOC faced a major task in finding about 55 000 workers and volunteers to

Further Research

The Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project has its own Web site at www.th.gov.bc.ca/seatosky/index.htm.

help with the Games. In October, some of the paid positions—ranging from cooks and cleaners to drivers—remained vacant; housing for workers from outside the area is hard to find. But there was no shortage of volunteers. There were 70 000 applications for the 25 000 positions advertised. VANOC also asked for, and received, 1 500 skilled volunteers from the private sector.

Transportation

Getting to and from Olympic venues will have a huge effect on how spectators and athletes view the Games. If transportation is slow or difficult to manage, people will have a poor impression of the Games. Many steps have been taken to make travel as efficient as possible, both in Vancouver and on the road to Whistler.

The biggest transportation project was the widening and improving of the Sea-to-Sky Highway between Vancouver and Whistler. This \$600-million engineering project has dramatically improved access to the Olympic sites outside Vancouver

proper. During the Games, only public transportation will be allowed into these sites; no private parking will be available.

To make getting around Vancouver easier during the Games, the city has asked its residents to change the way they travel—and when they travel. Residents are encouraged to leave their cars at home, and companies have been asked to change their hours so employees travel at times other than those when Olympic events are taking place.

In short, when the Games began, Vancouver was ready. Despite the economic downturn and some disappointments with sponsorship funding, VANOC ensured that everything was in place to guarantee success. They had a plan for almost every eventuality. Even a lack of snow at Cypress Mountain, the site for freestyle skiing and snowboarding events, was anticipated. The solution: bring snow from the top of the mountain down to the competition sites.

Follow-up Activity

One of the Vancouver 2010 official sponsors is Offsetters, a Vancouver company that provides ways in which individuals and corporations can reduce their carbon footprint. Travellers to the Vancouver Olympics can pay an amount of money toward an Offsetters project to neutralize the carbon they create by their travels.

1. How much would it cost you to travel to Vancouver and pay Offsetters to eliminate your carbon debt? Use the calculator at www.offsetters.ca/2010-travel-and-accommodation-calculator to figure it out.
2. How successful do you think Offsetters' efforts will be in attracting participants to their program?

THE ROAD TO THE WINTER OLYMPICS

The Cost of the Games

Further Research
The Vancouver 2010
Integrated Security
Unit Web site is at
<http://bc.rcmp.ca>.

Hosting an Olympic competition has become very expensive. Communities that take on responsibility for the Games cross their fingers and hope to break even. They dream of—and occasionally do realize—an “economic dividend” in the form of an improved international profile and an increase in investment and tourism.

Often, however, there are surprises waiting to trip up organizers’ plans. For example, construction cost overruns created a deficit for the 1976 Summer Games in Montreal that took the city 30 years to pay off. On the other hand, the 1988 Calgary Winter Games actually operated at a profit.

Stephen Brunt said in an article in *The Globe and Mail*, on January 15, 2009:

“Even in good times, there is always the issue of who pays the tab for the Games and whether it can be justified. Invariably someone is left holding the bag, and invariably that is not the International Olympic Committee, which has cleverly structured its business model to make sure others assume all of the risk.

“That’s the Olympics.

“This is also the Olympics, the beautiful part, the fantasy part, the patriotic-hearts-a-beating part that during the 17 days of the Games tends to make all of those earthly worries at least temporarily vanish.”

Vancouver’s Facilities

Vancouver has had its share of problems. Construction cost overruns have been a constant problem. It is estimated that new competition facilities built by the city have cost about \$45-million more than the city had budgeted. The total cost of renewing existing venues and building

new ones, including those at Whistler and Cypress Mountain, was almost \$600-million.

But the biggest problem for Vancouver has been where the athletes are housed: the Olympic Village. The Village was designed as a new waterfront development, a complete neighbourhood of condominium units that will be sold or rented after the Games. The city chose a private developer for the project. As the costs of building the Village rose rapidly, the developer was denied increased funding by its private backer. The city was forced to take on the full financing of the \$1-billion project, which is now at least \$100-million over budget. The Village was completed on schedule, but it remains to be seen whether the full costs will be recoverable when the units are sold later this year.

Security

When Vancouver bid for the Olympics in 2003, security costs were estimated at \$175-million. It is now estimated that the security operation, which will involve more than 12 000 people—police, RCMP, military, and private security personnel—will cost nearly \$1-billion.

Security needs also contributed to construction costs. About \$40-million was spent to build military camps along the Sea-to-Sky Highway connecting Vancouver and Whistler.

VANOC’s Operating Budget

The Vancouver Organizing Committee (VANOC) created an operating budget of \$1.62-billion to run the Games. This is in addition to construction and security costs. VANOC anticipated raising this money through ticket sales, merchandise sales, and sponsorship deals.

The sponsors were to include 11 major contributors provided by the International Olympic Committee (IOC). Unfortunately, the economic downturn led to the withdrawal of several sponsors, and the IOC was only able to obtain nine of the 11. This meant a shortfall of \$30-million for VANOC. And while ticket and merchandise sales exceeded expectations, revenue from outdoor advertising has been millions of dollars less than anticipated.

Part of VANOC's budget was a contingency fund of \$100-million; about half of this is left. In a rare concession, the IOC has said that, should VANOC's budget not balance at the end of the Games, they will be coming forward with specific support.

Transportation

To help obtain the Games for Vancouver, the B.C. government promised to make major improvements to the Sea-to-Sky Highway between Vancouver and Whistler. The cost of this project is generally reported as \$600-million, but a former B.C. auditor-general has estimated the real cost at \$1.98-billion. In any event, the provincial government does not include the cost of highway or urban transit improvements as part of its contribution to the Games.

The Actual Cost

Coming up with a final figure on what the Games cost taxpayers is not easy to do. The total depends on the answers to several questions, including:

- Did VANOC stay within its budget?
- Will the sale of condominium units at the Olympic Village recover the money invested?
- Are the three governments involved in the Games reporting all of the costs associated with hosting the event?

We do know some things for sure. The federal government has committed more than \$1.2-billion to the Olympics, mostly for security. The provincial government says its contribution is \$600-million, a figure that the auditor-general believes fails to include all the real costs associated with hosting the Games. Construction cost overruns have cost the City of Vancouver at least \$45-million; these could be much higher if the costs associated with the Olympic Village are not recovered.

Most observers currently estimate the total cost to taxpayers—Canadians, British Columbians and Vancouverites—at anywhere from \$3- to \$4-billion.

THE ROAD TO THE WINTER OLYMPICS

The Controversies of the Games

Did you know . . .

Many First Nations anti-Olympics groups are part of the Olympics Resistance Network (ORN) and will be actively protesting during the Games. Its Web site is at olympicresistance.net.

The Olympic Games have often been surrounded by controversy.

In some cases the controversy involves specific events. The quality of hockey refereeing and figure skating judging are two topics that have caused disputes during the Games. Vancouver had its own sport controversy even before the Games opened.

Women's Ski Jumping

Ski jumping is the only winter Olympic sport that does not have a competition for both men and women. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has long argued that there are not enough high-quality competitors in women's ski jumping to justify holding an Olympic competition in the sport.

As one might imagine, women who do compete in ski jumping strongly object to this attitude. In an attempt to force VANOC, the Vancouver Organizing Committee, to include women's ski jumping in the Games, several athletes from Canada and the United States brought a lawsuit in a British Columbia court. They argued that VANOC was violating the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. They asked the court to require VANOC to hold a women's competition or to cancel the men's event.

The British Columbia Supreme Court ruled against the women, accepting the argument that Olympic competitions are determined by the IOC, not VANOC, and are not subject to Charter rights. The athletes appealed to the Supreme Court of Canada, but in December the Court refused to hear the appeal.

Aboriginal Lands

Other controversies recently in the news have nothing to do with individual

sporting events. They deal with the impact of Vancouver's hosting of the Games on the lives of the people who live in the area.

Four First Nation peoples (the Lil'wat, Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh) have joined with VANOC to host the Games. This marks the first time Aboriginal peoples have been full partners in organizing and conducting an Olympics.

Not all Aboriginal people see this as a positive development. Many argue that the land on which many of the competitions are being held is traditional native land, stolen from them. Others argue that the billions of dollars spent on the Olympics could have been better spent helping with the social and economic problems that plague First Nations peoples across the country.

Civil Rights and Free Speech

Many British Columbia civil rights and free speech activists have become alarmed by recent legislation and regulations passed by the municipal and provincial governments.

These include the Assistance to Shelter Act, a law giving police the right to force homeless people into shelters during bad weather. Police argue that the law is needed to help them protect the lives of the homeless, who are also often suffering from mental illness. Critics, who refer to the law as the "Olympic Kidnapping Act," argue that the law will be used to hide the homeless during the Olympics and will turn shelters into jails and their workers into guards.

Also under attack is a municipal bylaw that states: "During the Games period . . . a person . . . must not distribute any advertising material or install or carry any sign unless licensed to do so by the

Further Research

The *Protesters' Guide* is available online at www.lrwc.org/documents/Civil.Disobedience.Guide.November.20.2009.F.pdf.

city” (*The Globe and Mail*, October 9, 2009). The bylaw also forbids any sign that is not a “celebratory sign”—meaning, if people do put up a sign about the Olympics, it must be one that supports the Games. In addition, no one may “cause any disturbance . . . interfering with the enjoyment of entertainment on city land by other persons,” and no one may possess “voice amplification equipment” on city property, for the duration of the Games.

The city has tried to reassure civil rights advocates that the bylaw is not intended to take away civil liberties but rather is meant to assist bylaw officers in dealing rapidly with anyone who is not a legitimate Games sponsor but tries to use the Games as an advertising platform.

Activists have their doubts. As early as June 2009, activists were complaining that the RCMP’s Integrated Security Unit was using questionable tactics, including badgering friends and family members, to intimidate anti-Olympic activists.

IOCC

The Impact on Community Coalition (<http://iocc.ca>) was formed after

Vancouver won the Olympic bid. It describes itself as “an independent, non-partisan, and community-based coalition that is dedicated to maximizing the positive impacts of the 2010 Vancouver/Whistler Olympic Games for the host city and surrounding regions, while minimizing the negative impacts.” The IOCC works with VANOC to minimize the impact of the Games on civil rights—especially those of the poor—and free speech.

One of the ways in which the IOCC communicates with the public is by issuing a “report card.” The April 2009 report card (available at iocc.ca/documents/2009-04-19_IOCC_2ndInterimReportCard.pdf) gave VANOC, the governments, and the RCMP a grade of D-, mostly for their failures to protect civil rights. A second report card will be issued soon.

Anticipating problems with the protection of civil rights at the Vancouver Games, Leo McGrady of Lawyers’ Rights Watch Canada, has prepared the *Protesters’ Guide to the Law of Civil Disobedience in British Columbia, November 20, 2009, Olympic Edition*.

Follow-up

The information in this feature is only an introduction to a few of the controversies that have swirled around the Vancouver Olympic Games. You may choose to investigate one of the following controversies associated with the Games. These include:

- The impact of the Games on Whistler and the surrounding area
- Free-speech restrictions on the artists of the Cultural Olympiad
- Low-income housing and the future of the Olympic Village
- Canada House—the Canadian Olympic Pavilion—constructed by an American company
- The Vancouver Symphony’s refusal to appear at the opening ceremony of the Games

THE ROAD TO THE WINTER OLYMPICS

Own the Podium

Quote

"Then there is the performance of the host team. Winning medals creates a frisson [a shiver] that courses through the crowds, the volunteers, the entire nation. When the home team bombs it leaves everyone asking: What was the point?" — Gary Mason, *The Globe and Mail*, December 15, 2009

Further Research

The Own the Podium Web site is at www.ownthepodium2010.com.

The members of the Vancouver Organizing Committee (VANOC) are not the only Canadians who have been gearing up for the Games. So have the athletes and the members of the various governing sports bodies to which the athletes belong. Many of them have been preparing with the generous financial assistance of Canada's Own the Podium program.

For many Canadians, the real success of the Vancouver Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games will depend on how well our athletes perform and how many medals they win. Canada currently has the dubious distinction of being the only country to ever host an Olympics—summer or winter—where the host country failed to win a gold medal. This has happened twice: in Montreal in 1976 and in Calgary in 1988. Olympic organizers would very much like Vancouver 2010 to destroy this record.

Own the Podium was launched in 2005 as an attempt to guarantee the greatest possible success for Canada's athletes at the 2010 Vancouver Games. It was supported by all of the winter sports governing organizations, as well as the major sources of funding for Canadian athletes. These include Sport Canada, the Canadian Olympic Committee, the Canadian Paralympic Committee, and VANOC. Its specific goal is to ensure that Canada's athletes win more medals than any other country at the 2010 Olympic Games and that Canada place in the top three for gold medals at the 2010 Paralympic Games.

A similar program, Road to Excellence, was created in 2006 to improve Canadians' chances at the Summer Olympic Games in Beijing.

Its goal, a 16th-place finish in overall medals at the 2008 Games, was met when Canada finished tied for 13th. Road to Excellence was renamed Own the Podium. The goal for the 2012 Summer Games in London is a 12th-place finish in total medals for the Olympics and an 8th-place finish at the Paralympic Games.

It works this way: Own the Podium makes recommendations to national funding parties on the amount of resources allocated to targeted winter and summer national sport organizations, Canadian Sport Centres, innovation and research, and other needed programs. It then monitors the implementation of the targeted national sport organizations' high-performance programs to ensure maximum performance results and intervenes where necessary.

Partly because of this focused approach, Own the Podium's Olympic funding has increased dramatically in preparation for the Vancouver 2010 Olympics and Paralympics. In the four years prior to the 2006 Turin Games, Own the Podium invested \$14-million in 15 Olympic sports and \$1.5-million in four Paralympic sports. For the 2012 Vancouver Games, Own the Podium's four-year investment rose to almost \$70-million for 17 sports, and \$10-million for the same four Paralympic sports. The amounts range from \$35 000 for nordic combined to \$8.7-million for alpine skiing.

For Paralympic sports the sums range from \$1-million for wheelchair curling to \$4.6-million for para alpine (www.ownthepodium2010.com/Funding/comparison.aspx).

Not all Canadian Olympic winter athletes are funded by Own the Podium. Only certain athletes have been targeted.

Further Research

A 2009-2010 breakdown of funding by sport, including the names of the targeted athletes for each sport, is available at www.ownthepodium2010.com/Funding/winter_sports.aspx.

Others, like those of nordic combined, which mixes cross-country skiing and ski jumping, receive no support from the program. Canada's team, with only one experienced member, is considered a non-contender for medals. Its members are ineligible for financing by Own the Podium, and the sport organization itself has received minimal financial support.

Top Secret

Top Secret is the name given to a program combining technology and physiological training in an attempt to give Canadian athletes a competitive edge at the 2010 Games. In past competitions, Canadian athletes often felt they were at a disadvantage against more generously funded competitors. But over the past five years \$8-million in funding by Own the Podium has been spent on 55 different projects aimed at making the 2010 advantage a Canadian one.

The program was indeed kept secret, and it was only just before the Olympics that some of the details were released to the press. Researchers and designers wanted to be sure that competitors would not have the time to duplicate any of the equipment they had developed.

Maclean's was one of the first news sources to break the Top Secret story

For Discussion

Own the Podium has become the major source of increased funding for Canadian athletes. Do you think it will continue to be of primary importance once the Vancouver Games are over? Will its future depend on whether Canada meets its Olympic and Paralympic goals?

(www2.macleans.ca/2010/01/12/olympic-secrets-revealed/), and it listed some of the technological breakthroughs available to Canadians at the Games.

These include:

- Snowboards with super low-friction bases and a revolutionary composite plate for bindings
- A computerized database that helps alpine skiers choose the best skis, waxes, and base grinds for any conditions
- An adjustable sit ski for para-alpine skiers that has already given Canadians three world championship titles in 2009
- A new skater's skin suit that is so good at cutting friction that speed skaters expect it to be the fastest suit at the competition

These and other technological breakthroughs, combined with new ways of training, make Canadian athletes believe that "owning the podium" is more than just a possibility.

Own the Podium has already been credited for some significant improvements in Canadian athletic performances. Since its inception, Canada has won an impressive number of World Cups and World Championships.

THE ROAD TO THE WINTER OLYMPICS

Activity: Time to Rethink the Games?

Vancouver 2010 is the third time that Canada has hosted the Olympics. It is likely that it will not be the last time a Canadian city will want to bid to host the Games.

Proponents of the Olympics have many arguments in favour of hosting:

- The Olympics bring prestige to the city and country that host them.
- Hosting often leads to an increase in tourism before, during, and after the Games.
- Jobs are created, especially in the construction industry.
- Hosting leads to civic improvements via new facilities for sport, public spaces, and transportation.
- Hosting the Games gives a boost to the country's athletic programs.
- As was the case in Calgary, the Games can break even or make money.

Opponents of the Games argue:

- Money spent hosting the Olympics could be better spent elsewhere, especially on social programs.
- The Games are disruptive for the community hosting them, especially given the security measures required to keep participants safe.
- Jobs created by the Olympics are temporary.
- Facilities built for the Olympics, built under time constraints, are often more expensive than other building projects.
- Support for athletic programs often falls off after the Games are over.
- As was the case in Montreal, the Games can lose millions of dollars.

Your Task

Consider the following proposal: "Resolved, that Canadian cities no longer be allowed to bid for future Summer or Winter Olympic Games." Would you support or argue against this policy?

Prepare a short (no more than one page) position paper stating your position on this subject. Give specific reasons why you agree or disagree with the proposal. These may include some of the above arguments, as well as your personal observations during Vancouver 2010.

THE PLANE BOMBER AND AIRPORT SECURITY

Introduction



Download the mp3 of this Introduction at newsinreview.cbclearning.ca.

Focus

A failed terrorism plot occurred aboard a Northwest Airlines airplane on December 25, 2009, triggering security scares in airports around the world. This incident revealed multiple security and intelligence failures and caused renewed efforts to make air travel safer. In this *News in Review* story we will look at the challenges of preventing terrorist attacks in the air.

Quote

"The best defences against terrorism are largely invisible: investigation, intelligence, and emergency response."
— Bruce Scheier, Security Expert, *New Internationalist*, November 2009

Airports around the world were on emergency alert after a young man from Nigeria allegedly attempted to set off an explosive device as an airplane was preparing to land in Detroit. The 23-year-old alleged would-be bomber, Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, began his flight in Amsterdam. As the flight was approaching its landing in Detroit, he allegedly tried to destroy the plane by injecting chemicals into a package of explosives that were concealed in his underwear. The chemicals failed to ignite the explosives, but a small fire was started that had to be extinguished by the crew and passengers. After being charged with attempted murder and attempting to use a weapon of mass destruction to kill 300 people, he pleaded not guilty at his first appearance in federal court in Michigan on January 8, 2010. He faces the possibility of a life sentence if convicted of the charges.

Outside the court, small groups of American Muslims and Nigerian-Americans carried signs denouncing Abdulmutallab's alleged actions and extremist violence of any kind.

The event called into question the effectiveness of current airport security measures. Sweeping changes to airport security were ordered at travel hubs in most nations. Carry-on baggage is more restricted than in the past. Passengers carrying passports from certain "suspect"

nations will be asked more questions by security officials and be subject to more detailed searches of their baggage and bodies. Full-body scanners are a new line of defence against concealed materials. This technology allows a security official to detect objects underneath the clothing of a passenger. These changes have caused airports to demand that passengers arrive many hours ahead of international flights.

The failed attack also renewed fears in the United States of the terrorist group Al Qaeda, who claimed responsibility for the incident. As well, the event prompted a re-evaluation of the role that military intelligence plays in preventing future terrorist attacks.

Canada was significantly affected by this bombing attempt. Canadian air travellers faced enormous delays immediately following the events of December 25. The call for increased security measures in air travel resulted in increased costs and lower profits for economically vulnerable Canadian airline companies. The Canadian public was left wondering to what degree of inconvenience they would have to submit in the name of safety. Some wondered if there were more effective measures outside the realm of the airport that might ultimately prevent future terrorist attacks.

To Consider

1. What changes to airport security are likely to be the result of the events of December 25, 2009?
2. Why do you think terrorists target airliners?
3. Have you or anyone you know been affected by the increased security measures at Canadian airports? Explain.

THE PLANE BOMBER AND AIRPORT SECURITY

Video Review

Quote

"We do not condone terrorism. We do not support terrorism in any way, and terrorism is not a part of our religion whatsoever no matter what you may hear, no matter what terrorists may say."

— Zeinab Moughnia, Muslim American demonstrator, outside the Detroit courthouse

Pre-viewing Activity

Before you watch the video, discuss the following questions with a partner or in a small group.

1. What do you know about the beliefs, motives, and membership of Al Qaeda?
2. What do you think are the pros and cons of tight security restrictions on airline travel?
3. Are you willing to undergo new security measures to increase airport security? Why or why not?
4. Some people say that if we change our lifestyle because of fear of terrorism, the terrorists have won. What do you think that means? Do you agree? Why or why not?

Viewing Questions

As you watch this *News in Review* story, respond to the following questions in the spaces provided.

1. What were the sights, sounds, and emotions on board Flight 253 to Detroit?

2. What specific changes to airport security occurred immediately after the incident on Flight 253?

3. What do authorities know about the alleged bomber?

4. Why is London, England, sometimes referred to as “Londonistan”?

5. Why is Yemen a prime training ground for terrorist groups?

6. How do full-body scanners work?

7. Outline some of the criticisms of these scanners.

8. Why is Abdulmutallab’s court case referred to by some as a “slam dunk”?

9. If convicted, what is the maximum sentence Abdulmutallab may face?

Post-viewing Activity

Based on what you have seen in the video, return to the pre-viewing questions and add any new information you learned. Have any of your responses changed substantially? Why?

THE PLANE BOMBER AND AIRPORT SECURITY

IV *The Attempted Bombing*

Did you know . . .

According to officials in Yemen, the alleged would-be bomber, Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, may have met with Anwar al-Awlaki in that country. al-Awlaki is a U.S.-born radical cleric who exchanged e-mails with Major Nidal Hasan before the U.S. Army psychiatrist went on a murderous rampage at the Fort Hood military base in November 2009.

Did you know . . .

The U.S.'s "no fly" or "watch" list was established after the 9/11 terrorist attacks on American targets. The list includes any individual who has been linked to terrorism or terrorists in some way. Originally, authorities estimated the list would contain 20 000 to 30 000 names. The list purportedly includes over one million names. The governments of the U.S. and Canada will not say how many Canadians are on the list.

Before Reading

Create a chart in your notes to record information as you read. The chart will summarize two or three significant points of information for each subheading. Be prepared to share your chart with a partner after reading the information and discuss any similarities and differences in your summary charts.

The Suspect: Who is Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab?

Described by his peers as a quiet, studious, and devout Muslim, Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab has gained worldwide notoriety as an attempted airline bomber. Immediately following his alleged bombing attempt, the world media began investigating his life and the possible motive for his alleged acts. What they discovered was that he had ties to Al Qaeda operatives in Yemen.

Abdulmutallab is the son of a wealthy Nigerian bank executive and his second wife. He studied mechanical engineering at University College London, where he headed the school's Islamic Society. He lived in a \$3.5-million central London flat while attending school. His father said he had warned U.S. officials in Nigeria of his son's involvement with Islamic fanaticism.

Abdulmutallab broke off all ties with his family and went to Yemen in August 2009 to study Arabic at a language institute. At some point in his young life, Abdulmutallab's deeply held belief in the moral superiority of the Muslim faith turned to radicalization. His suspected contact with Islamic extremists may have led him to consider terrorist acts. He told investigators that he acquired his bomb-making materials in Yemen from an Al Qaeda member. On December 24, 2009, Abdulmutallab flew from Lagos, Nigeria, to Amsterdam where he transferred to Northwestern Airlines Flight 253 to Detroit.

The "Systemic Failures" of United States Intelligence: Why wasn't Abdulmutallab stopped from boarding the plane?

Investigations into Abdulmutallab's life and his actions just prior to boarding Flight 253 point to the fact that a breach of security occurred in this case:

- Despite his possible connection to terrorists, a misspelling of his surname left the State Department unaware of the fact that he had a valid U.S. visa. Someone with ties to terrorists is automatically placed on the U.S.'s "no fly" list, which restricts passage to the United States.
- If the Schiphol Airport in Amsterdam had required Abdulmutallab to pass through its one body scanner, it would have exposed the explosives that he allegedly concealed.
- An intelligence report on Abdulmutallab was improperly filed, so database searches of his name were incomplete or faulty.
- A systemic failure kept Abdulmutallab off a watch list of known or suspected terrorists. A counter-terror analysis from the U.S. identified that a Yemen-based branch of Al Qaeda was a growing threat, but the focus of the analysis was on "imminent" attacks in Yemen rather than attacks in the United States—this, despite warnings of attacks in the U.S.
- Security personnel at the airports overlooked the unusual circumstances

of a Nigerian man flying to Detroit in December on a tourist visa without a return ticket and no checked baggage. Ironically, in Detroit, customs officers identified the name “Abdulmutallab” on the watch list and had preselected Umar for special questioning—after he landed in Detroit.

In an article in the *Toronto Star* on January 8, 2010, Deputy National Security Advisor John Brennan admitted that intelligence agencies had all the information they needed to stop Abdulmutallab from boarding a plane but that “no one intelligence entity or team or task force was assigned responsibility for doing that follow-up investigation. The intelligence fell through the cracks.”

The Bombing Attempt: What happened on the plane?

Half an hour before landing, and while over Canadian territory, Abdulmutallab went to the bathroom. When he returned he covered his lap and legs with a blanket and complained to his neighbor of stomach pains. As the plane was

preparing for a landing, investigators believe that Abdulmutallab pulled out a syringe and moved to inject a pouch of 80 grams of PETN (a compound related to nitroglycerin) with TATP, another highly explosive compound that he had sewn into his underwear. Had he successfully triggered an explosion, a hole would have been blown in the side of the plane’s fuselage, potentially causing a crash.

Luckily, his alleged attempt to ignite the substance was unsuccessful, but smoke and flames did result. One passenger in particular, 32-year-old Dutch film director Jasper Schuringa, is being heralded as a hero for sitting on Abdulmutallab while putting out the flames with his hands and water bottles. Assisted by other passengers, he dragged Abdulmutallab to the first-class cabin and subdued until the plane landed.

After landing, Abdulmutallab was taken to a Michigan hospital for treatment for burns. He was then transported to a federal prison in Milan, Michigan, where he awaits trial.

Post-reading Activities

Reflect on what you read in this feature and individually or with a partner respond to the following questions. Be prepared to share your responses with your classmates.

1. If you were an investigator on this case, what questions would you ask Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab?
2. What questions would you ask his family, friends, and teachers?
3. What questions would you ask the intelligence agencies charged with anti-terrorist responsibilities?
4. What questions would you ask the security personnel in the airports?
5. What do you think about Jasper Schuringa’s actions? Do you think he should be rewarded for his actions? Why or why not?

THE PLANE BOMBER AND AIRPORT SECURITY

The Response

When news of the attempted bombing reached other airports, security measures immediately reflected the heightened sense of alert and panic. These measures—such as detailed body and baggage searches, restrictions on carry-on luggage, and increased questioning of all passengers—caused lengthy delays and the cancellations of some flights. Many airport customers were caught unprepared by the new rules and long waits for their flights.

U.S. President Barack Obama was criticized by some for his failure to immediately address American citizens at the first opportunity. He was in Hawaii on vacation with his family on the day of the attempted bombing and was reportedly kept informed of the situation by advisors. On January 7, he addressed the nation with tough rhetoric, reiterating

that the United States was “at war” with Al Qaeda terrorists and that the serious breaches of security that led to this failed bombing attempt would be dealt with.

Al Qaeda is a terrorist organization under the purported leadership of Osama bin Laden. The organization is a fundamentalist Sunni movement that believes a Christian-Jewish alliance exists to destroy Islam and that this alliance is largely supported by the U.S. and Israel. The leadership of Al Qaeda has called for a global *jihād*—a holy war undertaken as a sacred duty by Muslims—against the governments and citizens of those nations. The September 11, 2001, attacks were the most violent of their terrorist actions. Since that date, the U.S. has declared a “war on terror” that extends to such nations as Pakistan, Sudan, and Afghanistan.

Responses and Reactions to the Bombing Attempt

The memories of the 9/11 attacks were revived by this bombing attempt. Americans in particular engaged in heated discussions on the nature of the terrorist threats, the security implications, and the appropriate way to respond.

Read the quotes below. Indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with each quote. Provide reasons for each choice and be prepared to explain your choices.

“Flying is very, very safe.” — Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano, *Toronto Star*, December 28, 2009

Strongly agree _____ **Agree** _____ **Disagree** _____ **Strongly disagree** _____

Reasons _____

“There was a tip from the father of the individual who is alleged to have put together the Detroit plot. We did nothing. And we could have kept the individual far, far away from the airport. Frankly, airports are not a good last line of defence.” — Robert Mann, aviation consultant, *The Globe and Mail*, December 29, 2009

Strongly agree _____ **Agree** _____ **Disagree** _____ **Strongly disagree** _____

Reasons _____

“We are at war against Al Qaeda, a far-reaching network of violence and hatred that attacked us on 9/11, that killed nearly 3 000 innocent people, and that is plotting to strike us again. . . . That’s why we must communicate clearly to Muslims around the world that Al Qaeda offers nothing except a bankrupt vision of misery and death, including the murder of fellow Muslims, while the United States stands with those who seek justice and progress.” — U.S. President Obama, *The Globe and Mail*, January 8, 2010

Strongly agree _____ **Agree** _____ **Disagree** _____ **Strongly disagree** _____

Reasons _____

“The history is that these things do subside—there’s an immediate reaction and then, as time goes on, the memory fades and the reality of the invasiveness and the inconvenience of strict screening persists, and so we eventually move toward a system that is less stringent.” — Mark Hansen, professor at UC Berkeley and specialist in aviation security, *The Globe and Mail*, December 28, 2009

Strongly agree _____ **Agree** _____ **Disagree** _____ **Strongly disagree** _____

Reasons _____

“Security is both a feeling and a reality. . . . When people are scared, they need something to be done that will make them feel safe, even if it doesn’t truly make them safer. Politicians naturally want to do something in response to a crisis, even if that something doesn’t make any sense.” — Bruce Schneier, security expert, *New Internationalist*, November 2009

Strongly agree _____ **Agree** _____ **Disagree** _____ **Strongly disagree** _____

Reasons _____

“Great and proud nations don’t hunker down and hide behind walls of suspicion and mistrust. That is exactly what our adversaries want, and so long as I am president we will never hand them that victory.” — U.S. President Barack Obama, *Toronto Star*, January 8, 2010

Strongly agree _____ **Agree** _____ **Disagree** _____ **Strongly disagree** _____

Reasons _____

“A terrorist attack cannot possibly destroy a country’s way of life: it’s only our reaction to that attack that can do that kind of damage. The more we undermine our own laws, the more we convert our buildings into fortresses, the more we reduce the freedoms and liberties at the foundation of our societies, the more we’re doing the terrorists’ job for them.” — Bruce Schneier, *New Internationalist*, November 2009

Strongly agree _____ **Agree** _____ **Disagree** _____ **Strongly disagree** _____

Reasons _____

THE PLANE BOMBER AND AIRPORT SECURITY

International Security

Did you know . . .

On September 11, 2001, airport procedures such as metal detectors and X-ray screening of luggage failed to prevent the 9/11 attackers from boarding four jets with knives and box cutters.

In December 2001, Richard Reid attempted to blow up a plane by igniting explosives in his shoe. That led to the demand to remove footwear when passing through airport checkpoints.

In August 2006, British authorities uncovered a plot to blow up aircraft using liquid explosives. That event led to restrictions on liquids and gels in carry-on luggage.

Did you know . . .

Guantanamo Bay is an American detainment facility for prisoners captured in the U.S.'s "war on terror." It is located in Cuba.

As a result of the attempted bombing attack on Flight 253 to Detroit on December 25, 2009, many changes in airport security were made, some short-term and some long-term. A few examples of the potential long-term changes include passport profiling, intensive screening for citizens of 14 countries, and the use of new technology such as whole-body scanners. Yemen, in particular, became the subject of heightened U.S. scrutiny due to the fact that the suspect had connections to Al Qaeda leaders in that country. While airport security was once again affected by a terrorist attempt, it is anticipated that many restrictions—such as the demand to remain in plane seats during the final hour before arrival, and the rule preventing passengers from having pillows, blankets, and other personal items in their lap at the end of a flight—will be eased over time.

Suspect Nations

New rules in the United States demand that the citizens of 14 countries identified as "state sponsors of terrorism"—or travellers flying to the United States from these countries—may be subject to passport profiling and intensive screening measures such as body and baggage searches, intensive questioning, and passing through whole-body scanners. These countries include Cuba, Iran, Sudan, and Syria. "Countries of interest" to the United States include Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Nigeria, Afghanistan, Algeria, Lebanon, Libya, Iraq, Somalia, and Yemen. Civil right groups protested that the changes are discriminatory in that they imply that people living in these countries are automatically terrorist suspects. But many air travellers

agreed with government and intelligence officials that the added security was a necessary inconvenience.

Focus on Yemen

Yemen in particular has been the focus of U.S. military attention since a group called Al Qaeda in Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) stated on an Islamic Web site that they co-ordinated the attack plans with Abdulmutallab and assisted in the making of the explosives he carried on the flight. The bombing was intended as retaliation for a U.S.-aided operation in Yemen in which two airstrikes were made against AQAP leadership. The second airstrike occurred one day before Abdulmutallab's flight.

An AQAP statement posted on the Internet demanded its followers "kill every crusader using all the killing methods available in support of Allah's religion and in glorifying His words on Earth" (translation of the AQAP December 28, 2009, statement at www.nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/nefaAQIYChristmas1209.pdf). AQAP is purportedly part of Osama bin Laden's Al Qaeda network that is based in Saudi Arabia and Yemen. Yemen is also Osama bin Laden's ancestral homeland.

As a consequence of Abdulmutallab's alleged actions and the AQAP's statement of responsibility for the failed bombing attempt, President Obama suspended transfers to Yemen of prisoners held in Guantanamo Bay. Seven Yemeni detainees had already been sent home by the Obama administration, which is under intense pressure from some critics not to send more detainees back to Yemen due to fears they will once again become extremists.

Western allies such as the U.S., Britain, and Canada considered ways to bolster Yemen's government, with offers of financial support and military training due to fears that Al Qaeda might exploit the country's instability to launch more international terrorist attacks. Yemen, the poorest country in the Middle East, faces a Shia Muslim rebellion in the north and separatist protests in the south.

Meanwhile, a Canadian warship, the HMCS *Fredericton*, continued to patrol the international shipping lanes through the Gulf of Aden, which separates Somalia from Yemen. The warship was looking for suspected Al Qaeda-inspired fighters—the al-Shabab—who threatened to leave Somalia to fight in Yemen.

Yemen has requested Canadian and international aid and assistance to help fight Al Qaeda. Yemeni security forces killed two Al Qaeda militants who were threatening to attack U.S. and British embassies in January 2010. Canada does not have an embassy in Yemen, although the Calgary-based Nexen runs the largest oil project in the country. It remains to be seen to what extent, and with what

international assistance, Yemen could contain Al Qaeda extremists.

Body Scanners: A Controversial New Measure

Canada intends to purchase 44 new imaging scanners, at the cost of \$250 000 each, for use in international airports across the country. The scanners use electromagnetic waves to scan through clothing and produce images of hidden objects. Some politicians, airline passengers, and civil liberties spokespeople have questioned the use of the scanner.

Although the scanners blur passengers' facial features, the images do reveal breasts, buttocks, and genital areas. Officials claim the body scanners are quick, accurate, and less embarrassing than "pat-downs." They also argue that scanning will not be used on children and that the images are deleted after being viewed. Critics of the scanners cite the cost, privacy issues, and constitutional protections against "unreasonable searches" as arguments against the use of scanners.



Follow-up

Events and actions often have both intended and unintended consequences. Explore the intended and unintended consequences of this event using the Multiple consequence Web worksheet at <http://newsinreview.cbclearning.ca> and discuss your completed work with a classmate or in a small group.

THE PLANE BOMBER AND AIRPORT SECURITY

What makes a terrorist?

“I am a terrorist, and I am proud of it.” — Ramzi Yousef, “mastermind” of the World Trade Center bombing, September 11, 2001

Before Reading

1. Brainstorm words that you would use to describe terrorists and the actions of terrorists.
2. How is the terrorist portrayed (consider age, sex, racial/cultural/national background, personality, intelligence) in popular culture (television shows, movies)? Give specific examples to support your answer.
3. If you were to conduct research on terrorists what three questions would you use to focus your research?

Investigating Terrorism

Who becomes a terrorist and why? This is an important question as increasingly dangerous terrorist groups emerge as potential threats to civilians worldwide. Technology has made the threat even more menacing due to the larger scale of destruction now possible.

Terrorists have existed in different periods of history and have claimed allegiance to various ethnic, cultural, national, separatist, ideological, political, and/or religious groups. What they have in common is that they share strong beliefs in an ideological or religious message. They feel compelled to share the message through terrorizing the general public. Terrorist actions are intended to have high-profile impact; the actions should be unexpected and shocking. Terrorist groups thrive on the fear and intimidation they promote. The media are implicated in promoting the spread of terrorism because the terrorist's actions are aimed at a global audience more so than at its intended victims.

Terrorist Personality

Is there a terrorist personality? It is not enough for a person to have strongly held beliefs; the person must also want to risk their own life for the beliefs and be

willing to engage in violent behaviours to promote the beliefs. Terrorist actions usually result from multiple causes: psychological, sociological, economic, political, and religious. The belief that terrorists are insane is a simplistic assumption. Terrorists have not been adequately studied by psychologists, so relatively little is known about their personalities; researchers do not typically have access to them, even if they are imprisoned, and terrorists tend not to divulge their motivations during questioning. There does not appear to be a single terrorist personality. More importantly, terrorists are not typically mentally ill, since terrorist groups don't want members who arouse suspicion.

Political psychologist Jeanne N. Knutson's extensive research on political terrorists in the 1980s found that “their violent acts stem from feelings of rage and hopelessness engendered by the belief that society permits no other access to information-dissemination and policy-formation processes” (*Social and Psychodynamic Pressures Toward a Negative Identity*, 1981). Terrorists are frustrated individuals; their strongly held beliefs become moral imperatives that distort their view of the world and of other human beings. Other general traits

of terrorists are that they feel a sense of alienation, they may view themselves as victims, they are single-mindedly devoted to a cause, and they do not regard their actions as criminal. They can exhibit initiative, cunning, skill, and ruthlessness. They show no fear, pity, or remorse.

Why become a terrorist?

Terrorists typically do not act alone; they have a network of like-minded people who support them and encourage their beliefs and actions. It was once supposed that terrorists were recruited from the uneducated, and while this is often the case, it is not always so. Many terrorists are recruited from the fields of engineering, science, computer science, chemistry, and communication. Some of the more common sociological characteristics of terrorists studied in the last 30 years are that they are

young men between 22-25 years of age, unmarried, with a higher than average education. That being said, more women are engaged in terrorist activities than in previous decades. Those living in poverty can be particularly vulnerable to the financial and emotional support offered by terrorist groups.

So if the psychology of terrorists is largely unknown, and if each terrorist group has different motivations, how can governments protect their citizens from terrorist attacks? It seems that three pre-emptive actions are needed:

- effective counterterrorism measures that focus on collecting intelligence information regarding individuals and groups who are suspected of terrorism
- psychological warfare aimed at dividing the group's political and military leaders
- education to deter alienated youth from joining terrorist organizations

After Reading

1. Refine your earlier research questions with a partner and create a set of essential questions regarding terrorists.
2. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Give supported reasons for your answers.
 - a) "Terrorists are made, not born."
 - b) "Researchers should focus more on why people join terrorist groups rather than studying the personality types of terrorists."
 - c) "The media help to support the goals of terrorism."
 - d) "Accidental guerrillas are people who fight us not because they hate the West and seek our overthrow but because we have invaded their space to deal with a small, extremist element that has manipulated and exploited local grievances to gain power in their societies. They fight us not because they seek our destruction but because they believe we seek theirs." — David Kilcullen, author of *The Accidental Guerrilla* quoted in *The Globe and Mail*, January 12, 2010

Sources: *The Sociology and Psychology of Terrorism: Who becomes a terrorist and why?* by Rex Hudson, Washington, D.C.: Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. 1999; *Social and Psychodynamic Pressures Toward a Negative Identity*, by Jeanne N. Knutson, in Yonah Alexander and John M. Gleason, eds., *Behavioral and Quantitative Perspectives on Terrorism*. New York: Pergamon. 1981.

THE PLANE BOMBER AND AIRPORT SECURITY

Activity: Considering Islamophobia

Note to Teachers

Teachers should be aware that the teaching of sensitive and controversial issues may provoke emotional responses from students. A high degree of care should be taken before the lesson to ensure that the learning environment allows for conflicting sets of values to be processed analytically and with respect for differences in peoples and their cultures, identities, and world views.

Islamophobia is fear and/or hatred of Muslims and Islam. People who suffer from Islamophobia may share one or all of the following beliefs: all or most Muslims are religious fanatics, all or most Muslims have violent tendencies toward non-Muslims, Muslims view common Western concepts such as equality, tolerance, and democracy as being in opposition to Islam.

The term *Islamophobia* gained worldwide recognition after the September 11, 2001, attacks on the United States and the resulting global backlash against Muslims. Islamophobia could be considered a new form of racism, whereby Muslims, an ethno-religious group (not a race), are nevertheless viewed by non-Muslims as a race.

As Canadians, we pride ourselves on living peacefully in a pluralistic and diverse society. For this reason, Islamophobia is a serious concern in our democratic way of life. When a set of negative assumptions is made about an entire group to the detriment of that group, then tension, hatred, and persecution often result. Indeed, there have been incidents of violence and discrimination against Muslims in Canada and other nations as fear of aggressive Islamic terrorists gains widespread media attention. This violence and discrimination are also fuelled by the lack of knowledge in the West about Islamic religion and cultures of the nations where Islam thrives.

Islam is often portrayed in Western media and popular culture as irrational, intolerant, sexist, resistant to change, and inferior to the Western cultures. The diversity within the Muslim community is not recognized or understood, and criticisms made of the West by Muslims are considered irrational and rejected outright.

Activity

Consider the issue of Islamophobia by individually answering the questions below. Be prepared to share your answers with a partner or in a small group. In group and class discussions you should be mindful of the need to respect differences in peoples and their cultures, identities, and world views.

1. How does Islamophobia affect you?
2. How does Islamophobia affect your class and your school?
3. How does Islamophobia affect Canada?
4. How does Islamophobia affect the world?
5. What are the causes of Islamophobia?
6. What are the solutions to Islamophobia?
7. Is this an important issue? Explain your response.

CANADA'S AMAZING NEPTUNE PROJECT

Introduction



Download the mp3 of this Introduction at newsinreview.cbclearning.ca.

Focus

This *News in Review* story focuses on the launch of NEPTUNE Canada, a high-tech ocean observatory off the coast of Vancouver Island. NEPTUNE's 800 kilometres of fibre optic cable, along with a number of sophisticated underwater instruments, could change the way the world studies its oceans.

Acknowledgement

News in Review would like to acknowledge the support and assistance of NEPTUNE Canada in the development of this story. Visit the NEPTUNE Canada Web site for further information on this amazing project at <http://neptunecanada.ca>.

Many Canadians look to the skies and wonder about the vast unexplored expanse called space. However, there is another vast unexplored expanse right here on Earth—the world's oceans. Consider these facts: over 70 per cent of Earth is covered by water, and every second breath we take comes from oxygen generated by our oceans. Water is such an important resource one has to wonder why more hasn't been invested in studying the mysteries of the deep blue sea.

Canada is solidifying its reputation as an international leader in ocean research and exploration. The University of Victoria—working in conjunction with 12 universities across Canada and partners in government and the private sector—officially launched NEPTUNE Canada near the end of 2009. NEPTUNE Canada is a sophisticated ocean observatory that is hooked up to the Internet via fibre optic cable. The cable stretches 800 kilometres in a strategic loop across the Juan de Fuca tectonic plate off the Pacific coast of Vancouver Island. All the data gathered at five research hubs are fed back to NEPTUNE Canada's shore station in Port Alberni and then transmitted via high bandwidth to the archiving centre at the University of Victoria where they are shared with the world over the World Wide Web.

Both academic and amateur researchers from anywhere in the world

can log onto the NEPTUNE site and create an account free of charge. They can then interact with NEPTUNE's data to make observations and discoveries. This means that a person conducting PhD research on biodiversity in Guelph, Ontario, or a Grade 11 science student in Paris, France, can participate in ocean research without having to head out onto the rugged waters off the coast of British Columbia.

The launch of NEPTUNE has put Canada in a position to provide researchers from a range of sciences (geology, biology, physics, chemistry) and from around the world with the opportunity to access real-time continuous data online to study and better understand things like climate change, ocean health, marine ecosystems, ocean-floor mineral deposits, and hydrocarbons from anywhere in the world. NEPTUNE will also provide invaluable data for the study of underwater volcanic processes and submarine earthquakes and tsunamis.

NEPTUNE's slogan maintains that they are "Transforming Ocean Science." It appears that the generosity of NEPTUNE's data-sharing agenda, as well as the ingenuity of its observatory system, could see this transformation become a reality. Many nations have expressed interest in constructing NEPTUNE-style research facilities in the not-too-distant future.

To Consider

1. Identify two ways that NEPTUNE is transforming ocean science.
2. How are discoveries made off the west coast of Vancouver Island relevant to someone living in another part of the world?

CANADA'S AMAZING NEPTUNE PROJECT

Video Review

Definition

NEPTUNE is an acronym that stands for North-East Pacific Time-series Undersea Networked Experiments.

Pre-viewing Questions

With a partner or in a small group read and discuss the following questions.

1. Traditionally, scientists have studied the world's oceans by going out on marine expeditions with sophisticated instruments. Imagine if there could be permanent study labs on the ocean floor. Why would permanent ocean labs be more effective than ongoing marine expeditions?

2. If scientists were able to build permanent labs on the ocean floor in a variety of locations, where should they be located? Explain your answer.

3. Imagine that scientists could remotely access information from permanent ocean labs. Should the people who build the labs be paid for use of their labs? Why or why not?

Viewing Questions

Write your responses to the following questions in the spaces provided.

1. What does Mairi Best mean when she says that she is being asked to build "the marine space station"?

2. Why does Kim Juniper say that we had better start to understand what is going on in our oceans or we're going to be in big trouble soon?

3. a) Describe NEPTUNE Canada.

- b) How much is the project expected to cost?

Did you know . . .

Forty per cent of Earth's people live within 100 kilometres of the sea, and the issue of ocean wellness is beginning to take on increasing importance in deliberations regarding climate change. NEPTUNE, and whatever other projects it inspires, will become a key player in providing information that shows humanity how profoundly connected we are to the sea.

4. What role did the voyage of the M.V. Thompson play in laying the groundwork for NEPTUNE Canada?

5. How many species have been discovered in Earth's oceans? How many do some people estimate are actually present in Earth's oceans?

6. What do ocean scientists study when they visit Endeavour Ridge?

7. Why is Kim Juniper surprised that life is able to thrive in the volcanic areas of Endeavour Ridge?

8. What does Juniper mean when he says that life at the bottom of Endeavour Ridge is "an ecosystem that is not dependent on solar energy"?

9. Name some of the things that NEPTUNE hopes to study.

10. How long is the line of fibre optic cable stretching from Port Alberni out into the Pacific Ocean?

11. Why did ocean scientists pick the coast of Vancouver Island as the location for NEPTUNE Canada's research?

12. What is the name of NEPTUNE's rover? What is the rover's job?

13. What difficult decision does NEPTUNE's staff need to make when some of their instruments fail once they are installed?

Post-viewing Questions

1. The price tag on NEPTUNE is \$100-million to build and \$8- to \$10-million a year to operate. Is the project too expensive, or do you think the information NEPTUNE will provide is worth the cost?

2. A paradigm shift is a radical and unexpected change in the way things are done. How does NEPTUNE represent a paradigm shift in the world of ocean science?

CANADA'S AMAZING NEPTUNE PROJECT

Transforming Ocean Science

Did you know . . .
VENUS was the first cabled underwater observatory built by the University of Victoria. It features 44 kilometres of fibre optic cable connecting instruments in Saanich Inlet and the Strait of Georgia to researchers using the Internet.

The emergence of NEPTUNE Canada as a global leader in ocean research is a story of vision, planning, ingenuity, innovation, perseverance, and collaboration. The rationale behind the use of so many descriptors to describe the efforts of the University of Victoria (UVic) to bring NEPTUNE online will become clear to you in a moment.

The NEPTUNE story began in the mid 1990s with a team of visionary ocean scientists from the United States who were frustrated with the way marine research was being conducted. Traditionally researchers hoped that government and university funding grants would allow for marine expeditions for a limited period of time scattered sporadically over the course of a given year. Even if researchers could scrounge up the money, things like the weather and sea conditions would often scuttle an expedition before it could get out of port.

Then, around the turn of the millennium, these visionaries began to put a dream into action with the idea of a permanent ocean science observatory located on the sea floor that was hardwired to a shore station. In 2000, scientists in Canada and the U.S. agreed to work together on the NEPTUNE project and to seek funding in their respective countries. Within a few short years, Canadian ocean scientists received funding for VENUS (the Victoria Experimental Network Under the Sea), a coastal cabled ocean observatory between Victoria and Vancouver, British Columbia. After several years of careful planning and preparation, VENUS launched in 2006.

VENUS

What makes VENUS unique is that it is located in two different scientifically interesting coastal settings. One is a glacially carved fiord setting in the Saanich Inlet and the other is in the Strait of Georgia, a very busy human-use corridor between Vancouver and Victoria that is impacted by the Fraser River delta. VENUS provides three research hubs, including one where more than 50 instruments powered by undersea nodes feed a constant stream of data to the UVic database. The instrument readings travel from their respective locations along 44 kilometres of fibre optic cable straight onto the Internet for anyone in the world to use.

NEPTUNE

Following the success of VENUS the installation of NEPTUNE (North-East Pacific Time-series Undersea Networked Experiments) was not far behind. While VENUS covers a significant and important smaller coastal system, NEPTUNE is a huge network that extends from the west coast of Vancouver Island out into the sea. In fact, 800 kilometres of fibre optic cable stretch out in a massive circle from the base station in Port Alberni into the Pacific Ocean. Five 13-tonne nodes feed power to over 400 instruments and sensors located in water ranging in depth from 100 metres along the coast to 2 660 metres out in the deeper ocean.

Ocean scientists are able to conduct experiments along the coast at Folger Passage as well as gather data from the edge of the Juan de Fuca tectonic plate at NEPTUNE's Endeavour site. All this can be done remotely from anywhere in

Did you know . . .

Gas hydrates—natural gas and water frozen together into a solid substance—are common in arctic permafrost regions and in sediments in the ocean's deep waters. Research is now underway to better understand the issues around this vast, untapped resource: how natural gas hydrates form, where they are located, and how they could be used as a future source of natural gas.

the world via the Internet. NEPTUNE is really in its infancy; it came online only in December 2009. Ocean scientists are just starting to see NEPTUNE's true potential, and plans are underway in different jurisdictions around the world to build similar cabled networks.

Ocean Networks Canada

The ingenuity and innovation behind the scientific success of VENUS and NEPTUNE are complemented by the equally creative leadership work of Ocean Networks Canada (ONC), which it put into place in 2007 to help build and sustain Canada's world leadership in ocean science and technology.

Experienced university researchers have seen many projects disintegrate due to unproductive rivalries and poor planning.

ONC works as the umbrella organization that keeps VENUS and NEPTUNE on track and provides leadership and support to ensure these observatories bring maximum economic and social benefits to Canada and its international partners. In other words, both projects can function independently while focusing on their research objectives.

Ocean Networks Centre for Enterprise and Engagement

To complement the work of ONC, Ocean Networks Centre for Enterprise and Engagement (ONCEE) was founded in the spring of 2009. ONCEE's mandate is to work with governments and businesses to highlight the economic

benefits of VENUS and NEPTUNE. Both projects are so unique that politicians and business people might need some guidance in realizing the true benefits of what these ocean observation systems have to offer. For example, NEPTUNE is equipped with seismic monitoring equipment and can detect oceanic earthquakes and corresponding tsunamis. Governments would be very interested in this critical public safety information.

NEPTUNE is also studying things like natural gas hydrates which, if handled correctly, could prove to be a source of energy in the future. This is obviously of interest to businesses, as humans continue to consume more and more of Earth's energy resources.

The whole point of explaining the overall organization behind VENUS and NEPTUNE is to demonstrate that things don't just happen because someone has a good idea. Progress happens because a good idea is combined with planning and perseverance. If the Canadian and British Columbia governments, scientists, and technological partners hadn't been willing to bring VENUS and NEPTUNE to life through creativity and hard work, Canada would not be the international leader in ocean science that it has become. Just 10 years after its conception, both projects are living up to their mandate and are transforming ocean science.

Source: Ocean Networks Canada – www.oceannetworks.ca

To Consider

1. How is VENUS different from NEPTUNE? Provide at least three differences.
2. Why is ONC so important in maintaining the success of VENUS and NEPTUNE?
3. What is the mandate of ONCEE?
4. This section uses a number of descriptors in its opening sentence to describe NEPTUNE. Do you think these descriptors accurately describe NEPTUNE Canada?

CANADA'S AMAZING NEPTUNE PROJECT

NEPTUNE Canada: A Snapshot

What is NEPTUNE?

NEPTUNE stands for North-East Pacific Time-series Undersea Networked Experiments. The separate parts of this acronym are explained below:

North-East Pacific: This identifies the project's location off the coast of Vancouver Island, British Columbia, in the northeastern part of the Pacific Ocean.

Time-series: NEPTUNE will provide on-demand, real-time information for researchers for at least the next 25 years.

Undersea: NEPTUNE's instruments will take up permanent residence in the north-east Pacific Ocean operating at depths ranging from just under 20 metres to just over 2 600 metres.

Networked: 800 kilometres of fibre optic cable connect to a series of nodes stretching from the Port Alberni shore station out to the edge of the Juan de Fuca tectonic plate. The nodes deliver the power and manage the data from the over 400 instruments and sensors spread out like tentacles at NEPTUNE's five locations.

Experiments: In an act of remarkable scientific generosity, NEPTUNE has agreed to provide unfettered access to its undersea observatory. This means that innumerable scientific experiments can occur simultaneously via the NEPTUNE network.

Visiting NEPTUNE

Close your eyes and imagine you are taking a ride along the ocean floor in order to visit NEPTUNE Canada, here's what you would find:

- Folger Passage (17–100 metres below the ocean surface)

Initially you will travel from the shore station at Port Alberni and begin your submarine expedition beneath the sea in Barkley Sound. The first stop on your journey will be the Folger Passage research area. In this zone, you will find two arrays of instruments—one set on the seafloor 95 metres deep, and another on a rock pinnacle 17 metres below the ocean's surface. The instruments plug into a 13-tonne node that powers the equipment and receives and transmits data. The Folger Passage site examines biodiversity and marine life on the continental shelf.

- ODP 889 (1 260 metres below the ocean surface)

Next you will travel along the continental shelf, departing the relative comfort of Folger Passage, moving to the mid-point of the continental slope 1 260 metres below the ocean's surface. Eventually you will encounter another research hub, marking your arrival at ODP 889. The instruments that branch off the node are designed to measure seismic events, monitor gas hydrate distribution, and look for areas where the slope has collapsed.

- Endeavour (2 300 metres below the ocean surface)

Continuing your voyage you will travel out into the deep sea and visit the research site at Endeavour Mid-Ocean Ridge. NEPTUNE ocean scientists see this as one of the most exciting places to study. Endeavour Ridge is located about 300 kilometres from the British Columbia coast and has been a place of intense study since the mid 1980s.

Quote

"It's like landing on another planet, constantly disturbed by volcanic activity. No light ever reaches these depths. Crushing pressure and extreme temperature near these black smokers make it one of the most unwelcoming places on Earth."

— Frédéric Zalac, CBC reporter, describing Endeavour Ridge

You will find instruments located on the expanding boundary between the Juan de Fuca and Pacific tectonic plates that features hydrothermal vents. A hydrothermal vent forms when fissures open on the seafloor, causing the release of hot, mineral-rich water. Researchers at the Endeavour site study this hydrothermal vent activity as well as earthquakes and tectonic processes.

- ODP 1027 (2 660 metres below the ocean surface)

After you visit Endeavour Ridge you will make your way back toward land, winding up in the middle of the abyssal plain. ODP 1027 (Ocean Drilling Program drill hole) is at the mid-point of the Juan de Fuca tectonic plate at a depth of 2 660 metres deep. Instruments that

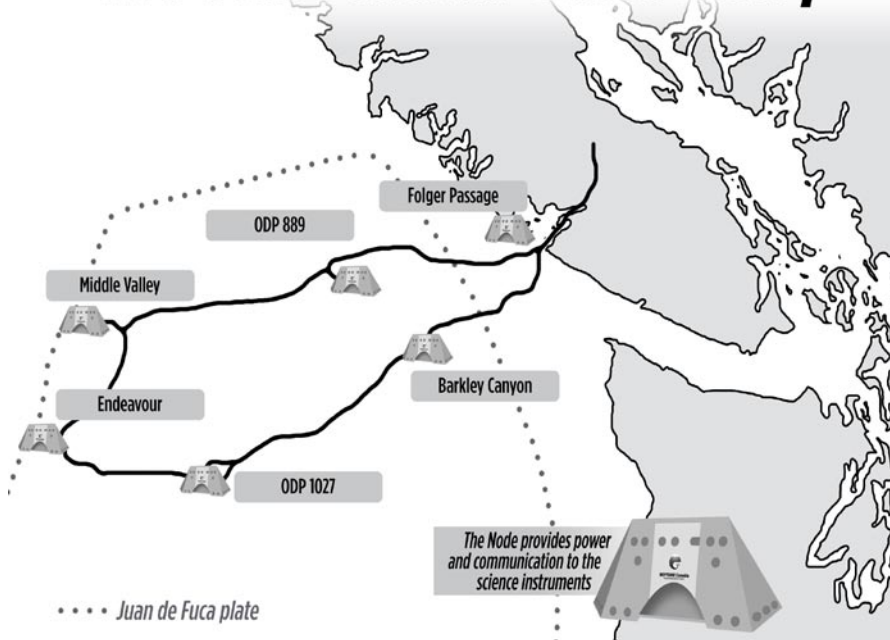
branch off this node take measurements related to temperature and pressure. They also provide earthquake- and tsunami-detection readings.

- Barkley Canyon (400-653 metres below the ocean surface)

You are almost home. Your final stop will be at Barkley Canyon, where you will find a lively ecosystem consisting of fish, marine mammals, and plankton. One of the technological strengths of this NEPTUNE research area is a mobile instrument platform called the Vertical Profiler System (VPS). The base of the VPS is situated on the sea floor. A tethered float can be raised and lowered from the platform via a winch, which allows scientists to measure activity from the sea floor 400 metres down up to the ocean surface. The VPS facilitates the monitoring of things like temperature, salinity, plankton and fish clusters, and marine mammal movement. Gas (methane) hydrate deposits outcrop in the walls of the canyon, and NEPTUNE is deploying a rover, like an all-terrain vehicle, hosting many instruments controlled through a powered tether to investigate how such deposits are formed.

Source: NEPTUNE Canada – <http://neptunecanada.ca>

NEPTUNE Canada Observatory



Activity

Visit the NEPTUNE Web site (<http://neptunecanada.ca>) and click on the links to the five locations listed above. Make a list of instruments used at each location and the research being conducted at each site. Create a chart that shows the information you were able to discover.

CANADA'S AMAZING NEPTUNE PROJECT

NEPTUNE and the Global Ocean

Quote

"Right now we have something in the order of 200 000 to 300 000 species that have been encountered in the ocean. Some people estimate there are six million or more species in the deep sea." — Kim Juniper, oceanographer, University of Victoria

Did you know . . .

NEPTUNE Canada is considered to be one of four groundbreaking science initiatives in Canada. NEPTUNE joins Canadian Light Source at University of Saskatchewan, Triumph at the University of British Columbia, and the Sudbury Neutrino Observatory.

To say that NEPTUNE Canada is studying a tiny portion of the Pacific Ocean is a bit misleading. Increasingly scientists are referring to the global ocean—an amalgam of Earth's five oceans—because of the way ocean currents interconnect. In reality, what happens in the Pacific Ocean has an effect on the Arctic and the Atlantic oceans as well. In other words, all oceans really connect into one global ocean.

Based on this premise, consider the following:

- the global ocean contains 80 per cent of all life on Earth, most of which remains undiscovered
- close to 250 000 marine species have been identified
- the global ocean contains 97 per cent of Earth's water
- ocean scientists have only managed to study five per cent of the deep sea
- every second breath a human takes comes from oxygen generated from the part the ocean plays in the oxygen-carbon cycle

The Impact of Climate Change

We often associate climate change with the circulation of polluted air. However, the air we breathe is actually intricately linked to the global ocean. The climate change facts are clear: the last 25 years have featured the warmest years on record, with the world's average surface temperature increasing by 0.7° C over the past 100 years. Experts predict a further one to six degree rise in the next century. The warming of the air is contributing to the warming of the oceans, which is causing some wild weather patterns. Of even more concern is that the addition of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere is

being transferred to the oceans, causing acidification. Climate change has become a major global concern—and the health of the global ocean has risen to paramount importance.

Canada's Role

With the world's largest coastline, Canada has a significant interest in becoming a global leader in ocean research. VENUS and NEPTUNE are evidence that Canada is taking this role seriously, with both projects being described as the most innovative ocean observatories in the world. Meanwhile, Canadian ocean scientists know that the ocean is our greatest ally in the climate change struggle. While human activity has led to a 25 per cent increase in carbon dioxide in the air, the ocean continues to protect us by absorbing almost half of that amount.

How long this will remain the case is unclear, and the increasing ocean acidification and its effects on many species is a growing concern. What is clear is the fact that NEPTUNE in particular can provide a snapshot into the behaviour, health, and future of the global ocean. A study in gas hydrates at Barkley Canyon can lead to hypotheses that have global implications. Ocean warming trends measured by instruments at ODP 889 can serve as a predictor for other temperature changes in the global ocean. And long-term ecosystem analysis by NEPTUNE's vertical profiler system at Barkley Canyon can certainly provide vital information regarding the health of species living in the global ocean.

NEPTUNE promises to provide state-of-the-art research covering the following areas over the next 25 years and beyond:

- undersea volcanic processes
- earthquakes and tsunamis
- minerals, metals, and hydrocarbons
- ocean-atmosphere interactions
- climate change
- greenhouse gas cycling in the ocean
- marine ecosystems
- long-term changes in ocean productivity

- marine mammals
- fish stocks
- pollution and toxic blooms

How can advanced research in any of these areas be anything but good for humanity?

Source: NEPTUNE Canada – <http://neptunecanada.ca>

To Consider

1. What is meant by the expression *global ocean*?
2. Why is it in Canada's best interest to become a leader in ocean science research?
3. How has Canada positioned itself to be a leader in ocean science research?
4. Rank the research areas listed at the end of this section from most important to least important. Explain the rationale behind your top ranking and bottom ranking.

CANADA'S AMAZING NEPTUNE PROJECT

Activity: Web Site Exploration

Activity Choices

You have a choice between two different activities. Review both options and select the one that best suits your learning style. Both options involve a writing task.

- Activity 1 is an exercise in following instructions and navigating a Web site.
- Activity 2 is more open-ended but also involves exploring a Web site.

Activity 1: Become an Ocean Scientist

Step One: Log on

Go to the NEPTUNE Canada Web site (www.neptunecanada.ca) and create an account. You will need a valid e-mail address to register.

Once you have registered, go to the home page and click on DATA EXPLORER. Once you get to this page, you will need to register again since this is a separate application. Use the same username and password.

Step Two: Play Ocean Scientist

Once you are logged onto NEPTUNE's Ocean 2.0 program, you'll see a list of instrument headings and the DATA SEARCH instructions. Review the data search instructions and then start playing with the data.

Here's an example:

1. Go to the TEMPERATURE SENSOR option and click on the A.G.O. TEMPERATURE PROBES. A screen will pop up that shows you an illustration of the probe and a map showing where the probes are deployed. Click on the picture and the map for a closer look. Make note of where the probes are deployed.
2. Next click on MORE INFO. Work your way through the tabs and make special note of the NAMEPLATE and HISTORY information. The NAMEPLATE will tell you what the probe is measuring. Keep in mind that a lot of the information will not mean much to you since you are not an actual ocean scientist—but it is fun to look at nonetheless.
3. Now it's time to play with the NEPTUNE instruments.
 - a) You'll see a START DATE and END DATE option. Click on the calendars and pick a one-week period to study.
 - b) Next click on *any two temperature probes* (for example, 6957-T1, 6958-T2) in the TIME SERIES SCALAR PLOT column. These reports generate relatively quickly, and that's why we are selecting them.
 - c) Next, click on the GENERATE RESULTS button. Either download the results onto your computer or click on the document and take a look at what you created. Once again, the data aren't going to mean much to you unless you have a background in ocean science, but at the very least you are getting an idea of how ocean scientists gather their information.

You will also get an idea of how cold or warm the water is based on your knowledge of temperatures.

Feel free to keep playing with the data and the NEPTUNE instruments.

Final Task

When you are finished exploring, write a 150–300 word reflection of what you discovered when you visited the NEPTUNE Canada Web site and played the role of ocean scientist. Be sure to comment on what you found interesting and surprising.

Activity 2: NEPTUNE Canada Scavenger Hunt

Step one: Visit NEPTUNE Canada

Go to the NEPTUNE Canada Web site (www.neptunecanada.ca).

Step Two: Find the Info

Navigate the site and find the following information:

1. NEPTUNE is an acronym for . . .
2. NEPTUNE's slogan is . . .
3. Name five (5) things that NEPTUNE studies.
4. NEPTUNE is located on which tectonic plate?
5. The five NEPTUNE node locations are . . .
6. The deepest NEPTUNE node is located how many metres below the ocean surface?
7. NEPTUNE's sister project is called . . .
8. NEPTUNE runs under the umbrella of which organization?
9. The university that runs NEPTUNE is . . .
10. NEPTUNE's shore station is located in which city?
11. Name five (5) types of instruments that NEPTUNE uses.
12. DMAS stands for . . .

Final Task

Use the information you gathered to write a 150–300 word news report on how NEPTUNE Canada is transforming ocean science.

News in Review Index

A list of the stories covered last season and to date in the current season is provided below.

The complete chronological index for all 19 seasons of *News in Review*, and a subject-oriented index listing *News in Review* stories appropriate for various subject areas can be accessed through our Web site at <http://newsinreview.cbclearning.ca>. Hard copies of these indexes can also be obtained by contacting CBC Learning.

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