**Type of Article:** Feature

**Title:** Canadian Soldier’s Good Work Helps Foster Education for Afghan Kids

**Author:** Bill Graveland

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**Synopsis:** Graveland writes about the Sayad Pacha school in Kandahar, Afghanistan, which has been set up by a group of Canadian soldiers and civilians. The article conjures up, in some details, cliched images of a traumatized, war-torn country struggling to be civilized. The writer states that the school is open to girls and goes on to remind us of the restrictions faced by women in Afghan society.

However, unlike many commentators on the subject, Graveland acknowledges the enormous role played in the country’s devastation by the Soviet invasion. In other commentaries on Afghanistan, the reader is often led to conclude that Afghanistan’s devastation has been caused by the nature of its society and culture.

**Quotes:**

“The open courtyard, where a shiny new hand pump and drinking well are on display, is surrounded by classrooms and hallways that echo with the sounds of children learning - a rarity in a dirt-poor country scarred by constant conflict.”

“Sayad Pacha hosts some 520 students, a significant percentage of which are young women - a rarity in many areas of ultra-conservative southern Afghanistan, the spiritual home of the Taliban.”

“The gravel-strewn school yard, surrounded by chain-link fence and topped with razor-sharp barbed wire, doesn't look like much, but it's the product of years of backbreaking work: it had to be cleared of countless landmines, a legacy of the Soviet occupation of the 1980s.”