

# Table of Contents

<u>Who will be Canada's next defence chief?; Analyst says don't expect another Rick Hillier as next top soldier.....</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>General in the house.....</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>Don't expect another Hillier: defence analyst.....</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>'It's a dark day for us to be losing him'; Colleagues react to Hillier stepping down.....</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>Right from the Cod.....</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>News of Hillier's departure 'dark day'.....</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>Premier takes swipe at PM over Hillier's departure.....</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>Hillier's departure 'dark day' for troops; Soldiers stationed in Kandahar upset with departure of the head man of forces.....</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>Hillier the driving force on policy.....</u>	<u>12</u>
<u>Celebrity generals like Hillier nothing to celebrate.....</u>	<u>14</u>
<u>Don't expect another Hillier, says defence analyst.....</u>	<u>16</u>
<u>N.L. premier takes swipe at PM while commenting on Hillier's departure.....</u>	<u>18</u>
<u>The Canadian Press News Budget for Wednesday, April 16, 2008.....</u>	<u>19</u>
<u>'Dark day' in Kandahar as soldiers learn of Hillier's imminent retirement.....</u>	<u>22</u>
<u>The Canadian Press News Agenda for Thursday, April 17.....</u>	<u>25</u>
<u>BC-Cda-News-Digest.....</u>	<u>32</u>
<u>The Canadian Press World News Budget – Wednesday, April 16, 2008.....</u>	<u>35</u>
<u>--Ninth NewsWatch--.....</u>	<u>37</u>
<u>The Canadian Press News Agenda for Thursday, April 17.....</u>	<u>39</u>
<u>TOR OUT YYY.....</u>	<u>46</u>
<u>INDEX:Defence, International, Politics.....</u>	<u>48</u>
<u>TOR OUT YYY.....</u>	<u>49</u>

# Table of Contents

<u>INDEX:Politics, Defence.....</u>	<u>51</u>
<u>TOR OUT YYY.....</u>	<u>52</u>
<u>TOR OUT YYY.....</u>	<u>54</u>
<u>--Twentieth NewsWatch--.....</u>	<u>56</u>
<u>--Tenth NewsWatch--.....</u>	<u>58</u>
<u>INDEX:Advisories.....</u>	<u>60</u>
<u>--Eighth NewsWatch--.....</u>	<u>62</u>
<u>INDEX:Defence, Politics.....</u>	<u>64</u>
<u>PM faces challenges on foreign affairs file.....</u>	<u>65</u>
<u>Hillier ideal model.....</u>	<u>67</u>
<u>Retiring general hailed as hero.....</u>	<u>68</u>
<u>As defender of the truth, Rick Hillier earned respect on all sides; Canada's top general accomplished his mission, and will be hard to replace.....</u>	<u>70</u>
<u>Stand and salute General Hillier.....</u>	<u>73</u>
<u>Troops see Hillier as inspiration; 'He's a personal hero of mine,' soldier says.....</u>	<u>75</u>
<u>Hillier exit hits troops hard.....</u>	<u>77</u>
<u>Four-star superstar Gen. Rick Hillier's blunt style won the trust of Canadians.....</u>	<u>78</u>
<u>Four-star superstar Gen. Rick Hillier's blunt style won the trust of Canadians.....</u>	<u>80</u>
<u>Hillier exit hits troops hard.....</u>	<u>82</u>
<u>Life and career.....</u>	<u>83</u>
<u>Quote.....</u>	<u>84</u>
<u>Troops lament loss of departing Hillier.....</u>	<u>85</u>
<u>Motive for Tory office raids a head-scratcher.....</u>	<u>87</u>
<u>Hillier exit hits troops hard.....</u>	<u>89</u>

# Table of Contents

<u>Four–star superstar Gen. Rick Hillier's blunt style won the trust of Canadians</u> .....	90
<u>Letters to the Editor Column</u> .....	92
<u>With 'em to the end Sens Army maintain support despite team's poor performance</u> .....	94
<u>Hillier's style won our trust</u> .....	96
<u>Hillier exit hits troops hard</u> .....	98
<u>Four–star superstar Gen. Rick Hillier's blunt style won the trust of Canadians</u> .....	99
<u>Edmonton soldiers honoured by Governor General</u> .....	101
<u>Four–star superstar Gen. Rick Hillier's blunt style won the trust of Canadians</u> .....	103
<u>Hillier exit hits troops hard</u> .....	105
<u>Groundhog Day on the Hill: repeating the same mistakes</u> .....	106
<u>Almost enough to lower the flag</u> .....	108
<u>Hillier left lasting impression on troops in Afghanistan; General 'is personal hero of mine'. Obtained more funding for equipment</u> .....	109
<u>Gen. Hillier; A legacy of accomplishment</u> .....	111
<u>RICK HILLIER'S REPLACEMENT Picking our top soldier is a rather casual affair The Afghan backdrop may concentrate the PM's mind</u> .....	112
<u>Goodbye to a general</u> .....	114
<u>Goodbye to a general</u> .....	115
<u>Goodbye to a general</u> .....	116
<u>THE AFGHAN MISSION: MILITARY ADVERTISEMENTS Latest Canadian Forces ads omit Afghan mission New commercials depict domestic operations with no reference to overseas combat; critics suggest Tories playing down controversy</u> .....	117
<u>THIS COUNTRY: HOCKEY: SENATORS As the Peace Tower clock strikes midnight, there's no tomorrow for Sens</u> .....	119
<u>The folly of 'soft power'</u> .....	122
<u>'This country needs defenders of values and valour'</u> .....	124

# Table of Contents

<u>'This country needs defenders of values and valour'.....</u>	125
<u>The RCMP came knocking, but call it even.....</u>	126
<u>Hillier hangs up his helmetMilitary chief applauded for being candid.....</u>	128
<u>A soldier's soldierGen. Rick Hillier will be sorely missed by troops and civilians.....</u>	130

# Who will be Canada's next defence chief?; Analyst says don't expect another Rick Hillier as next top soldier

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**DATE:** 2008.04.17  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** C9  
**BYLINE:** THE CANADIAN PRESS  
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**WORD COUNT:** 416

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Canada's next top military commander will have some big boots to fill, but defence observers say whoever gets Gen. Rick Hillier's job will likely have to walk softly.

The new chief of defence staff will inherit an incomplete war in Afghanistan, fragile public support for the mission, a military only part of the way through rebuilding for 21st Century realities, and a minority Conservative government obsessed with political messaging.

Much has been made of the nimble way Hillier moved between the political minefields in Ottawa and the battlefields of Kandahar.

Along the way, his take-no-prisoners style made him political enemies, and analysts say the recruiting criteria for a new defence chief will no doubt include some clear marching orders.

"This government will try to make it pretty clear to the successor, whoever that might be, that they want someone who is going to conduct their dialogue with the government in a much less public fashion," said David Bercuson, a military and political historian at the University of Calgary.

"It really just doesn't suit the style of this government to have a senior military leader having the ability — or the feeling — that he has the freedom to speak publicly to the extent Hillier probably has done.

"I just can't see this government letting that go."

The name most often mentioned at the moment for the top job is Lt.-Gen. Walter Natynczyk, currently the vice-chief of defence staff.

A former tank officer and commander of the Royal Canadian Dragoons, he is a bit of an enigma to the public and political side of Ottawa, mostly because of his time overseas, which recently included a stint with the U.S. Army as a corp commander in Iraq.

"We like that guy," said one Conservative insider, who noted Natynczyk's ability to fly below the radar, but still get things done.

Both Lt.-Gen. Michel Gauthier, the current commander of all Canadian overseas expeditionary forces, and Lt.-Gen. Andrew Leslie, the head of the army, are also considered contenders.

Who will be Canada's next defence chief?; Analyst says don't expect another Rick Hillier as next top soldier

Leslie was short-listed for the top job in 2005, but former Prime Minister Paul Martin picked Hillier because of the Newfoundlander's forceful personality and views.

Both the chief of the air staff, Lt.-Gen. Angus Watt, and the head of the navy, Vice-Admiral Drew Robertson could also make the replacement list.

Hillier downplayed his disagreements with the Conservative government in announcing his July 1 retirement, and said he retained the full confidence of Prime Minister Stephen Harper.

He said most of his battles were with the bureaucracy.

In many of his public speeches, Hillier has often talked about the need to "speak truth to power" and it is precisely that quality that Bercuson says is at the heart of the general's magic.

It also the attribute that is most endangered, especially when it comes to the war in Afghanistan.

"He was not a CDS who was seen as serving the needs of his political masters, but was representing the men and women of the Forces," said Bercuson.

Who will be Canada's next defence chief?; Analyst says don't expect another Rick Hillier as next top soldier

# General in the house

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**PUBLICATION:** The Telegram (St. John's)  
**DATE:** 2008.04.17  
**SECTION:** Sports  
**PAGE:** C3  
**ILLUSTRATION:** Canada's Chief of Defence Staff General Rick Hillier (right) from Newfoundland gets honoured during the Ottawa Senators –Pittsburgh Penguins Game 4 of NHL Stanley Cup playofs at the Scotiabank Place in Ottawa on Wednesday. Ottawa Senators owner Eugene Melnyk applauds to his left. – Photo by The Canadian Press

# Don't expect another Hillier: defence analyst

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**PUBLICATION:** The Telegram (St. John's)  
**DATE:** 2008.04.17  
**SECTION:** National/World  
**PAGE:** A9  
**SOURCE:** THE CANADIAN PRESS  
**BYLINE:** Murray Brewster  
**DATELINE:** OTTAWA  
**ILLUSTRATION:** Rick Hillier  
**WORD COUNT:** 306

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Canada's next top military commander will have some big boots to fill, but defence observers say whoever gets Gen. Rick Hillier's job will likely have to walk softly.

The new chief of the defence staff will inherit an incomplete war in Afghanistan, fragile public support for the mission, a military only part of the way through rebuilding for 21st-century realities, and a minority Conservative government obsessed with political messaging. Much has been made of the nimble way Hillier moved between the political minefields in Ottawa and the battlefields of Kandahar.

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# 'It's a dark day for us to be losing him'; Colleagues react to Hillier stepping down

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**PUBLICATION:** Kingston Whig–Standard (ON)  
**DATE:** 2008.04.17  
**SECTION:** National/World  
**PAGE:** B2  
**SOURCE:** The Canadian Press  
**BYLINE:** James McCarten  
**DATELINE:** KANDAHAR, Afghanistan  
**ILLUSTRATION:** Hillier: Leaving post in July.  
**WORD COUNT:** 671

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Canadian soldiers at Kandahar Airfield marked a "dark day" yesterday as they awoke to news that Gen. Rick Hillier, the popular, populist leader many consider the principal architect of Canada's mission in Afghanistan, was stepping down as chief of defence staff.

Word of Hillier's departure – he confirmed Tuesday he would be stepping down in July after more than three years in Canada's top military job – seemed to be on the lips of every soldier in a uniform with a Canadian flag on the shoulder.

Lt.-Col. Dan Drew, deputy commander of Canada's Operational Mentor and Liason Team, which trains members of the Afghan National Army, described Hillier as a "personal hero" who won't be easily replaced. Hillier almost single-handedly breathed fresh life into a Canadian military that had been robbed of its resources and its sense of value, said Drew, 50, a no-nonsense commander from Medicine Hat, Alta.

"He took us out of the dark ages of the 1990s and reshaped us, reformed us, made us proud to be who we are, and he made the Canadian people know who we are and to be proud of us again," Drew said.

"We're more focused on operations now, we care more about our own people, and Gen. Hillier's the guy who led us out of that darkness." Drew called Hillier the best chief of defence staff since "J-Dex" – Gen. Jacques Dextraze, a Canadian Army general who served from 1972 to 1977.

"It's a dark day for us to be losing him," he said.

Despite Hillier's persistent denial he has any designs on a political posting, Drew said he considers him worthy of the top job in the land.

"There's only one Gen. Hillier, so whomever's coming in behind him's going to have a tough job – I'm thinking Hillier for prime minister next," he smiled.

Hillier, 52, was the most visible Canadian Forces leader in a generation, a blunt, straight-talking "soldier's soldier" who showed visible affection for the "soldiers, sailors, airmen and airwomen" under his command and constant admiration for their work.

His visits to Afghanistan were frequent, as much to bolster the morale of the members of the rank and file as to meet with senior commanders.

Twice within a year, most recently last month, Hillier arrived at the airfield with a squad of retired hockey players and the Stanley Cup in tow, talking trash in advance of a ball-hockey showdown with soldiers and boasting of a Cup win by his beloved Toronto Maple Leafs. "The Taliban have been closer to the Stanley Cup than the Maple Leafs," he liked to crack.

Along the Kandahar Airfield boardwalk, just down the way from the ever-popular Tim Hortons outlet where the gleaming trophy has twice been on display, Master Cpl. Bob Gaudet was among a group of soldiers talking about Hillier's departure.

"He's been fantastic for the military," said Gaudet, 40, originally from Moncton, N.B. "I've been in 20 years, and he's done wonders for us. He is one of the pinnacle figures in the Canadian Forces that is going to be missed. He's done a lot for us."

Drew said one of Hillier's most important accomplishments has been to fundamentally change how the Canadian Forces treats its injured members and the families of those who are killed in action.

Jim Davis, whose son, Cpl. Paul Davis, died in a light armoured vehicle accident in Afghanistan in 2006, echoed that sentiment.

Davis was one of eight family members who arrived Tuesday at Kandahar Airfield for a first-hand look, arranged by the Canadian Forces, at the country where his son lost his life.

"Gen. Hillier told me once that he wanted to make sure the families are taken care of and looked after, and I think this is proof of that, this is the result of that," Davis said of the trip.

"The soldiers here are welcoming us with open arms to make sure we are comfortable and I think the Canadian military has gone overboard to make sure that grieving families are not forgotten."

Master Cpl. Brad McCaughey, 36, with the National Command Element, said news of Hillier's departure came as a blow to many soldiers.

He said he was proud to have served under Hillier, who did an "amazing job" during his time as chief of defence staff.

"We were very fortunate that we had him for the time we had," McCaughey said, "and I hope that whomever follows suit does as equal a job as he did."

# Right from the Cod

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Chronicle–Herald  
**DATE:** 2008.04.17  
**SECTION:** Editorial  
**PAGE:** A10  
**WORD COUNT:** 347

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LAST YEAR, the prime minister's office felt obliged to tell Canada's blunt-spoken and popular chief of defence staff he wasn't the chief spokesman for the mission to Afghanistan.

That didn't fool anyone. Constitutional niceties aside, in his three years as CDS, General Rick Hillier has come to be widely regarded and highly respected as a top soldier who will speak plainly and honestly – both for the men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces and to the Canadian public. What he talked about mattered: the realities of risking your life to fight terrorists and what you need from the folks back home by way of moral support, proper equipment, a clear mission and an understanding of tactics and the enemy.

Does this forceful openness, and his Newfoundland touch for the irreverently unforgettable phrase, make the "Big Cod" a political general? Yes, but only in a proper and admirable way. He's not the type who has accumulated stars by telling political bosses what they wanted to hear or trimming his advice to suit the party in power. Rather, this is a soldier who has the political smarts and courage to tell his civilian bosses and the public what they need to know if they're going to make informed political choices on where and how to deploy Forces personnel.

The results speak for themselves. In announcing his retirement this week, Gen. Hillier leaves the Armed Forces with better equipment, stronger morale and a higher standing among our allies and with the Canadian public than they have had for decades.

He'd be the first to say this isn't all his doing. Canadians in uniform have earned our respect by their outstanding performance – or as Gen. Hillier once quipped, visiting the troops in Afghanistan always improved his morale. But a commander who cut through the old snail's-pace procurement and was not afraid to be their public champion was an invaluable advance in military leadership. Well done, Big Cod.

# News of Hillier's departure "dark day"

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Chronicle–Herald  
**DATE:** 2008.04.17  
**SECTION:** World  
**PAGE:** A3  
**SOURCE:** The Canadian Press  
**BYLINE:** James McCarten  
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KANDAHAR, Afghanistan – Canadian soldiers at Kandahar Airfield marked a "dark day" Wednesday as they awoke to news that Gen. Rick Hillier, the popular, populist leader many consider the principal architect of Canada's mission in Afghanistan, was stepping down as chief of defence staff.

Word of Hillier's departure – he confirmed Tuesday he would be stepping down in July after more than three years in Canada's top military job – seemed to be on the lips of every soldier in a uniform with a Canadian flag on the shoulder.

Lt.-Col. Dan Drew, deputy commander of Canada's Operational Mentor and Liason Team, which trains members of the Afghan National Army, described Hillier as a "personal hero" who won't be easily replaced. Hillier almost single-handedly breathed fresh life into a Canadian military that had been robbed of its resources and its sense of value, said Drew, 50, a no-nonsense commander from Medicine Hat, Alta.

"He took us out of the dark ages of the 1990s and reshaped us, reformed us, made us proud to be who we are, and he made the Canadian people know who we are and to be proud of us again," Drew said.

"We're more focused on operations now, we care more about our own people, and Gen. Hillier's the guy who led us out of that darkness." Drew called Hillier the best chief of defence staff since "J-Dex" – Gen. Jacques Dextraze, a Canadian army general who served from 1972 to 1977. "It's a dark day for us to be losing him."

Despite Hillier's persistent denial he has any designs on a political posting, Drew said he considers him worthy of the top job in the land.

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# Premier takes swipe at PM over Hillier's departure

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**DATE:** 2008.04.17

**SECTION:** Canada/Atlantic

**PAGE:** B5

**COLUMN:** Across the region

**DATELINE:** ST. JOHN'S, N.L.

**WORD COUNT:** 65

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Newfoundland and Labrador Premier Danny Williams isn't known for mincing words when it comes to dealing with Ottawa.

He even found a way Tuesday to take a shot at Prime Minister Stephen Harper when asked about the departure of Chief of Defence Staff, Gen. Rick Hillier, a native Newfoundlander.

Referring to the prime minister as Steve, Williams said Hillier had his full understanding.

"Well I wouldn't be able to work for Steve either," Williams told reporters.

"He (Hillier) has done an outstanding job but you know he's got a difficult boss."

# Hillier's departure "dark day" for troops; Soldiers stationed in Kandahar upset with departure of the head man of forces

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**PUBLICATION:** The Guardian (Charlottetown)

**DATE:** 2008.04.17

**SECTION:** Canada/Atlantic

**PAGE:** B5

**SOURCE:** The Canadian Press

**DATELINE:** KANDAHAR, Afghanistan

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# Hillier the driving force on policy

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**PUBLICATION:** The Guardian (Charlottetown)

**DATE:** 2008.04.17

**SECTION:** Opinion

**PAGE:** A7

**COLUMN:** National analysis

**BYLINE:** Hébert, Chantal

**DATELINE:** Ottawa

**WORD COUNT:** 600

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When historians ponder how Canada came to trade decades of soft diplomacy on the international stage for an indefinite spell of military activism in the early years of the 21st century, they should look to the retiring Rick Hillier rather than the two prime ministers he served under.

Over his three-year watch as top soldier, Hillier emerged as the driving force behind the remodelling of Canada's foreign policy – a military commander with a more focused view of Canada's potential role in the post 9/11 world and sharper communication skills than his successive political masters.

On that score, the main difference between Paul Martin and Stephen Harper is that the first had to be talked into the more muscular Canadian role Hillier craved for in Afghanistan while the second embraced it with gusto.

At times, the line between politics and the military became uncomfortably thin. Hillier dwarfed every minister he served under and, under the Conservatives, the Department of National Defence he operated in came to overtake Foreign Affairs as the top venue for articulating Canadian foreign policy.

Part of this ascendancy was not of Hillier's own making but rather the product of volatile political times. He might not have exerted the same influence under the more sure-footed, more stable governments of Jean Chrétien or, for that matter, Brian Mulroney.

In the end, Hillier filled a succession of providential vacuums, serving first under a government preoccupied with a domestic scandal of corrosive proportions and then under a rookie regime whose leader brought more military instincts than foreign policy knowledge to the job.

He is so far the only public servant who can claim to have disposed of the career of a Harper minister. Under the current regime, the reverse is usually the case. In this instance, though, Gordon O'Connor has been seen but rarely heard from since he was shuffled out of the defence portfolio last summer.

A weaker chief-of-defence staff might have foundered under uncertain or distracted political bosses, but Hillier ultimately thrived in an environment of ministerial mediocrity and, as it happens, he never lacked for it.

That was demonstrated with the latest and most colossal public blunder to date of accident-prone Maxime Bernier. His public musings about the removal of the Afghan governor of Kandahar province this week set back months of behind-the-scenes diplomacy.

Not all of Canada's foreign affairs ministers have been Pearsonian in stature, but it is the first time that a government has one whom it should seriously consider grounding in Ottawa.



For Harper, Hillier's departure comes at a logical point in the cycle, with the politics of the Afghan deployment if not the policy itself in relative order. The prospect of taking Hillier on, even if only by proxy, in an election certainly weighed in the Liberal decision to seek common ground with the Tories to extend the mission to 2011 rather than campaign to take the troops out of Kandahar next year.

There will be many in the government who will not be sorry to see the media-savvy Hillier go. But government strategists should be wary that they have not seen the last of him. In contrast with senior civil servants, retired generals do not always fade quietly into the night. The sustained media presence of former military luminaries such as Roméo Dallaire and Lewis MacKenzie is a reminder that they sometimes have a fruitful second life as self-appointed government consciences.

As he ponders Hillier's succession, early indications are that Harper will not lack for competent choices. If only the prime minister could say as much about his cabinet options.

Chantal Hébert is a national affairs columnist. Copyright 2008 Torstar Syndication Services.

# Celebrity generals like Hillier nothing to celebrate

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**SECTION:** Comment  
**PAGE:** A10  
**BYLINE:** Paul Willcocks  
**SOURCE:** Times Colonist  
**WORD COUNT:** 554

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The adulation being lavished on Gen. Rick Hillier makes me glad he's stepping down as chief of defence staff.

That's no criticism of Hillier. He's obviously smart and astute. If I was in the Canadian Forces, certainly if I was in a management role, I'd be sad to see him go.

Hillier had a vision for the military — the equipment, budget, support and public profile it should have. He wanted Canada to be seen as, and act like, a significant international military force — "one of the big boys."

Like a good corporate manager or politician, he set out to get what he wanted.

And he was good at it. Pushing the politicians a bit sometimes, seeking allies others, charming the media, highly quotable and keeping regular soldiers front and centre. He knew how to cast the military and himself in the best light and keep the public onside.

Hillier became a celebrity general, something almost unprecedented in Canada.

Politicians — especially ones like Stephen Harper, who shared his desire for more military spending and foreign expeditions — welcomed the chance to share the spotlight with Hillier.

But they learned quickly that he wasn't afraid to use his celebrity and popularity to advance his own agenda, whether the government shared it or not.

When Hillier was sworn in as chief of defence staff in February 2005, he used the ceremony — attended by then prime minister Paul Martin — to criticize the Liberal government for neglecting the Armed Forces.

It was an early warning. Governments that didn't accept Hillier's priorities better watch it. And they quickly learned that Hillier was adroit in capturing headlines and public support and setting the agenda. More adroit than the politicians.

Four months later, while government and the public were grappling with what the Afghan mission should be, Hillier defined it.

Canadian Forces were going to fight "detestable murderers and scumbags," he said. Their focus wasn't reconstruction or aid. "We are the Canadian Forces, and our job is to be able to kill people," he said.

Which on one level is true. We give our Forces weapons so they can kill people when necessary.

On another level, Hillier was on shakier ground. The job of the Canadian Forces is — or should be — to fill the role that elected representatives set.

Hillier tended to elbow those elected representatives off to the side.

Don Martin, the fine Canwest News columnist, notes that even Canada's participation in the war in Afghanistan was at least in part Hillier's doing

"With carefully timed speeches and politically incorrect outbursts defending the needs of the soldier, Hillier dwarfed queasy voter opinion about the Afghanistan mission by focusing on strong public support for the military," Martin suggests.

The result of all this was that Hillier became more powerful, in some ways, than the defence ministers he supposedly served. Whether it was a battle for bigger defence budgets or new arms spending or a power struggle with former defence minister Gordon O'Connor, Hillier emerged victorious.

But who should be setting objectives for the military and making policy decisions — a career military manager with good political skills, or elected representatives?

O'Connor was a fumbling defence minister, but he was elected. No one ever voted for Hillier.

The general is being given credit for a multibillion-dollar increase in military spending. New weapons programs have won quick approval thanks in part to his effective political positioning.

His task was made easier because Canada was at war. What politician wants to be accused of depriving troops of needed equipment?

But that increases concerns about Hillier's role, particularly in steering Canada into an overseas conflict.

And it leaves questions about what Canadians gave up — tax cuts, or improved health care or child care — to fund the military spending increases Hillier so skilfully won.

Martin summed up Hillier's tenure in a column on his departure.

"He didn't fear the politicians. They feared him."

Accurate, I suspect. But anytime politicians are afraid of the generals who supposedly work for them, something has gone seriously wrong..

# Don't expect another Hillier, says defence analyst

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**DATE:** 2008.04.16  
**KEYWORDS:** DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS  
**PUBLICATION:** cpw  
**WORD COUNT:** 476

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OTTAWA \_ Canada's next top military commander will have some big boots to fill, but defence observers say whoever gets Gen. Rick Hillier's job will likely have to walk softly.

The new chief of defence staff will inherit an incomplete war in Afghanistan, fragile public support for the mission, a military only part of the way through rebuilding for 21st Century realities, and a minority Conservative government obsessed with political messaging.

Much has been made of the nimble way Hillier moved between the political minefields in Ottawa and the battlefields of Kandahar.

Along the way, his take-no-prisoners style made him political enemies, and analysts say the recruiting criteria for a new defence chief will no doubt include some clear marching orders.

"This government will try to make it pretty clear to the successor, whoever that might be, that they want someone who is going to conduct their dialogue with the government in a much less public fashion," said David Bercuson, a military and political historian at the University of Calgary.

"It really just doesn't suit the style of this government to have a senior military leader having the ability \_ or the feeling \_ that he has the freedom to speak publicly to the extent Hillier probably has done.

"I just can't see this government letting that go."

The name most often mentioned at the moment for the top job is Lt.-Gen. Walter Natynczyk, currently the vice-chief of defence staff.

A former tank officer and commander of the Royal Canadian Dragoons, he is a bit of an enigma to the public and political side of Ottawa, mostly because of his time overseas, which recently included a stint with U.S. Army as a corp commander in Iraq.

"We like that guy," said one Conservative insider, who noted Natynczyk's ability to fly below the radar, but still get things done.

Both Lt.-Gen. Michel Gauthier, the current commander of all Canadian overseas expeditionary forces, and Lt.-Gen. Andrew Leslie, the head of the army, are also considered contenders.

Leslie was short-listed for the top job in 2005, but former Prime Minister Paul Martin picked Hillier because of the Newfoundlander's forceful personality and views.

Both the chief of the air staff, Lt.-Gen. Angus Watt, and the head of the navy, Vice-Admiral Drew Robertson could also make the replacement list.

Hillier downplayed his disagreements with the Conservative government in announcing his July 1 retirement, and said he retained the full confidence of Prime Minister Stephen Harper.

He said most of his battles were with the bureaucracy.

In many of his public speeches, Hillier has often talked about the need to ``speak truth to power" and it is precisely that quality that Bercuson says is at the heart of the general's magic.

It also the attribute that is most endangered, especially when it comes to the war in Afghanistan.

``He was not a CDS who was seen as serving the needs of his political masters, but was representing the men and women of the Forces," said Bercuson.

Harper attempted to ease transition fears Wednesday.

``Gen. Hillier has provided strong and remarkable leadership for the military during a period which it has been rebuilt," Harper told the House of Commons.

``He's left a much stronger institution than when he found it. He's also left us with a strong cadre of senior officers from which the government will consult and will ultimately pick a successor."

# N.L. premier takes swipe at PM while commenting on Hillier's departure

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**DATE:** 2008.04.16  
**KEYWORDS:** POLITICS DEFENCE  
**PUBLICATION:** cpw  
**WORD COUNT:** 84

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ST. JOHN'S, N.L. \_ Newfoundland and Labrador Premier Danny Williams isn't known for mincing words when it comes to dealing with Ottawa.

He even found a way Tuesday to take a shot at Prime Minister Stephen Harper when asked about the departure of Chief of Defence Staff, Gen. Rick Hillier, a native Newfoundlander.

Referring to the prime minister as Steve, Williams said Hillier had his full understanding.

``Well I wouldn't be able to work for Steve either," Williams told reporters.

``He (Hillier) has done an outstanding job but you know he's got a difficult boss."

Williams has been feuding with the prime minister since 2006 over offshore oil revenues.

Hillier has denied that he had problems with the prime minister.

(VOCM)

# The Canadian Press News Budget for Wednesday, April 16, 2008

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**DATE:** 2008.04.16  
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Here are final coverage plans for top Canadian news as of 22:30 ET. Please note plans may change as circumstances warrant. A final coverage advisory will move about 13:00 ET Thursday. If you have any questions, contact CP's National Desk at 416-507-2150.

Copy moves by 18:00 ET unless otherwise noted; all times ET.

For queries about non-Canadian Press syndicated copy, call the Specials Desk at 416-507-2152.

MERRITT, B.C. \_ RCMP say a B.C. father suspected in the triple slaying of his children has been apprehended. Police say Allan Schoenborn was found Wednesday morning on the outskirts of Merritt, in the B.C. Interior. The children's mother found Kaitlyne, 10, Max, eight, and Cordon, five, slain in their home on April 6th. 600 words. BC-Children-Killed. Moved.

OTTAWA \_ The Conservatives tried Wednesday to blunt the impact of an embarrassing RCMP raid on their party headquarters, accusing Elections Canada of giving media \_ and the Liberals \_ advance notice. The Liberals laughed off the suggestion, saying they found out about the raid from TV. Elections Canada is searching for documents related to its investigation of the Tories over allegations of election spending irregularities. 600 words. By Terry Pedwell. See Photos. BC-Tories-RCMP-Raid, 2nd Writethru. Moved.

OTTAWA \_ Canada's next military commander will have some pretty big boots to fill in the wake of Gen. Rick Hillier's departure. Defence observers say the next chief of defence staff will not only inherit the ongoing war in Afghanistan, but will have to navigate the political minefield of dealing with a minority Conservative government bent on controlling message. 600 words. By Murray Brewster. BC-Hillier-Replacement. Moved.

OTTAWA \_ As the country settles in for three more years of fighting in Afghanistan, keeping soldiers in the military is proving to be a difficult task, newly released documents reveal. Briefing materials prepared for Defence Minister Peter MacKay show the level of attrition in the army \_ the number of people choosing to retire or not renew their contracts \_ has reached 13 per cent, almost double the average rate for all three branches of the military. 550 words. By Murray Brewster. See Photo. BC-Military-Attrition. Moved.

OTTAWA \_ The mother of a Polish immigrant who died after being shot by a Taser gun at Vancouver airport was to appear before a parliamentary committee Wednesday. Zofia Cisowski wants to make sure no one suffers the same fate as her son, Robert Dziekanski. 500 words. By Sue Bailey and Jim Bronskill. See Photo. BC-Taser-Mom. Moved.

VANCOUVER \_ Critics of Taser use called on Canada's only armed transit police force to suspend the use of the controversial weapons after documents revealed officers in Vancouver have used the stun guns to control passengers who tried to skip out on fares. 600 words. By James Keller. BC-Transit-Taser. Moved.

MONTREAL \_ The deadly head-on crash that killed a Quebec woman was much like many other drunk-driving accidents on Canadian roads, except for one horrible coincidence. The alleged drunk driver who smashed her minivan was her own husband. 350 words. By Sidhartha Banerjee.

CRIME–Husband–Crash–Wife. Moved.

TORONTO \_ A former RCMP cadet who claimed he was rejected from the force because of discrimination won his case Wednesday before the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal in a decision that orders the national police force to take Ali Tahmourpour, 33, back into their training program and compensate him. Tahmourpour \_ who has long dreamed of becoming a Mountie \_ said Wednesday that he was eager to begin his training. 550 words. By Tobi Cohen. BC–RCMP–Discrimination. Moved.

HALIFAX \_ Environmental crusader Paul Watson is standing by comments he made years ago in which he slammed other conservation groups' for exploiting seals for profit. In an interview three decades ago, the head of the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society slammed Greenpeace and other groups for capitalizing on the seal because "it is very easy to exploit," even though it's not endangered. 500 words. By Alison Auld. BC–Seal–Watson–YouTube. Moved.

ST. JOHN'S, N.L. \_ The former head of Newfoundland's largest health board did not see a 2003 memo that raised red flags about the lab that processed botched breast–cancer tests until four years later, a public inquiry heard Wednesday. A pathologist warned in June 2003 that patient care was at risk because the quality of the lab's testing was questionable \_ but former Eastern Health CEO George Tilley said no one brought it to his attention until May 2007. 600 words. By Tara Brautigam. Member photo requested. Will be budgeted writethru. BC–Breast–Cancer–Inquiry. Moved.

MONTREAL \_ As Mohamed Kohail awaits an appeal on his death sentence in Saudi Arabia, students at the Montreal–area school he attended are keeping the pressure on the Canadian government. They have collected a petition with about 700 names which calls on Ottawa to make sure he receives fair treatment from the Saudi legal system. By Peter Rakobowchuk. 500 words. BC–Cdn–Saudi–Arabia. Moved.

VICTORIA \_ B.C.'S child protection system failed four northern B.C. children on numerous levels prior to their deaths, says a report by the province's independent watchdog. The report by Mary Ellen Tupel–Lafond examines the roles of the many agencies who crossed paths with the children, including police, government, doctors, coroners, child–care workers, teachers and the aboriginal community. 700 words. By Dirk Meissner. BC–Child–Death–Review. Moved.

EDMONTON \_ Alberta plans to overhaul its health system to make sure paperwork isn't getting in the way of patient care, but the province won't close the door on more privatization of publicly funded services. "I'm not rejecting anything," Health Minister Ron Liepert said Wednesday. 650 words. By Dean Bennett. BC–Alta–Health–Reform. Moved.

UNDATED \_ A remote drilling rig high in the Mackenzie Delta has made a breakthrough that could one day revolutionize the world's energy supply. For the first time, Canadian and Japanese researchers have managed to produce a constant flow of natural gas from a deposit of gas hydrates \_ a mysterious ice–like substance that, worldwide, dwarfs all known fossil fuel deposits combined. 650 words. By Bob Weber. BC–Fire–From–Ice. Moves General (G) and Business (B).

TORONTO \_ With Ottawa reportedly poised to declare bisphenol A a toxic substance, some major retailers have cleared their shelves of water and baby bottles containing the chemical. But with the material so widely used in day–to–day products \_ from liners for food and beverage cans to sealants for cavity–prone teeth \_ what can consumers do to protect their health? 750 words. By Sheryl Ubelacker. BC–Bisphenol–A–Consumers. Moved General (G) and Lifestyles (L).

UNDATED \_ Influenza viruses flow across the globe each flu season from a source area, probably in East and Southeast Asia, say two new studies that try to answer a question that has long puzzled researchers: Where does flu come from? The scientific papers suggest viruses that circulate during a North American or European



winter don't lurk about waiting to pounce again the next fall. Instead, new waves of viruses invade from the source region. 800 words. By Helen Branswell. See CP Graphic. Also moved Lifestyles.  
BC-Where-Flu-Comes-From. Moved.

TORONTO \_ There's nothing ``family friendly" about a Liberal proposal to start the legislative work day earlier, say critics who add the move will only help the government ram through unpopular legislation. Moving the daily debate to the morning won't make it any easier for women and parents of young children to serve as elected politicians, Progressive Conservative Lisa MacLeod \_ who has a two-year-old daughter \_ said Wednesday. Instead, opposition parties say it will rob them of crucial preparation time and diminish government scrutiny. 600 words. By Maria Babbage. BC-Family-Friendly-Legislature. Moved Regional (C).

TORONTO \_ Skyrocketing enrolment is forcing many Ontario universities to look at cutting courses and not replacing retiring faculty to balance their operating budgets this year, according to the council representing the province's universities. Professors and university presidents said Wednesday that it's time for the Liberal government to reassess their long-term post-secondary funding which is helping universities modernize their campuses but isn't helping them meet the growing demand. 500 words. By Chinta Puxley.  
BC-Universities-Budget-Shortfall. Moved Regional (C).

HALIFAX \_ Recent media reports warning of overcrowding in Nova Scotia's jails were dismissed as ``alarmist" on Wednesday by the province's top corrections official as ``alarmist." Fred Honsberger, director of correctional services, said most of the embarrassing stories emerging from provincial jails were being driven by ongoing contract negotiations with guards. 600 words. By Keith Doucette.  
BC-NS-Jail-Overcrowding. Moved Regional (A).

# 'Dark day' in Kandahar as soldiers learn of Hillier's imminent retirement

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KANDAHAR, Afghanistan \_ Canadian soldiers at Kandahar Airfield marked a ``dark day" Wednesday as they awoke to news that Gen. Rick Hillier, the popular, populist leader many consider the principal architect of Canada's mission in Afghanistan, was stepping down as chief of defence staff.

Word of Hillier's departure \_ he confirmed Tuesday he would be stepping down in July after more than three years in Canada's top military job \_ seemed to be on the lips of every soldier in a uniform with a Canadian flag on the shoulder.

Lt.-Col. Dan Drew, deputy commander of Canada's Operational Mentor and Liason Team, which trains members of the Afghan National Army, described Hillier as a ``personal hero" who won't be easily replaced.

Hillier almost single-handedly breathed fresh life into a Canadian military that had been robbed of its resources and its sense of value, said Drew, 50, a no-nonsense commander from Medicine Hat, Alta.

``He took us out of the dark ages of the 1990s and reshaped us, reformed us, made us proud to be who we are, and he made the Canadian people know who we are and to be proud of us again," Drew said.

``We're more focused on operations now, we care more about our own people, and Gen. Hillier's the guy who led us out of that darkness."

Drew called Hillier the best chief of defence staff since ``J-Dex" \_ Gen. Jacques Dextraze, a Canadian Army general who served from 1972 to 1977.

``It's a dark day for us to be losing him."

Despite Hillier's persistent denial he has any designs on a political posting, Drew said he considers him worthy of the top job in the land.

``There's only one Gen. Hillier, so whomever's coming in behind him's going to have a tough job \_ I'm thinking Hillier for prime minister next," he smiled.

Hillier, 52, was the most visible Canadian Forces leader in a generation, a blunt, straight-talking ``soldier's soldier" who showed visible affection for the ``soldiers, sailors, airmen and airwomen" under his command and constant admiration for their work.

His visits to Afghanistan were frequent, as much to bolster the morale of the members of the rank and file as to meet with senior commanders.

Twice within a year, most recently last month, Hillier arrived at the airfield with a squad of retired hockey players and the Stanley Cup in tow, talking trash in advance of a ball-hockey showdown with soldiers and boasting of a Cup win by his beloved Toronto Maple Leafs.

“The Taliban have been closer to the Stanley Cup than the Maple Leafs,” he liked to crack.

Along the Kandahar Airfield boardwalk, just down the way from the ever-popular Tim Hortons outlet where the gleaming trophy has twice been on display, Master Cpl. Bob Gaudet was among a group of soldiers talking about Hillier's departure.

“He's been fantastic for the military,” said Gaudet, 40, originally from Moncton, N.B.

“I've been in 20 years, and he's done wonders for us. He is one of the pinnacle figures in the Canadian Forces that is going to be missed. He's done a lot for us.”

Drew said one of Hillier's most important accomplishments has been to fundamentally change how the Canadian Forces treats its injured members and the families of those who are killed in action.

Jim Davis, whose son Cpl. Paul Davis died in a light armoured vehicle accident in Afghanistan in 2006, echoed that sentiment.

Davis was one of eight family members who arrived Tuesday at Kandahar Airfield for a first-hand look, arranged by the Canadian Forces, at the country where his son lost his life.

“Gen. Hillier told me once that he wanted to make sure the families are taken care of and looked after, and I think this is proof of that, this is the result of that,” Davis said of the trip.

“The soldiers here are welcoming us with open arms to make sure we are comfortable and I think the Canadian military has gone overboard to make sure that grieving families are not forgotten.”

Master Cpl. Brad McCaughey, 36, with the National Command Element, said news of Hillier's departure came as a blow to many soldiers.

“Definitely disappointment, absolutely \_ I think everybody has a sense of disappointment that he's leaving,” he said.

“He was such a personable guy and everybody liked him, so everybody is disappointed that he's leaving.”

McCaughey said he was proud to have served under Hillier, who did an “amazing job” during his time as chief of defence staff.

“We were very fortunate that we had him for the time we had, and I hope that whomever follows suit does as equal a job as he did,” McCaughey said.

“I don't think anyone's ever irreplaceable, but definitely some, as the saying goes, big boots to fill. We certainly have some lofty expectations of whoever comes next.”

Hillier issued a statement on his departure, saying the military has “reached the critical milestones I originally set out for us to reach.”

“We have transformed how we recruit, train, equip, command, deploy, employ, bring home, recognize and care for our operational forces and our families, focused on achieving a strategic effect for Canada.”

“We have been strengthened, immensely, by the vocal and visible support of millions of Canadians who have demonstrated that they recognize, understand and honour your service, and the sacrifice of your families.”

Having earned a science degree from Memorial University in his native Newfoundland, Hillier joined the army 36 years ago and trained as an armoured officer.

He said when he joined he had no ambitions to be a general: ``I just wanted to be a soldier."

Hillier's career took him from regimental duties in a tank unit to staff jobs in Montreal and National Defence Headquarters in Ottawa, where he eventually became army, then defence, chief.

He has served across Canada, twice in Europe and the United States, and did a term as the senior NATO officer in Afghanistan.

His predecessor, air force Gen. Ray Henault, served five years in the job, while Gen. John de Chastelain served two separate appointments \_ from 1989 until 1993, and again in 1994–95.

# The Canadian Press News Agenda for Thursday, April 17

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**DATE:** 2008.04.16  
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**EDITORS:** Following is a list of news events for April 17 as of 11:45 p.m. ET: x—denotes wire, y—denotes picture, z—denotes graphics coverage. Copy from other events based on merit and availability. All times local unless otherwise noted. Queries about these events and stories in The Canadian Press report should be directed to the departments listed below (all phone numbers 416 area code):

Main Desk (National News) 507–2150; World Desk 507–2165; Sports Desk 507–2154; Ontario Desk 507–2159; Photo Desk 507–2169; Specials Desk (Syndicated Copy) 507–2152; IT Desk (Technical Trouble) 507–2099 or 800–268–8149

## WORLD

WASHINGTON \_ U.S. forestry firm Weyerhaeuser holds annual meeting. The firm announced in February the shut down of two of its Saskatchewan mills. (9 a.m. at 33663 Weyerhaeuser Way South, Federal Way)

## ATLANTIC

x–ST. JOHN'S, N.L. \_ Public inquiry into hundreds of erroneous breast cancer test results. Former Eastern Health CEO George Tilley testifying. Inquiry expected to run until July or beyond. (9:30 a.m. at 50 Tiffany Lane)

ST. JOHN'S, N.L. \_ World Curling Tour's Players Championship. Through April 20. (Mile One Centre)

ST. JOHN'S, N.L. \_ Standing committee on immigration and citizenship holds hearing on undocumented and foreign temporary workers. Witnesses include Earle McCurdy, president of the Fish, Food and Allied Workers. (9 a.m. at Fairmont Hotel)

HALIFAX \_ Weekly meeting of Nova Scotia cabinet. (9:30 a.m. at 1700 Granville St.)

y–HALIFAX \_ Former New Brunswick premier Frank McKenna gives speech. (5 p.m. at World Trade and Convention Centre)

HALIFAX \_ Entrepreneurs with Disabilities Network's entrepreneur of the year awards. (Westin Hotel)

## QUEBEC

MONTREAL \_ Quebec's association of emergency doctors holds meeting. (8:30 a.m. at Amphitheatre de la Direction de la sante publique, 1301 Sherbrooke E.)

MONTREAL \_ Drug firm MethylGene holds annual meeting. (10 a.m. at Hilton Montreal Bonaventure Hotel, 900 de la Gauchetiere St. West)

x-MONTREAL \_ Quebec Medical Association holds news conference to release survey findings. (10:15 a.m. at Delta Hotel, Verriere Room, 777 University)

x-MONTREAL \_ Patrice Pelletier, president and director general of the Port of Montreal, speaks to city's chambre of commerce. (12 p.m. at Delta Centre-Ville, 777 University, Victoria room)

y-MONTREAL \_ News conference with Matt Serra and George St-Pierre (12 p.m. at Bell Centre)

xy-QUEBEC \_ Parti Quebecois Leader Pauline Marois launches autobiography at Salon international du livre de Quebec. (8 p.m. at Centre des congres de Quebec, room 301, 3rd floor)

## OTTAWA

OTTAWA \_ CRTC continues major broadcast policy review. Through April 20. (9 a.m. at Portage 4, Gatineau, Quebec)

xy-OTTAWA \_ Daily question period. (2:15 p.m. at House of Commons, Centre Block, Parliament Hill)

OTTAWA \_ Canada Post partners with CanWest for the 2008 CanSpell Spelling Bee. Finals on Sunday April 20.

x-OTTAWA \_ Statistics Canada releases March consumer price index (inflation.) (7 a.m. at [www.statcan.ca](http://www.statcan.ca))

OTTAWA \_ University of Montreal professor Alain Noel speaks on eliminating poverty: what governments can do, presented in French. (7 a.m. at Parliament Hill, Wellington St., Parliamentary Restaurant, 6th Floor)

x-OTTAWA \_ Statistics Canada releases February travel between Canada and other countries. (8:30 a.m. at [www.statcan.ca](http://www.statcan.ca))

OTTAWA \_ Joint Commons-Senate scrutiny of regulations committee meets. Subject to change without notice. (8:30 a.m. at Room 256-S, Centre Block, Parliament Hill)

OTTAWA \_ Commons agriculture committee hears witnesses on product of Canada claims. Subject to change without notice. (9 a.m. at Room 253-D, Centre Block, Parliament Hill)

OTTAWA \_ Senate agriculture committee hears witnesses on future of agriculture. Subject to change without notice. (9 a.m. at Room 2, Victoria Building, 140 Wellington St.)

OTTAWA \_ Commons estimates committee hears witnesses on main estimates. Subject to change without notice. (9 a.m. at Room 269, West Block, Parliament Hill)

OTTAWA \_ Commons human resources committee hears witnesses on reducing poverty. Subject to change without notice. (9 a.m. at Room 237-C, Centre Block, Parliament Hill)

OTTAWA \_ Commons languages committee hears witnesses on 2006 Census. Subject to change without notice. (9 a.m. at Room 209, West Block, Parliament Hill)

OTTAWA \_ Commons status of women committee hears witnesses on gender budgets. Subject to change without notice. (9 a.m. at Room 308, West Block, Parliament Hill)

OTTAWA \_ Supreme Court hears appeals in N.S. case of S.A.C. vs. the Crown and Alberta case of Roseanne Turningrobe vs. the Crown. (9:30 a.m. at Supreme Court, 301 Wellington St.)

OTTAWA \_ Liberal Leader Stephane Dion meets with Writers Union on Bill C-10: taxes. (9:30 a.m. at Room 409-S, Centre Block, Parliament Hill)

OTTAWA \_ Supreme Court renders judgments in N.S. appeal of Robert Gibson vs. the Crown and Alberta appeal of Martin MacDonald vs. the Crown. Briefing at 9:15 a.m. in the Press Room. (9:45 a.m. at Supreme Court, 301 Wellington St.)

OTTAWA \_ Canadian Society for Medical Laboratory Science holds news conference on need for long-term human resource strategy. (10 a.m. at Room 130-S, Centre Block, Parliament Hill)

OTTAWA \_ Assembly of First Nations National Chief Phil Fontaine makes National Day of Action announcement. (10 a.m. at AFN Office, Main Level, 473 Albert St.)

OTTAWA \_ Liberal foreign affairs critic Bob Rae holds news conference on Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier interference in Afghan internal affairs. (10:30 a.m. at National Press Theatre, 150 Wellington St.)

OTTAWA \_ Senate banking committee hears witnesses on Bill C-10: Income Tax Act. Subject to change without notice. (10:45 a.m. at Room 9, Victoria Building, 140 Wellington St.)

OTTAWA \_ Senate social affairs committee meets in camera. Subject to change without notice. (10:45 a.m. at Room 2, Victoria Building, 140 Wellington St.)

OTTAWA \_ Senate legal affairs committee hears witnesses on Bill S-224: Parliament of Canada Act (vacancies). Subject to change without notice. (10:45 a.m. at Room 257, East Block, Parliament Hill)

OTTAWA \_ Commons environment committee meets on Bill C-377: climate change responsibilities. Subject to change without notice. (11 a.m. at Room 253-D, Centre Block, Parliament Hill)

OTTAWA \_ Commons public accounts committee meets in camera. Subject to change without notice. (11 a.m. at Room 209, West Block, Parliament Hill)

OTTAWA \_ Senate cities subcommittee hears witnesses on large cities' issues. Subject to change without notice. (11 a.m. at Room 2, Victoria Building, 140 Wellington St.)

OTTAWA \_ Commons special committee on Afghanistan subcommittee meets in camera. Subject to change without notice. (11 a.m. at Room 208, West Block, Parliament Hill)

OTTAWA \_ Commons health committee hears witnesses on 10 year plan for health care. Subject to change without notice. (11 a.m. at Room 237-C, Centre Block, Parliament Hill)

OTTAWA \_ Commons industry committee hears witnesses on science and technology. Subject to change without notice. (11 a.m. at Room 308, West Block, Parliament Hill)

OTTAWA \_ Commons natural resources committee meets in camera. Subject to change without notice. (11 a.m. at Room 371, West Block, Parliament Hill)

OTTAWA \_ Justice Minister Rob Nicholson speaks at Law Day event. (11:15 a.m. at Ottawa Technical High School, 440 Albert St., auditorium)

OTTAWA \_ Commons defence committee hears witnesses on post-traumatic stress disorder. Subject to change without notice. (3:30 p.m. at Room 362, East Block, Parliament Hill)

OTTAWA \_ Commons foreign affairs committee hears witnesses on Canada–China bilateral human rights dialogue. Subject to change without notice. (3:30 p.m. at Room 308, West Block, Parliament Hill)

x–OTTAWA \_ Government officials hold technical briefing on North American Leaders' Summit taking place April 21–22 in New Orleans. (4 p.m. at National Press Theatre, 150 Wellington St.)

OTTAWA \_ French Ambassador Daniel Jouanneau speaks on relationship between Canada and France. (6 p.m. at Rideau Club, 99 Bank St., 15th floor, Laurier Room)

## ONTARIO

x–BARRIE, Ont. \_ Premier Dalton McGuinty attends opening of Royal Victoria Hospital's portable radiation treatment clinic. (10:30 a.m. at Royal Victoria Hospital, 201 Georgian Dr.)

BURLINGTON, Ont. \_ Apparel, footwear retailer West 49 holds conference call for fourth–quarter earnings conference call. Dial 416–644–3417. Webcast at [www.newswire.ca](http://www.newswire.ca) (9 a.m.)

RICHMOND HILL, Ont. \_ The Amalgamated Transit Union, in contract talks with the Toronto Transit Commission, holds news conference. (11:30 a.m. at 600 Highway 7 East)

RICHMOND HILL, Ont. \_ Citizenship and Immigration Canada officials hold technical briefing to provide details on proposed legislative amendments to Immigration and Refugee Protection Act. (1 p.m. at Sheraton Parkway Toronto North Hotel Suites and Conference Centre, 600 Highway 7 E.)

x–TORONTO \_ Ontario legislature sits Monday through Thursday. (2 p.m. at Ontario legislature)

TORONTO \_ Cott Corp. annual meeting. Webcast at [www.cott.com](http://www.cott.com) (8:30 a.m. at Doubletree by Hilton Hotel, Room International C, 655 Dixon Rd. )

TORONTO \_ Ontario paramedics hold rally to call for right to retire at 60 like police and firefighters. (8:30 a.m. at 1 University Ave., front entrance)

TORONTO \_ Transportation Minister Jim Bradley demonstrates activation of speed limiter on big rig at Truck World 2008 show. (9:30 a.m. at International Centre, Kenworth booth 1224, Hall)

TORONTO \_ Ontario Attorney General Chris Bentley makes announcement about improving services for abused women. (10 a.m. at Ontario Victim Services Secretariat, Toronto Regional Office, 3rd floor boardroom, 700 Bay St.)

TORONTO \_ Toronto FC players and coaches available, ahead of Saturday's home opener. (10:30 a.m. at BMO Field)

TORONTO \_ Toronto FC holds a Media Day, in the Turf Room of BMO Field. Please enter through Gate 4. (10:30 a.m. at BMO Field 170 Princes' Blvd.)

TORONTO \_ Transportation Minister Jim Bradley makes announcement about improvements to beginner driving education. (11:15 a.m. at CAA Driver Training, Newtonbrook Plaza, suite 105, 5859 Yonge St.)

TORONTO \_ Former U.S. ambassadors James Blanchard and Paul Cellucci speak to Empire Club of Canada on upcoming U.S. presidential election. (12:30 p.m. at Royal York Hotel, Concert Hall, 100 Front St. W.)

TORONTO \_ Official announcement of Damon Allen's Quarterback Challenge, a fundraiser for Children's



Charities. Damon Allen, Michael Bishop and Kerry Joseph will be present. (2 p.m. at Rogers Centres)

TORONTO \_ Toronto Argonaut quarterbacks Damon Allen, Kerry Joseph and Michael Bishop announce new charity initiative. (2 p.m. at Rogers Centre, Windows Restaurant One Blue Jays Way)

TORONTO \_ Premier Dalton McGuinty launches 2008 Federated Health Charities Campaign to commemorate 25th anniversary of Federated Health Charities. (3 p.m. at MacDonald Block, 2nd floor, Ontario Room, 900 Bay St.)

TORONTO \_ Firan Technology holds annual meeting. (4:30 p.m. at TSX Centre Gallery, Exchange Tower, 130 King St. West)

TORONTO \_ Premier Dalton McGuinty meets with former Indian president A.P.J. Abdul Kalam. Closed to media. (4:30 p.m. at Ontario legislature, room 281)

TORONTO \_ Ian Smyth, 13, who has been on waiting list for a lung transplant for four months, throws out first pitch at Toronto Blue Jays game to mark National Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Week. (6:45 p.m. at Rogers Centre, 1 Blue Jays Way)

TORONTO \_ Toronto Professional Fire Fighters' Association dedicates 35 memorial plaques to honour firefighters who have died in line of duty. (7 p.m. at Toronto Fire Academy, 895 Eastern Ave.)

y-TORONTO \_ David Thomson and Geoff Beattie ring opening bell at 9:28 a.m. followed by press conference at 9:40 a.m. to launch Thomson Reuters. Media registration required. (TSX Gallery, The Exchange Tower, 130 King St. West)

## PRAIRIES

CALGARY \_ Stratic Energy Corp. holds year-end earnings conference call. Webcast at [www.newswire.ca](http://www.newswire.ca) or dial 416-644-3418. (8:30 a.m.)

x-CALGARY \_ Availability with Canadian men's gymnastics team. Update on injury to Olympic gold medallist Kyle Shewfelt. (12:30 p.m. at Olympic Oval, University of Calgary)

CALGARY \_ Ed Stelmach addresses annual Calgary premier's dinner. (5:30 p.m. at 120 9 Ave. S.E.)

CALGARY \_ City of Calgary tries to get an injunction against street preacher Art Pawlowski.

EDMONTON \_ Trial of Thomas Svekla, accused of second-degree murder and interfering with human remains in the deaths of two prostitutes.

EDMONTON \_ Sentencing hearing for 18-year-old, who was 17 when he stabbed Evan Grykuliak to death at his 17th birthday party in November 2006. Part of Judge James Koshman's decision will be whether the accused should be sentenced as an adult. (Youth court)

EDMONTON \_ Coalition for Cellphone-free Driving holds a workshop on how to do it. (10:30 a.m. at 2440 76 Ave)

EDMONTON \_ Annual general meeting of Alberta Seniors United Now Society. Alberta Seniors Minister Mary Anne Jablonski gives opening remarks. (11 a.m. at 9629-176 St.)

EDMONTON \_ The United Church Women of Alberta hold a rally against poverty. (11:30 a.m. at

Legislature)

EDMONTON \_ Ten soldiers from Edmonton will be presented with Chief of the Defence Staff Commendations at a military parade. General Rick Hillier will present the awards. (12:30 p.m. at CFB Edmonton)

LETHBRIDGE, Alta. \_ Const. Nichole Goodyear faces charges of unauthorized possession of a firearm in a motor vehicle and possession of a prohibited or restricted weapon with ammunition stemming from an incident in March 2007 when she was off-duty.

MEDICINE HAT, Alta. \_ Kacy Lancaster, 21, to be arraigned on charge of being an accessory to murder related to the multiple homicide of a Medicine Hat family in April 2006. (9 a.m. at Medicine Hat courthouse)

MEDICINE HAT, Alta. \_ Trial date to be set for Jeremy Steinke, accused in the first-degree murders of a Medicine Hat, Alta., couple and their young son. (9 a.m.)

RED DEER, Alta. \_ A man who pleaded guilty on Dec. 3 to charges of sexual assault and making child pornography returns to court. Defence lawyer Arnold Pigaroff has suggested his client may seek to change his plea. (9:30 a.m. at Provincial court)

RED DEER, Alta. \_ Chris Flessatti, who pleaded guilty to drunk driving causing the death of a 75-year-old man, will be sentenced.

WETASKIWIN, Alta. \_ Court appearance for Christopher Crane, 18, for election and plea on 16 charges, including aggravated assault and weapons-related offences. He was charged after a 23-month-old girl was shot and wounded in her home in a drive-by shooting on the Samson Cree First Nation April 13, 2008. (9:30 a.m. at Provincial Court)

FLIN FLON, Man. \_ Inquest into the death of Steve Ewing at Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting's copper smelter in 2000. Through April 24. (10 a.m. at Courthouse)

WINNIPEG \_ John Furlong, CEO of the Vancouver 2010 winter olympics, speaks to the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce about the economic impacts the games are expected to produce. (12:30 p.m. at The Fairmont Hotel, 2 Lombard Pl.)

SASKATOON \_ Former teacher Jeremy Houston, 53, is sentenced for accessing and possessing child pornography. (Court of Queen's Bench)

## BRITISH COLUMBIA

KELOWNA, B.C. \_ Council of Forest Industries of British Columbia annual convention on theme of Climate for Change. Speakers include B.C. Forests Minister Rich Coleman at 8:15 a.m. and B.C. Premier Gordon Campbell at 12:30 p.m. The convention runs through to April 18. (Grand Okanagan Lakefront Hotel)

VANCOUVER \_ Trial of five men accused of kidnapping university student Graham McMynn. Through April 30. (10 a.m. at B.C. Supreme Court, courtroom 20)

VANCOUVER \_ B.C. division of Canadian Union of Public Employees holds annual convention. Speakers include Author Michael Shuman, Wed., 9 a.m., B.C. NDP leader Carole James, Thursday, 1:30 p.m.; federal NDP Leader Jack Layton, Friday, 11 a.m., B.C. Federation of Labour president Jim Sinclair, Saturday, 11 a.m. Through April 19. (9 a.m. at Hyatt Regency Hotel, 655 Burrard St.)

VANCOUVER \_ Vancouver police department and Canadian Bankers' Association launch initiative to deal with 125 per cent hike in bank robberies this year, making Vancouver the bank robbery capital of North America. (10:30 a.m. at Vancouver Police Dept. – 2120 Cambie St.)

VANCOUVER \_ Grade 4 and 5 students from Lord Roberts Elementary School bid the famed hollow tree in Stanley Park goodbye. (12:30 p.m. at Hollow Tree, Stanley Park)

VANCOUVER \_ Western Wind Energy Corp. reception with presentation at 2:15 p.m. (2 p.m. at 915 W. Hastings St. – Vancouver Club, UBC Room, 3rd Floor)

VANCOUVER \_ Jinshan Gold Mines holds teleconference call to discuss recent China National Gold Group transaction. Dial 1–866–223–7781. (3 p.m.)

## NORTH

UNDATED \_ Paul Hubner, president of Baffin Inc., continues his ski trek to the North Pole in the hopes of becoming one of the first Canadians to ski both the North and South Poles. Hubner will be available for live interviews from the North Pole. Through April 26.

(The Canadian Press \_ Toronto)

# BC-Cda-News-Digest

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**DATE:** 2008.04.16  
**KEYWORDS:** ADVISORIES  
**PUBLICATION:** cpw  
**WORD COUNT:** 785

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MERRITT, B.C. \_ A local resident, armed with his dog and a sense of outrage, has tracked down the fugitive British Columbia father suspected in the slayings of his three children.

Allan Schoenborn was located by the resident and arrested by RCMP on Wednesday, 10 days after the bodies of his children were found in the family's mobile home in Merritt, B.C.

Police said Schoenborn was found in the bush on the outskirts of the town, not that far from where the bodies of his three children were found by their mother more than a week ago.

Local tracker Kim Robinson said he has been looking for Schoenborn for days.

“He wasn't on the highway. He was up on a side hill,” Robinson told radio station CHNL.

Schoenborn has been the subject of a police manhunt since the bodies of Kaitlynn, 10, Max, eight, and Cordon, five, were found on April 6.

“At this time we're confirming that Mr. Schoenborn is in custody and he is alive,” Const. Tracy Dunsmore of Merritt RCMP told a local radio station.

Alberta to remake regional health system, won't rule out more privatization

EDMONTON \_ Alberta won't close the door on more privatization of publicly funded services as it overhauls a health system it says needs fixing to ensure paperwork doesn't get in the way of patient care.

“I'm not rejecting anything,” Health Minister Ron Liepert said Wednesday.

“Everything is on the table.”

Patient care is hung up by too much red tape, he said.

“There are simply too many referral stages and patients are simply waiting too long,” said Liepert, who took over the health portfolio last month.

He said changes will flow from recommendations made in several reports, including a 2001 study headed by former deputy prime minister Don Mazankowski that urged more user fees and delisting of some services now covered by medicare.

The changes, which Liepert said he'll start rolling out in mid-June, will focus on how the province's nine regional health authorities and health boards operate.

Liepert wouldn't release details or say whether health regions would be amalgamated, but he did suggest there's no plan to close rural hospitals.

Alleged drunk driver kills wife in head-on crash and is charged in hospital

MONTREAL \_ The head-on crash that killed Renee Bourbeau was much like many other drunk-driving accidents on Canadian roads \_ except for one horrible coincidence.

The alleged drunk driver who smashed into Bourbeau's minivan was her husband, Patrick Laflamme.

Laflamme plowed his truck into the van the 41-year-old mother of two was driving on Saturday evening in Drummondville, Que.

Laflamme, 36, was charged in his hospital bed on Tuesday with drunk driving causing death. He was recovering from leg fractures and head lacerations.

Quebec provincial police say Laflamme had left a local bar and was just minutes from home when the crash occurred.

Bourbeau had been with Laflamme at the bar earlier in the evening and had left without him.

Later, police allege, Laflamme was driving the wrong way into oncoming traffic and slammed into his wife's vehicle in the 90 km/h zone.

Detectives weighed whether they were dealing with a tragic accident or a premeditated act and decided it couldn't be the latter, said police spokesman Louis-Philippe Ruel.

Ruel said darkness had settled in just after 8 p.m. and a heavy rainfall had made visibility poor and the roadway slick.

Don't expect another Hillier, says defence analyst

OTTAWA \_ Canada's next top military commander will have some big boots to fill, but defence observers say whoever gets Gen. Rick Hillier's job will likely have to walk softly.

The new chief of defence staff will inherit an incomplete war in Afghanistan, fragile public support for the mission, a military only part of the way through rebuilding for 21st Century realities, and a minority Conservative government obsessed with political messaging.

Much has been made of the nimble way Hillier moved between the political minefields in Ottawa and the battlefields of Kandahar.

Along the way, his take-no-prisoners style made him political enemies, and analysts say the recruiting criteria for a new defence chief will no doubt include some clear marching orders.

“This government will try to make it pretty clear to the successor, whoever that might be, that they want someone who is going to conduct their dialogue with the government in a much less public fashion,” said David Bercuson, a military and political historian at the University of Calgary.

“It really just doesn't suit the style of this government to have a senior military leader having the ability \_ or the feeling \_ that he has the freedom to speak publicly to the extent Hillier probably has done.”

Keeping soldiers is a tougher task for military: documents

OTTAWA \_ Keeping soldiers in the military is proving to be a difficult task as the country settles in for three

more years of fighting in Afghanistan \_ one that is demanding more and more attention from top commanders, newly released documents reveal.

Briefing materials prepared for Defence Minister Peter MacKay show army attrition \_ the number of people choosing to retire or not renew their contracts \_ has reached 13 per cent, almost double the average for all three branches of the military.

A presentation given last fall by the army chief, Lt.-Gen. Andrew Leslie, shows the overall size of the land force declined by 1,846 soldiers between May 2005 and May 2007, despite the success in recruiting fresh troops.

The Powerpoint slide show and other briefing materials were obtained by The Canadian Press under access-to-information laws.

MacKay acknowledged attrition is growing, but downplayed its impact and insisted the Conservative government is taking steps to deal with the problem.

“I think that's always been an issue in a competitive job market,” MacKay said at the recent launch of new television recruitment ads.

# The Canadian Press World News Budget – Wednesday, April 16, 2008

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**DATE:** 2008.04.16  
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Here are the budgeted stories as of 23:00 EDT. The editor handling World news in Toronto can be reached at 416-507-2165.

PHILADELPHIA \_ Hillary Rodham Clinton said emphatically Wednesday night that Barack Obama can win the White House this fall, undercutting her efforts to deny him the Democratic presidential nomination by suggesting he would lead the party to defeat. 1,000 words. By Beth Fouhy. BC-Democrats-Debate.

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan \_ Canadian soldiers marked a ``dark day" Wednesday at Kandahar Airfield as they awoke to news that Gen. Rick Hillier, the popular leader many consider the principal architect of Canada's mission in Afghanistan, was stepping down as chief of defence staff. Word of Hillier's planned retirement in July seemed to be on the lips of every soldier in a uniform with a Canadian flag on the shoulder. 850 words. By James McCarten. BC-Afghan-Cda-Hillier. Moved.

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan \_ The loved ones of five fallen soldiers placed wreaths atop a marble cenotaph honouring Canada's war dead Wednesday to cap an emotional 24-hour visit to the region where their husbands, brothers and sons gave their lives in service of two countries. The eight relatives took a cathartic, first-hand look at what Canadians have been fighting for since 2002 in Afghanistan. 700 words. By James McCarten. See Photos. BC-Afghan-Cda-Families. Moved.

WASHINGTON \_ Pope Benedict moves from an exuberant White House welcome and sunny ``Happy Birthday" parade through Washington to a more somber \_ and perhaps painful \_ meeting with his American bishops. A likely topic for the evening private prayer meeting: the wrenching issue of molestations of young boys by Roman Catholic priests. 850 words. By Victor Simpson. See Photos. BC-Pope-US.

WASHINGTON \_ Revising his stand on global warming, President George W. Bush on Wednesday called for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025 and urged other major polluting nations to develop national goals to address climate change. Critics have argued that the Bush administration has dragged its feet, but Bush argued his staff was working intently to address the contentious issue. 550 words. By H. Josef Hebert and Deb Riechmann. See Photo. BC-Bush-Climate. Moved.

BLACKSBURG, Va. \_ A sea of people wearing the school colours of orange and maroon flowed onto the main lawn at Virginia Tech on Wednesday, some clutching single roses, to remember the victims of the worst mass shooting in modern U.S. history. They gathered on the same field where a white candle lit at midnight began a day of mourning for the 32 people killed a year ago by a student gunman who shot himself as police closed in. Among the dead was a Canadian French teacher. 650 words. By Kristen Gelineau. See Photos. BC-Virginia-Tech-Anniversary. Moved.

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip \_ Israel struck hard against targets in Gaza on Wednesday, killing at least 20 Palestinians in a day of heavy fighting that also saw three Israeli soldiers die in a brazen Hamas ambush. Among the Palestinian dead was a Reuters news cameraman. 750 words. By Diaa Hadid. See Photo. BC-Israel-Palestinians. Moved.

BAGHDAD \_ Associated Press photographer Bilal Hussein embraced sobbing relatives and thanked colleagues after being released Wednesday from more than two years in U.S. military custody. Hussein, 36, was freed at a checkpoint in Baghdad, where he was taken by the military aboard a prisoner bus. He left U.S. custody wearing a traditional Iraqi robe and appeared in good health. 425 words. By Robert H. Reid. See Photo. BC-Iraq-Photographer-Freed. Moved.



## --Ninth NewsWatch--

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**DATE:** 2008.04.16  
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**WORD COUNT:** 340

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Pope Benedict has been welcomed at the White House with pomp and pageantry and cheering from thousands of excited people spread across the South Lawn.

Benedict is only the second Pope to visit the White House and the first in 29 years.

He arrived in picture-perfect spring weather on his 81st birthday.

More than nine-thousand guests were invited to the ceremony, the largest in White House history.

The Pope was greeted with a 21-gun salute as the Marine Band played the national anthem of the Holy See.  
(9)

(Virginia Tech-Anniversary) (Audio: 121)

This is a day of mourning at Virginia Tech which was the scene one year ago of the worst mass shooting in modern U-S history.

A young gunman went on a rampage that left 32 people dead before he took his own life.

Canadian teacher Jocelyne Couture-Nowak was among those killed.

It drew a university already known for its school spirit even closer as the depth of the loss registered with students and faculty. (9)

(Hillier Resignation) (Audio: 91)

From Afghanistan to Canadian military bases across the country, rank and file soldiers and their officers are expressing their dismay that their beloved leader, General Rick Hillier, is stepping down.

A native son of Newfoundland, the premier of that province, Danny Williams, had words of praise for the outgoing chief of defence staff, calling him ``a great Canadian."

Hillier says he has no plans other than to do some fishing and play a little golf after he retires in July. (9)

(Toronto-Plane-Circling)

Drama in the sky as a small plane with landing gear problem is circling Toronto's Island Airport to burn off fuel.

Two people are aboard the plane.

Emergency crews are standing by at the airport while the pilot awaits orders to try to land there or at another airport.

Toronto City Centre Airport director Ken Lundy says discussions continue with Pearson International Airport about a possible diversion there. (9)

(CRIME–Fraud–Cars)

It's alleged two people arrested in British Columbia are players in an international fraud ring that duped numerous victims into buying non-existent vintage cars.

Police say victims were engaged in e-mails and phone calls to arrange for the purchase of the vehicles.

During a nine-month probe, police followed the money trail and found that funds were being wired to Calgary banks, then forwarded to B-C.

Facing fraud and theft-related charges are 31-year-old Akthem Saadi Yousif, and Allana Nicole Austring, who is the same age. (9)

(BIZ–Loonie Soars)

The Canadian dollar was up 1.67 cents at 99.80 cents U-S this morning as the American dollar's global weakness intensified.

The loonie's latest gain came after Canadian potash producers reaped a rich new contract with China and oil prices probed new highs.

Sentiment toward the dollar was bolstered as crude oil topped 114-dollars U-S a barrel. (9)

(NewsWatch by Phil Godin)

# The Canadian Press News Agenda for Thursday, April 17

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**DATE:** 2008.04.16  
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**EDITORS:** Following is a list of news events for April 17 as of 11:45 p.m. ET: x—denotes wire, y—denotes picture, z—denotes graphics coverage. Copy from other events based on merit and availability. All times local unless otherwise noted. Queries about these events and stories in The Canadian Press report should be directed to the departments listed below (all phone numbers 416 area code):

Main Desk (National News) 507–2150; World Desk 507–2165; Sports Desk 507–2154; Ontario Desk 507–2159; Photo Desk 507–2169; Specials Desk (Syndicated Copy) 507–2152; IT Desk (Technical Trouble) 507–2099 or 800–268–8149

## WORLD

WASHINGTON \_ U.S. forestry firm Weyerhaeuser holds annual meeting. The firm announced in February the shut down of two of its Saskatchewan mills. (9 a.m. at 33663 Weyerhaeuser Way South, Federal Way)

## ATLANTIC

x–ST. JOHN'S, N.L. \_ Public inquiry into hundreds of erroneous breast cancer test results. Former Eastern Health CEO George Tilley testifying. Inquiry expected to run until July or beyond. (9:30 a.m. at 50 Tiffany Lane)

ST. JOHN'S, N.L. \_ World Curling Tour's Players Championship. Through April 20. (Mile One Centre)

ST. JOHN'S, N.L. \_ Standing committee on immigration and citizenship holds hearing on undocumented and foreign temporary workers. Witnesses include Earle McCurdy, president of the Fish, Food and Allied Workers. (9 a.m. at Fairmont Hotel)

HALIFAX \_ Weekly meeting of Nova Scotia cabinet. (9:30 a.m. at 1700 Granville St.)

y–HALIFAX \_ Former New Brunswick premier Frank McKenna gives speech. (5 p.m. at World Trade and Convention Centre)

HALIFAX \_ Entrepreneurs with Disabilities Network's entrepreneur of the year awards. (Westin Hotel)

## QUEBEC

MONTREAL \_ Quebec's association of emergency doctors holds meeting. (8:30 a.m. at Amphitheatre de la Direction de la sante publique, 1301 Sherbrooke E.)

MONTREAL \_ Drug firm MethylGene holds annual meeting. (10 a.m. at Hilton Montreal Bonaventure Hotel, 900 de la Gauchetiere St. West)

x-MONTREAL \_ Quebec Medical Association holds news conference to release survey findings. (10:15 a.m. at Delta Hotel, Verriere Room, 777 University)

x-MONTREAL \_ Patrice Pelletier, president and director general of the Port of Montreal, speaks to city's chambre of commerce. (12 p.m. at Delta Centre-Ville, 777 University, Victoria room)

y-MONTREAL \_ News conference with Matt Serra and George St-Pierre (12 p.m. at Bell Centre)

xy-QUEBEC \_ Parti Quebecois Leader Pauline Marois launches autobiography at Salon international du livre de Quebec. (8 p.m. at Centre des congres de Quebec, room 301, 3rd floor)

## OTTAWA

OTTAWA \_ CRTC continues major broadcast policy review. Through April 20. (9 a.m. at Portage 4, Gatineau, Quebec)

xy-OTTAWA \_ Daily question period. (2:15 p.m. at House of Commons, Centre Block, Parliament Hill)

OTTAWA \_ Canada Post partners with CanWest for the 2008 CanSpell Spelling Bee. Finals on Sunday April 20.

x-OTTAWA \_ Statistics Canada releases March consumer price index (inflation.) (7 a.m. at [www.statcan.ca](http://www.statcan.ca))

OTTAWA \_ University of Montreal professor Alain Noel speaks on eliminating poverty: what governments can do, presented in French. (7 a.m. at Parliament Hill, Wellington St., Parliamentary Restaurant, 6th Floor)

x-OTTAWA \_ Statistics Canada releases February travel between Canada and other countries. (8:30 a.m. at [www.statcan.ca](http://www.statcan.ca))

OTTAWA \_ Joint Commons-Senate scrutiny of regulations committee meets. Subject to change without notice. (8:30 a.m. at Room 256-S, Centre Block, Parliament Hill)

OTTAWA \_ Commons agriculture committee hears witnesses on product of Canada claims. Subject to change without notice. (9 a.m. at Room 253-D, Centre Block, Parliament Hill)

OTTAWA \_ Senate agriculture committee hears witnesses on future of agriculture. Subject to change without notice. (9 a.m. at Room 2, Victoria Building, 140 Wellington St.)

OTTAWA \_ Commons estimates committee hears witnesses on main estimates. Subject to change without notice. (9 a.m. at Room 269, West Block, Parliament Hill)

OTTAWA \_ Commons human resources committee hears witnesses on reducing poverty. Subject to change without notice. (9 a.m. at Room 237-C, Centre Block, Parliament Hill)

OTTAWA \_ Commons languages committee hears witnesses on 2006 Census. Subject to change without notice. (9 a.m. at Room 209, West Block, Parliament Hill)

OTTAWA \_ Commons status of women committee hears witnesses on gender budgets. Subject to change without notice. (9 a.m. at Room 308, West Block, Parliament Hill)

OTTAWA \_ Supreme Court hears appeals in N.S. case of S.A.C. vs. the Crown and Alberta case of Roseanne Turningrobe vs. the Crown. (9:30 a.m. at Supreme Court, 301 Wellington St.)

OTTAWA \_ Liberal Leader Stephane Dion meets with Writers Union on Bill C-10: taxes. (9:30 a.m. at Room 409-S, Centre Block, Parliament Hill)

OTTAWA \_ Supreme Court renders judgments in N.S. appeal of Robert Gibson vs. the Crown and Alberta appeal of Martin MacDonald vs. the Crown. Briefing at 9:15 a.m. in the Press Room. (9:45 a.m. at Supreme Court, 301 Wellington St.)

OTTAWA \_ Canadian Society for Medical Laboratory Science holds news conference on need for long-term human resource strategy. (10 a.m. at Room 130-S, Centre Block, Parliament Hill)

OTTAWA \_ Assembly of First Nations National Chief Phil Fontaine makes National Day of Action announcement. (10 a.m. at AFN Office, Main Level, 473 Albert St.)

OTTAWA \_ Liberal foreign affairs critic Bob Rae holds news conference on Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier interference in Afghan internal affairs. (10:30 a.m. at National Press Theatre, 150 Wellington St.)

OTTAWA \_ Senate banking committee hears witnesses on Bill C-10: Income Tax Act. Subject to change without notice. (10:45 a.m. at Room 9, Victoria Building, 140 Wellington St.)

OTTAWA \_ Senate social affairs committee meets in camera. Subject to change without notice. (10:45 a.m. at Room 2, Victoria Building, 140 Wellington St.)

OTTAWA \_ Senate legal affairs committee hears witnesses on Bill S-224: Parliament of Canada Act (vacancies). Subject to change without notice. (10:45 a.m. at Room 257, East Block, Parliament Hill)

OTTAWA \_ Commons environment committee meets on Bill C-377: climate change responsibilities. Subject to change without notice. (11 a.m. at Room 253-D, Centre Block, Parliament Hill)

OTTAWA \_ Commons public accounts committee meets in camera. Subject to change without notice. (11 a.m. at Room 209, West Block, Parliament Hill)

OTTAWA \_ Senate cities subcommittee hears witnesses on large cities' issues. Subject to change without notice. (11 a.m. at Room 2, Victoria Building, 140 Wellington St.)

OTTAWA \_ Commons special committee on Afghanistan subcommittee meets in camera. Subject to change without notice. (11 a.m. at Room 208, West Block, Parliament Hill)

OTTAWA \_ Commons health committee hears witnesses on 10 year plan for health care. Subject to change without notice. (11 a.m. at Room 237-C, Centre Block, Parliament Hill)

OTTAWA \_ Commons industry committee hears witnesses on science and technology. Subject to change without notice. (11 a.m. at Room 308, West Block, Parliament Hill)

OTTAWA \_ Commons natural resources committee meets in camera. Subject to change without notice. (11 a.m. at Room 371, West Block, Parliament Hill)

OTTAWA \_ Justice Minister Rob Nicholson speaks at Law Day event. (11:15 a.m. at Ottawa Technical High School, 440 Albert St., auditorium)

OTTAWA \_ Commons defence committee hears witnesses on post-traumatic stress disorder. Subject to change without notice. (3:30 p.m. at Room 362, East Block, Parliament Hill)

OTTAWA \_ Commons foreign affairs committee hears witnesses on Canada–China bilateral human rights dialogue. Subject to change without notice. (3:30 p.m. at Room 308, West Block, Parliament Hill)

x–OTTAWA \_ Government officials hold technical briefing on North American Leaders' Summit taking place April 21–22 in New Orleans. (4 p.m. at National Press Theatre, 150 Wellington St.)

OTTAWA \_ French Ambassador Daniel Jouanneau speaks on relationship between Canada and France. (6 p.m. at Rideau Club, 99 Bank St., 15th floor, Laurier Room)

## ONTARIO

x–BARRIE, Ont. \_ Premier Dalton McGuinty attends opening of Royal Victoria Hospital's portable radiation treatment clinic. (10:30 a.m. at Royal Victoria Hospital, 201 Georgian Dr.)

BURLINGTON, Ont. \_ Apparel, footwear retailer West 49 holds conference call for fourth–quarter earnings conference call. Dial 416–644–3417. Webcast at [www.newswire.ca](http://www.newswire.ca) (9 a.m.)

RICHMOND HILL, Ont. \_ The Amalgamated Transit Union, in contract talks with the Toronto Transit Commission, holds news conference. (11:30 a.m. at 600 Highway 7 East)

RICHMOND HILL, Ont. \_ Citizenship and Immigration Canada officials hold technical briefing to provide details on proposed legislative amendments to Immigration and Refugee Protection Act. (1 p.m. at Sheraton Parkway Toronto North Hotel Suites and Conference Centre, 600 Highway 7 E.)

x–TORONTO \_ Ontario legislature sits Monday through Thursday. (2 p.m. at Ontario legislature)

TORONTO \_ Cott Corp. annual meeting. Webcast at [www.cott.com](http://www.cott.com) (8:30 a.m. at Doubletree by Hilton Hotel, Room International C, 655 Dixon Rd. )

TORONTO \_ Ontario paramedics hold rally to call for right to retire at 60 like police and firefighters. (8:30 a.m. at 1 University Ave., front entrance)

TORONTO \_ Transportation Minister Jim Bradley demonstrates activation of speed limiter on big rig at Truck World 2008 show. (9:30 a.m. at International Centre, Kenworth booth 1224, Hall)

TORONTO \_ Ontario Attorney General Chris Bentley makes announcement about improving services for abused women. (10 a.m. at Ontario Victim Services Secretariat, Toronto Regional Office, 3rd floor boardroom, 700 Bay St.)

TORONTO \_ Toronto FC players and coaches available, ahead of Saturday's home opener. (10:30 a.m. at BMO Field)

TORONTO \_ Toronto FC holds a Media Day, in the Turf Room of BMO Field. Please enter through Gate 4. (10:30 a.m. at BMO Field 170 Princes' Blvd.)

TORONTO \_ Transportation Minister Jim Bradley makes announcement about improvements to beginner driving education. (11:15 a.m. at CAA Driver Training, Newtonbrook Plaza, suite 105, 5859 Yonge St.)

TORONTO \_ Former U.S. ambassadors James Blanchard and Paul Cellucci speak to Empire Club of Canada on upcoming U.S. presidential election. (12:30 p.m. at Royal York Hotel, Concert Hall, 100 Front St. W.)

TORONTO \_ Official announcement of Damon Allen's Quarterback Challenge, a fundraiser for Children's

Charities. Damon Allen, Michael Bishop and Kerry Joseph will be present. (2 p.m. at Rogers Centres)

TORONTO \_ Toronto Argonaut quarterbacks Damon Allen, Kerry Joseph and Michael Bishop announce new charity initiative. (2 p.m. at Rogers Centre, Windows Restaurant One Blue Jays Way)

TORONTO \_ Premier Dalton McGuinty launches 2008 Federated Health Charities Campaign to commemorate 25th anniversary of Federated Health Charities. (3 p.m. at MacDonald Block, 2nd floor, Ontario Room, 900 Bay St.)

TORONTO \_ Firan Technology holds annual meeting. (4:30 p.m. at TSX Centre Gallery, Exchange Tower, 130 King St. West)

TORONTO \_ Premier Dalton McGuinty meets with former Indian president A.P.J. Abdul Kalam. Closed to media. (4:30 p.m. at Ontario legislature, room 281)

TORONTO \_ Ian Smyth, 13, who has been on waiting list for a lung transplant for four months, throws out first pitch at Toronto Blue Jays game to mark National Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Week. (6:45 p.m. at Rogers Centre, 1 Blue Jays Way)

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x-CALGARY \_ Availability with Canadian men's gymnastics team. Update on injury to Olympic gold medallist Kyle Shewfelt. (12:30 p.m. at Olympic Oval, University of Calgary)

CALGARY \_ Ed Stelmach addresses annual Calgary premier's dinner. (5:30 p.m. at 120 9 Ave. S.E.)

CALGARY \_ City of Calgary tries to get an injunction against street preacher Art Pawlowski.

EDMONTON \_ Trial of Thomas Svekla, accused of second-degree murder and interfering with human remains in the deaths of two prostitutes.

EDMONTON \_ Sentencing hearing for 18-year-old, who was 17 when he stabbed Evan Grykuliak to death at his 17th birthday party in November 2006. Part of Judge James Koshman's decision will be whether the accused should be sentenced as an adult. (Youth court)

EDMONTON \_ Coalition for Cellphone-free Driving holds a workshop on how to do it. (10:30 a.m. at 2440 76 Ave)

EDMONTON \_ Annual general meeting of Alberta Seniors United Now Society. Alberta Seniors Minister Mary Anne Jablonski gives opening remarks. (11 a.m. at 9629-176 St.)

EDMONTON \_ The United Church Women of Alberta hold a rally against poverty. (11:30 a.m. at

Legislature)

EDMONTON \_ Ten soldiers from Edmonton will be presented with Chief of the Defence Staff Commendations at a military parade. General Rick Hillier will present the awards. (12:30 p.m. at CFB Edmonton)

LETHBRIDGE, Alta. \_ Const. Nichole Goodyear faces charges of unauthorized possession of a firearm in a motor vehicle and possession of a prohibited or restricted weapon with ammunition stemming from an incident in March 2007 when she was off-duty.

MEDICINE HAT, Alta. \_ Kacy Lancaster, 21, to be arraigned on charge of being an accessory to murder related to the multiple homicide of a Medicine Hat family in April 2006. (9 a.m. at Medicine Hat courthouse)

MEDICINE HAT, Alta. \_ Trial date to be set for Jeremy Steinke, accused in the first-degree murders of a Medicine Hat, Alta., couple and their young son. (9 a.m.)

RED DEER, Alta. \_ A man who pleaded guilty on Dec. 3 to charges of sexual assault and making child pornography returns to court. Defence lawyer Arnold Pigaroff has suggested his client may seek to change his plea. (9:30 a.m. at Provincial court)

RED DEER, Alta. \_ Chris Flessatti, who pleaded guilty to drunk driving causing the death of a 75-year-old man, will be sentenced.

WETASKIWIN, Alta. \_ Court appearance for Christopher Crane, 18, for election and plea on 16 charges, including aggravated assault and weapons-related offences. He was charged after a 23-month-old girl was shot and wounded in her home in a drive-by shooting on the Samson Cree First Nation April 13, 2008. (9:30 a.m. at Provincial Court)

FLIN FLON, Man. \_ Inquest into the death of Steve Ewing at Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting's copper smelter in 2000. Through April 24. (10 a.m. at Courthouse)

WINNIPEG \_ John Furlong, CEO of the Vancouver 2010 winter olympics, speaks to the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce about the economic impacts the games are expected to produce. (12:30 p.m. at The Fairmont Hotel, 2 Lombard Pl.)

SASKATOON \_ Former teacher Jeremy Houston, 53, is sentenced for accessing and possessing child pornography. (Court of Queen's Bench)

## BRITISH COLUMBIA

KELOWNA, B.C. \_ Council of Forest Industries of British Columbia annual convention on theme of Climate for Change. Speakers include B.C. Forests Minister Rich Coleman at 8:15 a.m. and B.C. Premier Gordon Campbell at 12:30 p.m. The convention runs through to April 18. (Grand Okanagan Lakefront Hotel)

VANCOUVER \_ Trial of five men accused of kidnapping university student Graham McMynn. Through April 30. (10 a.m. at B.C. Supreme Court, courtroom 20)

VANCOUVER \_ B.C. division of Canadian Union of Public Employees holds annual convention. Speakers include Author Michael Shuman, Wed., 9 a.m., B.C. NDP leader Carole James, Thursday, 1:30 p.m.; federal NDP Leader Jack Layton, Friday, 11 a.m., B.C. Federation of Labour president Jim Sinclair, Saturday, 11 a.m. Through April 19. (9 a.m. at Hyatt Regency Hotel, 655 Burrard St.)



VANCOUVER \_ Vancouver police department and Canadian Bankers' Association launch initiative to deal with 125 per cent hike in bank robberies this year, making Vancouver the bank robbery capital of North America. (10:30 a.m. at Vancouver Police Dept. – 2120 Cambie St.)

VANCOUVER \_ Grade 4 and 5 students from Lord Roberts Elementary School bid the famed hollow tree in Stanley Park goodbye. (12:30 p.m. at Hollow Tree, Stanley Park)

VANCOUVER \_ Western Wind Energy Corp. reception with presentation at 2:15 p.m. (2 p.m. at 915 W. Hastings St. – Vancouver Club, UBC Room, 3rd Floor)

VANCOUVER \_ Jinshan Gold Mines holds teleconference call to discuss recent China National Gold Group transaction. Dial 1–866–223–7781. (3 p.m.)

## NORTH

UNDATED \_ Paul Hubner, president of Baffin Inc., continues his ski trek to the North Pole in the hopes of becoming one of the first Canadians to ski both the North and South Poles. Hubner will be available for live interviews from the North Pole. Through April 26.

(The Canadian Press \_ Toronto)

# TOR OUT YYY

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**DATE:** 2008.04.16  
**KEYWORDS:** ADVISORIES  
**PUBLICATION:** bnw  
**WORD COUNT:** 337

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Three major Canadian retailers are voluntarily removing from sale all plastic water and baby bottles containing bisphenol-A.

Health Canada is expected to label it a dangerous substance, linked to breast and prostate cancer and early puberty.

Hudson's Bay Company, Canadian Tire and the Forzani Group which owns SportChek, Athlete's World and Coast Mountain Sports, have stopped selling products that contain the chemical.

All say they would rather err on the side of caution. (5)

(BIZ-Oil-Gas)

Most drivers will notice that gasoline prices went up by a few cents a litre overnight as oil hovers about 114 dollars U-S a barrel.

It closed at \$113.79 a barrel in New York yesterday, its second highest level in two days.

In the greater Toronto area, gasoline is averaging about \$1.17 a litre. (5)

(Hillier-Retires) (Audio: 02)

It's mission accomplished for General Rick Hillier.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper says Canada's chief of defence staff, who is stepping down in July, has done an excellent job of rebuilding the military and boosting morale at every level.

Known as the soldier's soldier, Hillier's accomplishments are being praised by all who know him.

He says he was under no pressure from the Harper government to resign. (5)

(Afghan-Cda-Families) (Audio: 85)

Relatives of some of the 83 Canadian soldiers killed in Afghanistan are in Kandahar for a special memorial service and to see the country first-hand where their loved ones died.

Jim Davis, the father of Corporal Paul Davis who died in 2006, says it was comforting to meet troops who stood alongside his son.

Barry Mellish, the father of Warrant Officer Frank Mellish, who died in the Battle of Panjwaii two years ago, says he son wanted to improve life for the Aghan people. (5)

(Terror Arrests)

Terrorism–related charges have been dropped against four Toronto–area men who were among 18 people arrested almost two years ago in what police then said was a major terrorist plot.

Charges against several others were thrown out earlier, leaving 10 adults and one youth still facing charges.

At the time of their arrest, police said they were planning to bomb several sites, storm the Parliament buildings in Ottawa and cut off Stephen Harper's head. (5)

(Transit–Taser)

Canada's only armed transit police have been tasing passengers who try to avoid paying fares.

Documents released under the Freedom of Information Act say Vancouver transit police have used tasers 10 times in the past 18 months, including five occasions when people tried to ride for free.

The report was provided by TransLink, the region's transit authority.

Ujjal Dosanjh, the public safety critic for the federal Liberals, calls it ``absolutely reprehensible" and ``inappropriate." (5)

(NewsWatch by Phil Godin)

# INDEX:Defence, International, Politics

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**DATE:** 2008.04.16

**KEYWORDS:** DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

**PUBLICATION:** bnw

**WORD COUNT:** 142

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KANDAHAR, Afghanistan \_ It was a dark day for Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan today as they awoke to news their champion, General Rick Hillier, is stepping down as chief of defence staff.

Word of Hillier's departure seemed to be on the lips of every soldier.

Lieutenant-Colonel Dan Drew described Hillier as a personal hero who won't be easily replaced.

Drew says Hillier almost single-handedly breathed fresh life into a Canadian military that had been robbed of its resources and its sense of value.

Drew called Hillier the best chief of defence staff since General Jacques Dextraze, who served from 1972 to 1977.

Hillier, 52, was the most visible Canadian Forces leader in a generation, a blunt, straight-talking soldier's soldier who showed visible affection for the men and women under his command and constant admiration for their work.

His visits to Afghanistan were frequent, as much to bolster the morale of the members of the rank and file, as to meet with senior commanders.

(The Canadian Press)

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# TOR OUT YYY

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**DATE:** 2008.04.16  
**KEYWORDS:** ADVISORIES  
**PUBLICATION:** bnw  
**WORD COUNT:** 301

---

Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan admit it's a sad day for them, after learning the chief of defence staff is packing it in.

General Rick Hillier announced yesterday that after more than three years in the top military post, he will retire in July.

Lieutenant-Colonel Dan Drew says it's a dark day for the Forces, noting Hillier's unique passionate and down-to-earth style make him a special leader who won't easily be replaced.

He says few leaders share Hillier's ability to move so easily between Ottawa's political circles and the rank-and-file soldiers under his command in Kandahar. (4)

(Afghan-Cda-Families)

Family members of some of the 83 Canadian soldiers killed in the Afghan military mission are in Kandahar today.

They're getting an emotional first-hand look at the country in which their loved ones lost their lives while serving for Canada.

Families are attending a memorial ceremony at the cenotaph. (4)

(Tories-RCMP-Raid) (Audio: 42)

Prime Minister Harper insists his party did nothing wrong to spark an R-C-M-P raid on Conservative party headquarters in Ottawa.

Harper confirmed yesterday's raid was connected to a protracted legal battle between the Conservative party and Canada's elections watchdog over alleged spending irregularities during the 2006 election campaign.

Liberal Leader Stephane Dion brushed aside suggestions the raid might give his election-wary party the ammunition to topple Harper's minority government. (4)

(HEALTH-Bisphenol-Bottle-Recall)

Some of Canada's biggest retail chains aren't waiting for Health Canada to declare a widely used chemical substance potentially ``dangerous."

They're pulling certain items that contain bisphenol-A from store shelves now.

Hudson's Bay Company, Canadian Tire Corporation and The Forzani Group, which owns sports-equipment chains Sport Check, Athlete's World and Coast Mountain Sports, are stripping their shelves of water and baby bottles that contain B-P-A.

B-P-A has been linked to prostate and breast cancer. (4)

(OLY-Torch-Pakistan)

Thousands of police aided by sniffer dogs are escorting the Olympic torch through Pakistan today.

Pakistan's pro-China government hopes it will be a trouble-free leg of the torch's world tour.

Other stops have sparked protests against China's human rights record. (4)

(Pope-US) (Audio: 58)

Pope Benedict will be getting a warm birthday welcome at the White House today.

At least nine-thousand guests are expected on the South Lawn for a 21-gun salute.

The crowd will also witness famed soprano Kathleen Battle's rendition of ``The Lord's Prayer" and an emotional welcome from U-S President Bush. (4)

(NewsWatch by Karen Rebot)

# INDEX:Politics, Defence

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**DATE:** 2008.04.16  
**KEYWORDS:** POLITICS DEFENCE  
**PUBLICATION:** bnw  
**WORD COUNT:** 83

---

ST. JOHN'S, N.L. – Newfoundland and Labrador Premier Danny Williams isn't known for mincing words when it comes to dealing with Ottawa.

He even found a way Tuesday to take a shot at Prime Minister Stephen Harper when asked about the departure of Chief of Defence Staff, Gen. Rick Hillier, a native Newfoundlander.

Referring to the prime minister as Steve, Williams said he wouldn't be able to work for him either describing Harper as a `difficult boss.'

Williams has been feuding with the prime minister since 2006 over offshore oil revenues.

Hillier has denied that he had problems with the prime minister.

(The Canadian Press)(VOCM)

# TOR OUT YYY

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**DATE:** 2008.04.16

**PUBLICATION:** bnw

**WORD COUNT:** 338

---

Three of Canada's major retailers are taking the bull by the horns, and voluntarily getting rid of and recalling water bottles that contain a controversial chemical.

Health Canada is expected today to label bisphenol-A a ``dangerous" substance.

It's been linked to prostate and breast cancer, and early puberty.

Canada's largest sporting-goods retailer The Forzani Group, along with Hudson's Bay Company and Canadian Tire Corporation, will clear out all water and baby bottles that contain B-P-A-based products. (3)

(Hiller-Retires) (Audio: 40)

General Rick Hillier has been the most visible military leader in a generation and a political lightning rod over his often blunt assessments of Canada's enemies and defence policy.

And now he's leaving.

Hillier says with the extension of the Afghan war now through Parliament, now is as good a time as any to retire.

He's been defence-staff chief for more than three years, but says he'll forever — and proudly — consider himself a soldier.

Prime Minister Harper praises Hillier as a great Canadian who worked well with the government. (3)

(Afghan-Cda-Families)

It's an emotional day at Kandahar Airfield for a group of visiting relatives of some fallen Canadian Forces' soldiers.

They're there for a first-hand look at the country where their loved ones gave their lives in service of Canada.

The families are attending a memorial ceremony today at the cenotaph where our 83 fallen soldiers are remembered.

Jim Davis, father of Corporal Paul Davis who died in 2006, says it was comforting to meet troops who stood alongside his son during the mission. (3)

(Terror Arrests)

Four Toronto-area men can begin putting their lives back together, now that terrorism-related charges against them were dropped yesterday in court.

The four were among 18 suspects arrested almost two years ago.



Last year, charges against three youths were dropped.

That leaves 10 adults and one youth still facing charges of attending a terrorist training camp, plotting to storm Parliament Hill, and bomb targets in Ottawa and Toronto. (3)

(Virginia–Tech–Couture)

It was one year ago today that a deranged gunman shot up 32 people on the campus of Virginia Tech university before killing himself.

Among the victims of America's deadliest–ever school shooting was 49–year–old Canadian French teacher Jocelyne Couture–Nowak.

Her daughter, Francine Dulong, says her mother inspired her to become a teacher as well — a life path she's thrilled to be taking.

Dulong will be in Blacksburg, Virginia on this sombre anniversary and will attend only a few private family rituals — nothing public. (3)

(SPORT–Woods–Knee)

Tiger Woods is out for the next four to six weeks after a knee operation — the second on his left knee in five years.

Yesterday's arthroscopic surgery was done to repair cartilage damage. (3)

(NewsWatch by Karen Rebot)

# TOR OUT YYY

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**DATE:** 2008.04.16  
**KEYWORDS:** ADVISORIES  
**PUBLICATION:** bnw  
**WORD COUNT:** 336

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The price of oil topped the 114-dollar mark in overnight trading in Singapore this morning, on the heels of its second record high close in two days.

It has since eased.

A two-dollar gain in price yesterday in New York saw oil close at \$113.79 U-S a barrel.

Traders point to signs the supply of oil on the world market will be tight.

The rise in oil is directly affecting prices at the pumps.

Gasoline prices jumped another two cents overnight in the Greater Toronto area, to about \$1.17 a litre. (1)

(BIZ-Securities-New Powers)

A controversial proposal would enable police to force witnesses to testify in white-collar crime cases.

The Globe and Mail says a task-force report prepared by the R-C-M-P and securities regulators recommends that potential witnesses who are not targets of investigation should be compelled to provide evidence.

Sources say the recommendation is part of a plan to give prosecutors new investigative powers and strengthen this country's dismal record for prosecuting securities fraud. (1)

(Hillier-Retires)

Compliments are pouring in for Canadian Forces General Rick Hillier, who confirmed yesterday he plans to step down in July.

Prime Minister Harper says in three-plus years as defence-staff chief, Hillier did ``an excellent job of rebuilding Canada's armed forces."

And retired general Lewis MacKenzie says Hillier's biggest accomplishment was elevating the Forces' morale ``at a very difficult time."

Hillier's been known as the soldiers' soldier, an outspoken advocate for the military and its troops.

His legacy will be a renewed military, equipped with new aircraft, vehicles and other equipment depleted by years of budget cuts and neglect. (1)

(India-Bus-Crash)

There's word at least 42 people have died, most of them school children, when a bus plunged into a canal

today in western India.

The Press Trust of India reports rescuers fished only four children from the water alive after the accident early today near Vadodara city.

There may have been between 50 and 60 people on the bus at the time. (1)

(Flooding–Deaths–NZ)

New Zealand's prime minister calls it ``every family and school's worst nightmare."

Six students and a teacher are dead, after a flash flood struck a high–school hiking group yesterday at a wilderness gorge on New Zealand's North Island.

Five other students were plucked to safety from the torrent. (1)

(Pope–US)

Pope Benedict will kick off his first full day of his first papal visit to the U–S today by meeting with President Bush at the White House.

Thousands are expected to be there to greet him, on what is also the pope's 81st birthday.

Benedict arrived in Washington yesterday, greeted by Bush at Andrews Air Force base.

But even before he touched down, the pope told reporters he's ``deeply ashamed" of the sexual–abuse scandal involving Catholic clergy in America. (1)

(NewsWatch by Karen Rebot)

# --Twentieth NewsWatch--

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**DATE:** 2008.04.16  
**KEYWORDS:** ADVISORIES  
**PUBLICATION:** bnw  
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General Rick Hillier says the Harper government did not press him to resign as chief of defence staff.

Hillier says after three-plus years on the job, it's time for someone else to take over as Canada's top military officer.

He says he has ``no idea" what he will do after he leaves the military on July 1st.

Hillier, who is 52, says he plans to work in some capacity until he's 65 or 70. (20)

(Tories RCMP Raid)

Prime Minister Harper is downplaying a search done by R-C-M-P officers on the Conservative party's national headquarters in Ottawa.

Harper says he's confident the his party did not misspend on advertising in the campaign for the 2006 election.

That's rejected by Liberal deputy leader Michael Ignatieff, who says it's incredible that the Mounties ``have to pry information from this government's clenched fist." (20)

(Taser Secrecy) (Audio: 183)

R-C-M-P commissioner William Elliott says the Mounties ``didn't handle this very well."

Elliott says the force should not have censored key details about the use of Tasers before agreeing to release more information.

Elliott says he hopes Canadians understand why the Mounties are not eager to release so much information, given the sensitive nature of much of the force's work. (20)

(Toddler Shot)

Leaders of a central Alberta reserve have called for R-C-M-P reinforcements after a two-year-old girl was shot and wounded in a drive-by shooting Sunday night.

Asia Saddleback is in critical but stable condition in an Edmonton hospital.

Two teenagers faces several charges in the shooting at the Samson Cree Nation, where officials say gang violence is on the rise. (20)

(Terror Arrests)

Four Toronto-area men are trying to put their lives back together after terrorism-related charges against them were dropped.

The four were among 18 suspects arrested almost two years ago.

Last year, charges against three youths were dropped.

That leaves 10 adults and one youth facing charges of attending a terrorist training camp, plotting to storm Parliament Hill, and bomb targets in Ottawa and Toronto. (20)

(Oil Prices Record)

The price of oil is at a record closing high for the second straight day.

It gained just over two-dollars to end the day in New York at \$113.79 U-S a barrel.

Traders point to signs the supply of oil on the world market will be tight. (20)

(BIZ-California Homes)

It's another sign of the severe slump in the American real estate market.

A survey shows the median price of homes in southern California plunged 24 per cent last month over March of last year.

The median price is the point where half the homes sell for more, and half for less. (20)

(NewsWatch by Bill Marshall)

## --Tenth NewsWatch--

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**DATE:** 2008.04.16  
**KEYWORDS:** ADVISORIES  
**PUBLICATION:** bnw  
**WORD COUNT:** 317

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U-S President Bush says Pope Benedict's visit is a reminder to Americans to ``distinguish between simple right and wrong."

Bush welcomed the pontiff to the White House this morning in a ceremony filled with pomp and pageantry.

Benedict is the first pope to visit the White House in 29 years — a visit that comes on his 81st birthday.

Songs and anthems played at the ceremony included the national anthem of the Holy See and ``Happy Birthday."

Benedict is on the first full day of a six-day visit to the U-S. (10)

(Afghan-Cda-Hillier) (Audio: 125)

Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan say General Rick Hillier will be greatly missed when he retires as Chief of Defence Staff in July.

Lieutenant-Colonel Dan Drew, second in command of Canada's effort to train the Afghan National Army, says it's a dark day for the Canadian Forces.

He says Hillier's unique down-to-earth style made him a special leader who won't easily be replaced.

Hillier is credited with boosting morale among all members of the military and rebuilding the once beleaguered armed forces. (10)

(Transit-Taser) (Audio: 135)

Vancouver's transit police service has issued a terse release in response to word that officers are using Tasers against passengers who don't pay fares.

It says its members have safety in mind when weapons, including Tasers, are used against passengers.

The release comes as a public outcry builds in response to documents showing transit police used Tasers 10 times in the past 18 months — including five times against riders who allegedly were trying to evade paying fares.

Vancouver is the only city in Canada that has armed transit cops. (10)

(NL-SCOC-Justice)

Newfoundland's justice minister says it's about time his province had a representative on the Supreme Court of Canada.

Jerome Kennedy says he's discussed it with his federal counterpart, following the impending retirement of Justice Michel Bastarache.

Ottawa will have to name a new justice from the Atlantic region.

Kennedy says since joining Canada in 1949, his province has never had representation on the most important court in the country. (10)

(Olympic Torch Relay)

Pakistan's pro-China government planned for a peaceful run of the Olympic torch relay -- and got it.

About 60 athletes took turns carrying the flame around a sports stadium, after a run through the Pakistani capital was scrapped for security reasons.

Thousands of police were on hand, but crowds were sparse. (10)

(Toronto-Plane-Circling)

A small plane has landed at a Toronto-area airport after problems with the landing gear forced it to circle in the air for two hours.

The plane is a six-seater Piper Aztec and is believed to have been carrying two people.

The aircraft's front landing gear partially deployed, which posed a safety problem. (10)

(NewsWatch by Phil Godin)

# INDEX:Advisories

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**DATE:** 2008.04.16  
**KEYWORDS:** ADVISORIES  
**PUBLICATION:** bnw  
**WORD COUNT:** 271

---

(NL–Williams–Harper)

Newfoundland and Labrador's outspoken premier is taking a swipe at Prime Minister Stephen Harper --- while praising Chief of Defence Staff, General Rick Hillier.

Danny Williams was asked today about the departure of Hillier, a native Newfoundlander.

Williams said Hillier has ``done an outstanding job," before adding, ``but you know he's got a difficult boss."

Williams has been feuding with the prime minister since 2006 over offshore oil revenues.

(The Canadian Press)

(NS–Jail–Overcrowding)

The head of a union representing correctional workers in Nova Scotia says complaints regarding on–the–job safety have nothing to do with ongoing contract negotiations.

Joan Jessome is responding to comments made today by the director of correctional services, Fred Honsberger.

Honsberger told the legislature's public accounts committee today that embarrassing stories coming from provincial jails are being driven by contract negotiations with guards.

Recent media reports have quoted unnamed guards complaining of overcrowding and a lack of training and equipment.

(The Canadian Press)

(NB–Fatal–Crash)

A single–vehicle crash in southeastern New Brunswick has claimed the life of a Sainte–Marie–de–Kent man.

Mathieu Desvarennnes (DAY'–var–EHN') was killed when his car left Route 115 in McKees Mills and crashed into a ditch around midnight.

The 24–year–old was pronounced dead in hospital.

The cause of the accident remains under investigation.

(CJMO)

(NS–Drug–Bust)



A 43-year-old man faces a number of charges after a drug bust yesterday in Nova Scotia's Lunenburg County.

Police executed a search warrant at a residence in Aldersville and dismantled an indoor marijuana grow-op.

The suspect faces production, possession and trafficking charges, along with unsafe storage of firearms.

(CKBW)

(NS-Drug-Sentence)

A Kings County, Nova Scotia man has been handed a 23-month conditional sentence on drug charges.

Twenty-six-year-old David Little was charged in October after police raided a home on the Cambridge Mountain Road and discovered a small grow-op.

They seized about 40 mature marijuana plants, a small quantity of dried marijuana, and some growing equipment.

Little was charged with production of marijuana and possession for the purpose of trafficking.

(CKEN)

(NS-Music-Week)

Nova Scotia Music Week will be celebrated in Pictou County this year.

After several years in Liverpool, Music Nova Scotia has announced its annual industry gathering is moving this year.

The four-day event includes dozens of performances, workshops and a gala awards show.

The 12th annual event will be held November 6th to 9th.

(CKEC)

(Atlantic Update by Melanie Patten)

## --Eighth NewsWatch--

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**DATE:** 2008.04.16  
**KEYWORDS:** ADVISORIES  
**PUBLICATION:** bnw  
**WORD COUNT:** 372

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Some members of the Canadian Forces in Afghanistan are saddened to learn their beloved commander, General Rick Hillier, will be stepping down this summer.

Lieutenant-Colonel Dan Drew, whose troops help train the Afghan National Army, says Hillier stood up for the military when no one else would.

By the time he retires in July, Hillier will have served for more than three years as Canada's chief of defence staff. (8)

(Afghan-Cda-Families) (Audio: 119)

It was an emotional gathering of Canadian families who lost loved ones during this country's mission in Afghanistan.

The group took part in a solemn memorial at the cenotaph in Kandahar where Canada's fallen soldiers are remembered.

Some family members say they were comforted by meeting soldiers who served with the Canadians who died.

Jim Davis, whose son, Corporal Paul Davis, died in 2006, told the touching story of an Afghan family who attended his funeral and expressed thanks for his sacrifice. (8)

(Virginia-Tech-Anniversary) (Audio: 92)

Virginia Tech's Norris Hall will be closed today to mark the one-year anniversary of the shootings that left 33 people dead.

A morning ceremony, an evening candlelight vigil and small, reflective gatherings are planned throughout the day.

Canadian teacher Jocelyne Couture-Nowak was among those killed in the deadliest school shooting in U-S history.

Her 25-year-old daughter, Francine Dulong, says she will be in Blacksburg today but won't be attending any public events -- only a few private family rituals. (8)

(BC-Children-Killed-Mother)

R-C-M-P are refusing to comment on new reports from the neighbours of three slain children in Merritt, B-C.

The neighbours say the mother of the children was not seen around her Merritt trailer home on the weekend her three children were killed.

Neighbour Robert Richard says Allan Schoenborn, the father of the children, was caring for them and the mother did not return until Sunday, April 6th.

Police have rejected earlier reports that the mother found the children dead after returning from a short errand.

Schoenborn remains the prime suspect in the killings and the search for him continues. (8)

(Toddler-Shot) (Audio: 45)

Alberta's Samson Cree Nation has declared a community crisis in the wake of a drive-by shooting on the weekend that has left a two-year-old girl in critical condition in hospital.

Chief Marvin Yellowbird went on a community radio station to say that everyone must come together to help make the reserve safer.

According to the R-C-M-P, several gangs on the reserve are battling to control the drug trade. (8)

(ODDITY-Garden-Lion)

Forget about barking dogs.

Police in Romania say a family complained that they were being kept awake by the constant roaring of their neighbour's lion.

When officers investigated, they not only found a caged three-year-old lioness in the man's yard, there were also two deer, a stag and two peacocks roaming around.

A 28-year-old man is charged with illegal possession of wild animals and could be sentenced to up to a year in jail. (8)

(NewsWatch by Phil Godin)

# INDEX:Defence, Politics

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**DATE:** 2008.04.16  
**KEYWORDS:** DEFENCE POLITICS  
**PUBLICATION:** bnw  
**WORD COUNT:** 123

---

OTTAWA \_ There's no shortage of praise for Canada's outgoing chief of defence staff.

General Rick Hillier plans to step down in July after more than three years as Canada's top military officer.

He insists he was under no pressure from Prime Minister Harper to resign.

Former prime minister Paul Martin, who appointed him to the job, told The Canadian Press Hillier was the right man for the right time.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper praised Hillier in the House of Commons, calling him a ``great Canadian," and saying he has worked well with the government.

Governor General Michaëlle Jean says Hillier had talked with her for some time about his plans to leave, and praised his leadership.

Warrant Officer Dan Demers, a military recruiter, says the general will be missed by the rank and file.

Hillier says he has ``no idea" what he will do after he retires.

He says he wants to play some golf, spend time with his family, recharge his batteries, ``and then see what the future brings."

(The Canadian Press)

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# PM faces challenges on foreign affairs file

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**BYLINE:** Les Whittington  
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The politics of the Afghan military mission appear to have suddenly become a lot tougher for Prime Minister Stephen Harper.

Gen. Rick Hillier, who did more than anyone else to convince Canadians that the mission is worthwhile, will soon be retiring, while Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier, the man whose comments may have undermined years of Canadian activities in Afghanistan, is staying around.

Bernier sparked an uproar by interfering in Afghan affairs with the suggestion that the governor of Kandahar should be replaced.

Despite opposition party demands that Bernier be fired for causing a diplomatic incident with Canada's partners in Afghanistan, Harper declined and expressed his faith in the 45-year-old newcomer to politics from Quebec.

Bernier, whose appointment as foreign affairs minister last summer after a lacklustre stint in the industry portfolio was widely seen as guided by domestic political considerations, has been in place during a rocky period for the Harper government on the international stage.

"I was always surprised that Bernier was chosen for foreign affairs," said University of Toronto political scientist Nelson Wiseman.

"I don't think he really had much grounding there.

"I thought it was done for domestic political reasons to appeal to Quebecers.

"Because Bernier was such an ill-fit in that portfolio, it also suggested to me that Harper didn't think much of the foreign affairs department and that he was going to be his own foreign affairs minister," Wiseman said.

In addition to the controversy over Afghanistan, the government suffered a black eye when it was accused of meddling in American political affairs over leaks from the Harper team suggesting that Democratic presidential hopeful Barack Obama was only playing politics when he called for a renegotiation of NAFTA.

NDP foreign affairs critic Paul Dewar says that, based on his conversations with experts in that area, the government is in danger of seriously damaging Canada's reputation abroad.

"The buzz around is that Canada's losing its credibility on the international stage. We still have a lot of credibility but, if we don't shore up our operations and, quite frankly, our depth of experience soon, our credibility will be shot."

Fen Hampson, professor of international affairs at Carleton University, said that on foreign issues the government is "somewhat gaffe-prone and accident-prone and it does reflect the inexperience of the foreign policy team, particularly Bernier."

He said the government also has a problem because it has yet to win the trust of the foreign affairs department and the diplomats and others Harper needs to carry out his plans on the ground in places like Afghanistan.

Even so, Hampson said despite the controversy in Afghanistan and the "NAFTA-gate" blow-up, Canada's action in Afghanistan has led the United States government and NATO to take Ottawa more seriously than in recent years.

# Hillier ideal model

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**PUBLICATION:** The StarPhoenix (Saskatoon)  
**DATE:** 2008.04.17  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** Forum  
**PAGE:** A12  
**SOURCE:** Calgary Herald  
**WORD COUNT:** 167

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Following is a Calgary Herald editorial.

It is too bad that Chief of the Defence Staff Gen. Rick Hillier feels it's time to go.

He was the right man, at the right time, for the right job, whose peculiar blend of political savvy, forthright talk and personal experience at the pointed end of the spear, made him credible to politicians, Canadians and the uniformed men and women whose lives he held in his hand.

In a very real way, he put the face of the Canadian Forces on our kitchen tables. And, having presiding over the largest program of re-equipment the forces has seen since the end of the Cold War, he has restored them to the professional excellence a nation such as Canada should require for itself.

He leaves big boots to fill. Happily, there are people with combat experience at the highest levels, able to take over.

Whoever replaces Hillier must be a leader, not a manager. This country has troops in combat, and men and women are losing their lives. They deserve to be led by somebody who knows what it is to come under fire, and fire back.

That was Hillier. His successor must be the same.

# Retiring general hailed as hero

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**IDNUMBER** 200804170050  
**PUBLICATION:** The Leader–Post (Regina)  
**DATE:** 2008.04.17  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** B10  
**DATELINE:** KANDAHAR AIRFIELD,  
Afghanistan  
**BYLINE:** Ryan Cormier  
**SOURCE:** Canwest News Service  
**WORD COUNT:** 561

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KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan — Soldiers spoke Wednesday with regret about the impending loss of a leader who gave them a renewed sense of national pride in their work and the tools to ensure it was done properly.

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"Gen. Hillier is a personal hero of mine," said Lt.–Col. Dan Drew, deputy commander of the Operational Mentor and Liaison Team. "He took us out of the dark ages of the 90s. He re–shaped us, re–formed us and made us proud to be who we are. He made the Canadian people know who we are and be proud of us again. That was an amazing accomplishment."

When Drew heard of Hillier's resignation, he e–mailed the chief of defence staff. Five minutes later, he had a response. It's what soldiers have come to expect from a leader who always put them first.

Hillier's visits to the Kandahar Airfield were a major event for troops, including one a month ago where he brought the Stanley Cup along with him.

"He's absolutely fantastic for morale," said Master Cpl. Bob Gaudet. "We look very much forward to him coming out here. We enjoy having him out here. He's our leader."

Hillier will step down in July.

His reputation was that he considered a conversation with a private in the trenches every bit as important, if not more, than speaking with politicians or heads of state.

Cpl. Brian Lussier, a reservist with the Royal Edmonton Regiment, fondly remembers meeting Hillier on his last visit.

"It's hard to take orders from someone if they don't come out and see what's going on with the troops," Lussier said. "He was very involved in overlooking all the development over here. He was very supportive. If he found out one of us had a problem, he took care of it quick."



A lot of the equipment used by the troops in Afghanistan exists because of Hillier's persistence in pressing for more funding so his soldiers had everything they needed to do their job well.

Among the items Hillier crossed off the military shopping list since he was appointed in 2005 are C-17 and C-130-J transport aircraft, armoured logistical trucks, precision artillery guns, mine-detection vehicles and computerized war rooms.

He instituted the emotional mass goodbye and homecoming gatherings of family and friends that are the last and first things a Canadian sees of their home country when they depart for theatre and return.

There is a solid consensus among the soldiers in Afghanistan that whoever replaces Hillier has enormous boots to fill.

Hillier has been closely associated with the Afghanistan mission for years. First, as the commander of the International Security Assistance Force as Canadian troops began to move into the now-crucial Kandahar area. Then as the highest-ranked public face of a war that has seen 82 Canadian troops killed and inspired fierce debate in coffee shops and government offices across the country.

The hard work paid off last month as Canada committed to stay in Afghanistan until 2011.

Perhaps the most important thing Hillier did for the troops was also the simplest — he took care of them.

"He personally led a number of initiatives that improved the way we live and also improved the living conditions for our people that are wounded," Drew said. "Also for the people that died over here, to look after their families. There's only one Gen. Hillier. I'm thinking Hillier for prime minister next."

# As defender of the truth, Rick Hillier earned respect on all sides; Canada's top general accomplished his mission, and will be hard to replace

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**IDNUMBER** 200804170041  
**PUBLICATION:** Edmonton Journal  
**DATE:** 2008.04.17  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** Opinion  
**PAGE:** A18  
**COLUMN:** J.L. Granatstein  
**KEYWORDS:** POLITICIANS; POLITICAL PARTIES; GOVERNMENT; CANADA  
**DATELINE:** OTTAWA  
**BYLINE:** J.L. Granatstein  
**SOURCE:** Freelance  
**WORD COUNT:** 748

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OTTAWA – In one week in February last year, I went twice to hear the chief of the defence staff, Gen. Rick Hillier, speak.

The first time, he talked to a large military audience in Ottawa and had the officers, serving and retired, junior and senior, on their feet cheering.

The second address was in Toronto, and a collection of bankers and industrialists laughed at his jokes, cheered him to the echo, and leapt from their chairs applauding when he finished.

There has not been a Canadian general officer with that kind of powerful charisma for decades, likely not since Gen. Jacques Dextraze in the 1970s or Gen. Andrew McNaughton in the early days of the Second World War.

How did Hillier do it? First, he was funny, patriotic, and transparently sincere in the way he singled out soldiers, sailors, and airmen in the audience who had been decorated for meritorious service.

Wars to Hillier were not fought only for generals. It was the soldiers who did the hard, dirty work, and the chief wanted Canadians to know this.

The troops loved him for his obvious concern for them, and so did the people. With his speeches and presence, he made sure that everyone understood that war was a costly business, and the extraordinary outpouring of respect and patriotism when the remains of those killed in Afghanistan return home is clear evidence that he succeeded.

But it was not only the military and the public that Hillier affected. He moved governments as no other soldier in our time has.

Former defence minister Bill Graham jumped him over the heads of more senior officers to be chief of the defence staff — and will still say how proud he is of his choice.

As defender of the truth, Rick Hillier earned respect on all sides; Canada's top general accomplished his mission, and will be hard to replace

Graham and Hillier together then moved prime minister Paul Martin, hitherto no special fan of the Canadian Forces, to adopt a new International Security Policy in 2005, the first defence statement in years to make sense, with its new vigorous approach.

Martin and Graham's approbation might not have been an automatic guarantee that the new government of Stephen Harper would approve of Hillier, but the chief made the turn seamlessly, and Harper's hard line on the need for Canada to carry its full share of the Afghanistan burden fit perfectly with the Hillier approach.

And the general's approach was tough indeed. Hillier clearly believed that the idea that Canada's natural role — for some Canadians, the only role — was peacekeeping had gone too far in capturing the public mind. Putting Canadian soldiers into Kandahar helped begin knocking the powerful peacekeeping mythology right between the eyes.

Hillier didn't succeed completely — to listen to the New Democratic Party's members of Parliament and the twaddle peddled by some "defence" institutes is to be certain of that.

But at the very least, large segments of public opinion and the government now understand that sometimes only the careful application of force can work to achieve Canadian interests.

It was not that Hillier opposed peacekeeping in principle or that he was averse to seeing Canadians serve the United Nations. Instead, it was simply that he understood that wearing a blue beret could not be the only role for the Canadian Forces.

To him, Canada had international responsibilities to its neighbours, friends, and allies.

Our soldiers, sailors, and airmen had to be ready for operations that ranged from traditional peacekeeping to war fighting, along with everything in between, and Hillier also set out to remind the Canadian Forces of this.

No serviceman or woman any longer could assume that military service was simply a pleasant job. Now the unlimited liability of the soldier is once again at the forefront of the military mind.

But if a soldier is asked to risk his life for Canada, the government and people must accept their obligations as well.

If Canada sends its men and women to fight, it must give them the tools they need to do the job.

Here, Hillier had extraordinary success.

As the mission in Afghanistan altered, as the Taliban changed its tactics, the Canadians serving in Kandahar received the tools to do their jobs.

New long-range transport aircraft, vehicles, tanks, artillery, better personal equipment, and devices that could begin to sniff out the improvised explosive devices that have killed and wounded so many — whatever they required, the troops received. And now with new helicopters expected by the autumn and with unmanned aerial vehicles on the way, Hillier has done his best for his soldiers overseas.

Yes, Hillier had his difficulties with his political masters.

Calling the Taliban "detestable murderers and scumbags" was not tactful in our so polite nation, even if they were.

Labelling the Jean Chretien era "a decade of darkness" for the Canadian Forces might have seemed a

As defender of the truth, Rick Hillier earned respect on all sides; Canada's top general accomplished his mis-

politically loaded remark to Liberal defence critics, although it was absolutely correct.

But telling the truth was Hillier's forte. It was why his troops loved him.

It was why the public responded, and it is why Rick Hillier will be almost impossible to replace with anyone of similar ability and charisma.

J.L. Granatstein is a senior research fellow at the Canadian Defence and Foreign Affairs Institute

As defender of the truth, Rick Hillier earned respect on all sides; Canada's top general accomplished his mis-

# Stand and salute General Hillier

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**PUBLICATION:** Edmonton Journal  
**DATE:** 2008.04.17  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** Opinion  
**PAGE:** A18  
**KEYWORDS:** POLITICIANS; POLITICAL PARTIES; GOVERNMENT; CANADA  
**SOURCE:** The Edmonton Journal  
**WORD COUNT:** 423

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General Rick Hillier was the right man in the right place at the right time for Canada's armed forces.

He seized the opportunity presented by the Afghanistan mission, by the arrival of a Conservative government in a precarious minority parliament, and by a growing popular suspicion about the limits of soft power and peacekeeping, to put Canada's Armed Forces on the road to being a more modern, better-equipped and respected force.

Canadians can only hope Prime Minister Stephen Harper is as wise in his choice of a successor as former prime minister Paul Martin was in appointing a man who could be relied upon to speak his mind with military bluntness on behalf of the forces whose lives are placed in his hands.

Perhaps because they are equally strong-willed on matters of principle, the Harper-Hillier marriage hasn't exactly been all roses and chilled champagne. Most memorably, public statements at odds with then-defence minister Gordon O'Connor about the state of preparedness of the Afghan army ended in O'Connor's replacement, not Hillier's — an outcome that can not have amused a prime minister who prefers subordinates who know how to stay "on message."

But as Harper doubtless understands now, Hillier's willingness to stand and fight, and the Canadian public's instinctive willingness to accept Hillier's perspective, has served Canada and the Conservative government extremely well. For to the extent Canadians now accept the need for a more expensive, vigorous military, and the need to fight and take casualties for what we believe in, it is because they knew the chief of the defence staff was more than a forelock-tugger toeing the party line.

The measure of the man could be seen and heard at the ceremony when he was appointed in 2005. In the presence of Paul Martin and then-defence minister Bill Graham, he pointedly rejected the neglect of the past.

"In this country, we could probably not give enough resources to the men and women (in uniform) to do all the things that we ask them to do. ... But we can give them too little, and that is what we are doing now. Remember them in your budgets."

And a final word might be appropriate, at a time when we naturally and rightly worry more about men and women of lower rank, on the front lines in Afghanistan, than we do about the brass fighting institutional battles in

Ottawa. Just imagine how stressful it must be, being the person in charge when soldiers are coming home in coffins, or with life-changing injuries.

We've been lucky to have Rick Hillier, and can only hope his replacement is as good.

# Troops see Hillier as inspiration; 'He's a personal hero of mine,' soldier says

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**IDNUMBER** 200804170017  
**PUBLICATION:** Edmonton Journal  
**DATE:** 2008.04.17  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** A7  
**ILLUSTRATION:** Colour Photo: Hillier;  
**KEYWORDS:** CANADIANS; ARMED FORCES  
**DATELINE:** KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan  
**BYLINE:** Ryan Cormier  
**SOURCE:** Canwest News Service  
**WORD COUNT:** 363

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# Hillier exit hits troops hard

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**SOURCETAG** 0804170347  
**PUBLICATION:** The Winnipeg Sun  
**DATE:** 2008.04.17  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** 12  
**ILLUSTRATION:** photo of RICK HILLIER Leaving post  
**BYLINE:** CP  
**DATELINE:** KANDAHAR  
**WORD COUNT:** 192

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'More focused'

"We're more focused on operations now, we care more about our own people, and Gen. Hillier's the guy who led us out of that darkness."

Hillier, 52, was the most visible Forces leader in a generation, a blunt, straight-talking "soldier's soldier" who showed visible affection for the "soldiers, sailors, airmen and airwomen" under his command and constant admiration for their work.

"He is one of the pinnacle figures in the Canadian Forces that is going to be missed," Master Cpl. Bob Gaudet said. **KEYWORDS=WORLD**

# Four-star superstar Gen. Rick Hillier's blunt style won the trust of Canadians

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**SOURCETAG** 0804170343  
**PUBLICATION:** The Winnipeg Sun  
**DATE:** 2008.04.17  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** Editorial/Opinion  
**PAGE:** 11  
**BYLINE:** GREG WESTON, SUN MEDIA  
**WORD COUNT:** 508

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In the capital city of process and routine, the sight of Gen. Rick Hillier jogging past the Parliament Buildings barely an hour before he was due in the prime minister's office to resign as the nation's top soldier was both unexpected and entirely in character.

Ordinarily, the hours leading up to the so-long salute by a chief of defence staff would have engulfed Hillier in a bureaucratic circus of last-minute memos, meetings and media preparations.

But there he was Tuesday afternoon out for a relaxed jog in his red running duds, merrily galloping past us down the sidewalk, laughing as Sun Media's Kathleen Harris doggedly tried to catch up in heels.

It was all vintage Rick Hillier, a four-star superstar revered by his troops and feared by politicians, the outspoken and charismatic military leader who marches — and apparently even jogs — to his own drummer.

At a time when the country is suffering a critical dearth of inspirational leadership, Hillier's departure leaves a void of national proportion.

As well-deserved tributes continue to pour in for the colourful Newfoundlander who led the Canadian military in transition from peacekeeping corps to modern fighting force, the inner circle of Stephen Harper's government is apparently suffering some ambivalence.

Hillier arrived to a kind of hero's welcome at a CTV bash Tuesday evening as political and media celebs alike lined up to shake his hand, and share the same picture frame.

## Opinions split

Yet the numerous ministers of the Harper cabinet in attendance seemed divided between those desperately seeking a photo-op with the general, and others equally determined to avoid one.

It is no secret that Hillier's outspoken style caused bouts of terminal heartburn for the control freaks around this PM.

The general's honest assessments of Canada's efforts in Afghanistan were definitely not grease for the Conservative spin machine.

Hillier's assertion, for instance, that creating stability in Afghanistan could take another decade or more, likely did not enhance the Harper government's political strategy to move Canada's commitment ahead in relatively short increments.

Similarly, the script for government's grand public relations campaign to emphasize Canada's humanitarian efforts in Afghanistan certainly did not include Hillier's famous quote: "We are not the public service of Canada. We are not just another department. We are the Canadian Forces and our job is to be able to kill people."

When the general said this week (with a straight face) that he got along famously with the PM and staff, he was overlooking the famous collegiality that helped win former defence minister Gordon O'Connor a well-earned cabinet demotion.

No matter. As Hillier marches out the exit this summer, we are all the better for his candour.

His departure may also leave the Harper government with new challenges easily as problematic as a general's occasional shots from the lip.

Fact is, Hillier's blunt-talking, down-home style helped to win the hearts and trust of Canadians for a war effort that might otherwise be fiercely unpopular.

Pollsters also report that Hillier's overt and unswerving devotion to his soldiers and their families seems to have connected with a group not naturally attracted in the majority to either war-making or the Conservatives — namely, women.

No politician

"I admit I am no politician, and I don't think I'm very wise," Hillier said. "But I represent the 87,000 forces members and their families." What mother could resist?

Finally, among all those who have occupied the office of highest command, Hillier has been the most effective advocate for re-equipping the military in decades.

The good news is General Rick leaves behind a number of highly capable successors, albeit with the nearly impossible task of filling some very large running shoes.

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**SOURCETAG** 0804170871  
**PUBLICATION:** The Toronto Sun  
**DATE:** 2008.04.17  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** Editorial/Opinion  
**PAGE:** 20  
**BYLINE:** GREG WESTON, SUN MEDIA  
**WORD COUNT:** 508

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**SOURCETAG** 0804170859  
**PUBLICATION:** The Toronto Sun  
**DATE:** 2008.04.17  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** 10  
**ILLUSTRATION:** photo of RICK HILLIER Leaving post  
**BYLINE:** CP  
**DATELINE:** KANDAHAR  
**WORD COUNT:** 192

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# Life and career

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**SOURCETAG** 0804160442  
**PUBLICATION:** The Toronto Sun  
**DATE:** 2008.04.16  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** 4  
**BYLINE:** CP  
**DATELINE:** OTTAWA  
**WORD COUNT:** 123

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A brief look at the life and career of Gen. Rick Hillier, Canada's retiring defence chief:

- Born — 1955 in Campbellton, Nfld.
- Education — Bachelor of Science from Memorial Univ. of Newfoundland (1975); honorary member, Royal Military College of Canada.
- Career — Regimental duties in a tank unit; staff jobs in Montreal and National Defence Headquarters in Ottawa; appointed army chief in 2003; became defence chief in 2005; has served across Canada, twice each in Europe and the United States, where he was the first Canadian to serve as deputy commanding general of III Corps, U.S. Army, in Fort Hood, Texas; appointed one term as senior NATO commander in Afghanistan.
- Hobbies — Enjoys many recreational pursuits, in particular "runs slowly, plays hockey poorly and golfs not well at all."
- Family — Wife, Joyce; two sons, Chris and Steven; grandson, Jack. KEYWORDS=CHRONOLOGY

## Quote

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**IDNUMBER** 200804170051  
**PUBLICATION:** Calgary Herald  
**DATE:** 2008.04.17  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** Q: Queries – Quibbles – Quirks  
**PAGE:** A19  
**ILLUSTRATION:** Photo: Gen. Rick Hillier;  
**KEYWORDS:** 0  
**SOURCE:** Calgary Herald  
**WORD COUNT:** 22

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"There's only one General Hillier. I'm thinking Hillier for prime minister next."

Lt.-Col. Dan Drew, on Gen. Rick Hillier's resignation as chief of defence staff.



# Troops lament loss of departing Hillier

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**IDNUMBER** 200804170023  
**PUBLICATION:** Calgary Herald  
**DATE:** 2008.04.17  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** A8  
**ILLUSTRATION:** Photo: Rick Hillier;  
**KEYWORDS:** CANADIANS; ARMED FORCES  
**DATELINE:** KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan  
**BYLINE:** Ryan Cormier  
**SOURCE:** Canwest News Service  
**WORD COUNT:** 377

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Soldiers spoke Wednesday with regret about the impending loss of a leader who gave them a renewed sense of national pride in their work and the tools to ensure it was done properly.

News of Gen. Rick Hillier's resignation began to filter through the ranks Tuesday night as soldiers crowded together in concrete shelters after a rocket attack on the Kandahar Airfield. By Wednesday morning, everyone had heard of the loss of a man they consider the head of their family.

"Gen. Hillier is a personal hero of mine," said Lt.-Col. Dan Drew, deputy commander of the Operational Mentor and Liaison Team. "He took us out of the dark ages of the '90s. He re-shaped us, re-formed us and made us proud to be who we are. He made the Canadian people know who we are and be proud of us again. That was an amazing accomplishment."

When Drew heard of Hillier's resignation, he e-mailed the chief of defence staff. Five minutes later, he had a response. It's what soldiers have come to expect from a leader who always put them first.

Hillier's visits to the Kandahar Airfield were a major event for troops, including one a month ago when he brought the Stanley Cup along with him.

"He's absolutely fantastic for morale," said Master Cpl. Bob Gaudet. "We look very much forward to him coming out here. We enjoy having him out here. He's our leader."

Hillier will step down in July.

His reputation was that he considered a conversation with a private in the trenches every bit as important, if not more, than speaking with politicians or heads of state.

Cpl. Brian Lussier, a reservist with the Royal Edmonton Regiment, fondly remembers meeting Hillier on his last visit.

"It's hard to take orders from someone if they don't come out and see what's going on with the troops," Lussier said. "He was very involved in overlooking all the development over here. He was very supportive. If he found out one of us had a problem, he took care of it quick."

A lot of the equipment used by the troops in Afghanistan exists because of Hillier's persistence in pressing for more funding so his soldiers had everything they needed to do their job well.

He instituted the emotional mass goodbye and homecoming gatherings of family and friends that are the last and first things a Canadian sees of their home country when they depart for theatre and return.

# Motive for Tory office raids a head-scratcher

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**IDNUMBER** 200804170019  
**PUBLICATION:** Calgary Herald  
**DATE:** 2008.04.17  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** A5  
**COLUMN:** Calgary's Eye on National Politics  
**KEYWORDS:** POLITICAL PARTIES; POLITICS; POLITICIANS  
**DATELINE:** OTTAWA  
**BYLINE:** Don Martin  
**SOURCE:** Calgary Herald  
**WORD COUNT:** 625

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Just in case television and Liberal campaign cameras missed it the first time, RCMP staged an instant replay of their Elections Canada 'raid' or 'visit' on Conservative headquarters Wednesday.

After spending Tuesday freely roaming offices emptied of all party officials, flipping through files or sifting through e-mails at leisurely will, police-escorted Elections Canada staff still had not satisfied their material desires and returned for a second look. They may well be back at it again today before the three-day search warrant expires, although I'm betting any damning documents initially overlooked have been severely shredded by now.

Of course, we don't officially know what they're looking for because the warrant remains sealed. But it's undoubtedly concerning the old-fashioned in-and-out, a scheme to funnel party cash through local candidates as a way to dodge a national limit on campaign spending, an allegation now the subject of a civil lawsuit between the Conservatives and the elections czar.

It's all a bit of a head scratcher because the search warrant is an invasion tactic of last resort when polite requests and increasingly angry demands for evidence handover have been rebuffed by the party under investigation.

The Conservatives insist nobody from Elections Canada has bothered to contact the party to request any documents for the last three months.

The real interesting part, which has a lot of Conservative MPs in a frothing lather, is how two camera crews magically surfaced to stake out both floors rented by the Conservative party within minutes of the search warrant being executed.

The RCMP cruisers were unmarked and the police scanner didn't broadcast the "visit," so unless CBC journalists are telepathic, the only plausible explanation is that they were tipped by Elections Canada.

And being dedicated Newsworld watchers, gleeful Liberals armed with their own cameras scrambled to record the "visitation" within minutes of the news being broadcast.

It should be noted that the Conservatives, instantly grasping the damning optics of the "visit," promptly leaked

Gen. Rick Hillier's retirement bombshell a day ahead of schedule, the better to split the salivating newsies between two major stories. Yes, it worked like a charm.

Still, with footage in the can and a campaign script that writes itself, this is no longer an issue of guilt or Conservative innocence in the showdown with election officials.

That's the beauty of securing a conviction in the court of public opinion -- optics, hearsay and circumstantial evidence can instantly gas chamber the innocent with no avenue of appeal.

And on this particular count, shots of warrant-bearing cops wandering the headquarters of the allegedly clean Conservatives are Tory tarnish and Grit gold.

This is why I find Election Canada's behaviour somewhat squeamish. Nobody can recall such heavy-handed behaviour before and there's no explanation why police were required when a phone call might've sufficed.

The Conservatives insist they'll have their day in court and argue convincingly Elections Canada will be proven wrong.

There's documentation suggesting the other three parties are not without sin at the ins and outs of creative campaign financing.

Perhaps the only explanation for these tactics is this being return fire from an ongoing feud between the Conservatives and the ballooning Elections Canada bureaucracy.

This party has a history of campaign chicanery dating back to its Alliance days and has been in almost constant angry conflict with election authorities for a wide variety of alleged improprieties.

The most recent case of an ethical slur cast on the party's electioneering is this Friends of Science funny business, which saw money flow from a community charity group through a University of Calgary trust fund, to mysteriously pay for anti-Kyoto, anti-Liberal policy radio ads in Ontario.

The bottom line may well be a pox on all federal party houses.

They're all guilty of having fun with election financing figures and voting procedures at some time in their history.

Besides, it all evens out in the end.

The last time RCMP tarred and feathered a federal party, it was in the middle of the 2006 election campaign when the force revealed it was investigating the Liberals for income trust leaks, a charge ultimately dismissed.

When armed RCMP knocked on its door this week, it was just the Conservatives' turn to be smeared with guilt by insinuation.

Perhaps, then, the prime minister should stop fighting his own officers of Parliament and call it even, Stephen.

dmartin@canwest.com

# Hillier exit hits troops hard

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**SOURCETAG:** 0804170531  
**PUBLICATION:** The Ottawa Sun  
**DATE:** 2008.04.17  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** 25  
**ILLUSTRATION:** photo of RICK HILLIER Leaving post  
**BYLINE:** CP  
**DATELINE:** KANDAHAR  
**WORD COUNT:** 192

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"We're more focused on operations now, we care more about our own people, and Gen. Hillier's the guy who led us out of that darkness."

Hillier, 52, was the most visible Forces leader in a generation, a blunt, straight-talking "soldier's soldier" who showed visible affection for the "soldiers, sailors, airmen and airwomen" under his command and constant admiration for their work.

"He is one of the pinnacle figures in the Canadian Forces that is going to be missed," Master Cpl. Bob Gaudet said. **KEYWORDS=WORLD**

# Four-star superstar Gen. Rick Hillier's blunt style won the trust of Canadians

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**SOURCETAG** 0804170514  
**PUBLICATION:** The Ottawa Sun  
**DATE:** 2008.04.17  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** Editorial/Opinion  
**PAGE:** 9  
**BYLINE:** GREG WESTON, SUN MEDIA  
**WORD COUNT:** 508

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But there he was Tuesday afternoon out for a relaxed jog in his red running duds, merrily galloping past us down the sidewalk, laughing as Sun Media's Kathleen Harris doggedly tried to catch up in heels.

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The general's honest assessments of Canada's efforts in Afghanistan were definitely not grease for the Conservative spin machine.

Hillier's assertion, for instance, that creating stability in Afghanistan could take another decade or more, likely did not enhance the Harper government's political strategy to move Canada's commitment ahead in relatively short increments.

Similarly, the script for government's grand public relations campaign to emphasize Canada's humanitarian efforts in Afghanistan certainly did not include Hillier's famous quote: "We are not the public service of Canada. We are not just another department. We are the Canadian Forces and our job is to be able to kill people."

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No matter. As Hillier marches out the exit this summer, we are all the better for his candour.

His departure may also leave the Harper government with new challenges easily as problematic as a general's occasional shots from the lip.

Fact is, Hillier's blunt-talking, down-home style helped to win the hearts and trust of Canadians for a war effort that might otherwise be fiercely unpopular.

Pollsters also report that Hillier's overt and unswerving devotion to his soldiers and their families seems to have connected with a group not naturally attracted in the majority to either war-making or the Conservatives — namely, women.

No politician

"I admit I am no politician, and I don't think I'm very wise," Hillier said. "But I represent the 87,000 forces members and their families." What mother could resist?

Finally, among all those who have occupied the office of highest command, Hillier has been the most effective advocate for re-equipping the military in decades.

The good news is General Rick leaves behind a number of highly capable successors, albeit with the nearly impossible task of filling some very large running shoes.

# Letters to the Editor Column

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**PUBLICATION:** The Ottawa Sun  
**DATE:** 2008.04.17  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** Editorial/Opinion  
**PAGE:** 8  
**COLUMN:** Letters to the Editor  
**WORD COUNT:** 624

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Re: "Cops treat noisy boy like criminal: Parents" (April 16). If I got home and found my kid in a cop car because he was being a little brat and disturbing the piece, I wouldn't be angry at the cops, I'd be ashamed that I'd raised such a brat. I'd be happy that the police had given my kid a scare. Teach him a lesson, and then he'd think twice before doing it again.

The parents should direct their embarrassment, anger and disgust at their kid, not the police. The fact they are defending their child's behaviour instead of punishing him speaks to their ignorance. No sympathy here.

Chantale Ladouceur

Gatineau

(It seems calling the cops to give your kid a scare has fallen out of style)

Re: "Cops treat noisy boy like criminal: Parents" (April 16). So Lukasz Gurzynskis's mother thinks her inconsiderate little son was treated poorly. Awww, poor baby. I'm sorry that you lack the skills to teach your son simple respect for others. I noticed you say you are always home and your son is never alone. What are the odds that the one and only time your angel ever acted like a spoiled brat, you weren't there?

As if the police don't have enough on their plates. Perhaps some parenting classes would help the family.

Could I sue them for wasting taxpayers time?

Carlie Wilson

Ottawa

(It'd be nice, but probably not)

Can someone please tell us, exactly what do city planners sprinkle on their morning pancakes when coming up with a new transit plan that will cost \$4 billion? And while we are at it, tell us what councillors put in their coffee whenever they fantasize about the same project.

To me, it is hardly surprising that little costing has gone into this massive transit plan except for the fact that the city has budgeted \$2.1 billion for rapid transit purposes, but only over the next 10 years. And all along I thought I would see some sort of an undertaking actually built and operating before I went to the big rapid transit system in the sky.



Does anyone care to remember that the city has not settled a multimillion-dollar suit filed by Siemens? I would hazard a wild guess that the lawsuit, along with the grandiose, and supposedly final, rapid transit scheme means that Larry O'Brien or anyone who runs for mayor next time around will not be able to campaign on "no tax increases." I thought so; and here I was dreaming.

Charles Tapp

Ottawa

(It's definitely not sugar and spice and everything nice on those pancakes)

What a shame, we finally get one of the good guys in there and he's leaving. You can bet your boots he's leaving because of pressure from the politicians. Hell, we deal with them daily and know what they're like. Rick Hillier says it like it is and, of course, they don't like it; he made them look bad at times because of his honesty, a concept most of our politicians had long ago. Hillier was, and is, a true leader. Most likely he could not stand the crap any longer. He will be dearly missed.

L. Donker

Orleans

(What, crap happens on the Hill?)

Re: "MPP homes in on bill to shut down crack houses" (April 16). Shutting down the crack houses, that's just wonderful. Then where will all the crackheads go to carry on their very addictive habit? In the meantime, officials refuse to allow safe places for addicts to go to exchange their contaminated needles to prevent the spread of diseases and to prevent sharing, while old contaminated needles pile up everywhere.

If they all contracted SARS from dirty needles, you could bet your bottom dollar that the "state" would have all the addicts quarantined with no thought to costs. Let's hope they get SARS so something drastic is done to help these zombies. God knows city staffers appear to be incapable of making any headway on this matter.

Gordon McPherson

Ottawa

(Ok, more crack houses and SARS it is)

# With 'em to the end Sens Army maintain support despite team's poor performance

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**SOURCETAG:** 0804170499

**PUBLICATION:** The Ottawa Sun

**DATE:** 2008.04.17

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** News

**PAGE:** 3

**ILLUSTRATION:** photo by Darren Calabrese, Sun Media One Senators fan in the mob outside Scotiabank Place before last night's game shows she still has faith in her team. Unfortunately the Sens went out of this year's playoffs with a whimper, losing 3–1 to the Pittsburgh Penguins and bowing out in four straight games.

**BYLINE:** AEDAN HELMER, SUN MEDIA

**WORD COUNT:** 318

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It was the last hurrah for Senators fans.

A noticeably subdued Sens Army put on a brave face and tried to keep the faith at Scotiabank Place last night, but many fans seemed resigned to Ottawa's playoff fate before the puck was dropped for Game 4.

With the Senators still looking for their first win of the 2008 playoffs and on the brink of elimination against the high-flying Pittsburgh Penguins, fans in the Red Zone were a nervous lot.

Even appearances by high-profile Senators fans did little to boost the crowd's spirit.

Senators owner and "biggest fan" Eugene Melnyk made an appearance on the arena concourse, shaking hands and chatting with fans.

Soon-to-be-retired Gen. Rick Hillier cruised the Red Zone wearing a No. 1 Senators jersey.

"These guys have a lot of pride on the line and I expect they'll play hard," said Hillier. "They don't want to go down in four games. They don't want to go down at all."

But they did go down in four straight, losing last night's game 3–1.

## MAGIC NUMBER

Much had been made of the number 33 in local media. Only two NHL teams ever came back from a 3–0 series deficit to victory. The last time it happened was 33 years ago, when the New York Islanders came back to defeat the Penguins in 1975. The 1942 Toronto Maple Leafs turned the trick 33 years before that.

But if the Senators were due in 2008, the fans weren't buying it.

"It's going to be at least 34 years," quipped Richard Lepage.

"You gotta be realistic," added Phil Labelle.

Fans at The Bank and those on the Sens Mile on Elgin St. all agreed there's been something missing in this year's playoff run, and not just from the disappointing on-ice product.

"The atmosphere this year is not even close to what it was last year," said Richard Proulx. "Game 1 last year was unbelievable. But this team hasn't been good for a long time. We were all hoping they'd change in the playoffs and it just didn't happen."

"We're sad for (Sens captain Daniel) Alfredsson, because he played his heart out all year," said Eric Cazeault.

An army of Penguins fans who invaded Scotiabank Place last night were undoubtedly the happiest fans in the city.

#### BROOMS IN HAND

One contingent of a dozen black-and-yellow-clad fans stormed the arena wielding brooms and draped in Penguins gear. The group, in town for a conference, represented almost every province and did their best to show up the locals.

"Mike Fisher is the heart and soul of the Sens and without him, they're nothing," said Dale Lewis, from St. John's, Nfld.

"Have a nice summer," chirped in Steph Jardine, from Vancouver. KEYWORDS=OTTAWA AND REGION

# Hillier's style won our trust

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**PUBLICATION:** The London Free Press  
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**SECTION:** Editorial/Opinion  
**PAGE:** A10  
**BYLINE:** GREG WESTON  
**WORD COUNT:** 468

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Hillier's assertion, for instance, that creating stability in Afghanistan could take another decade or more, likely did not enhance the government's political strategy to move Canada's commitment ahead in short increments.

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Pollsters report that Hillier's overt and unswerving devotion to his soldiers and their families seems to have connected with a group not naturally attracted to either war-making or the Conservatives -- namely, women.

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**SOURCETAG:** 0804170780  
**PUBLICATION:** The Edmonton Sun  
**DATE:** 2008.04.17  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** 19  
**ILLUSTRATION:** photo of RICK HILLIER Leaving post  
**BYLINE:** CP  
**DATELINE:** KANDAHAR  
**WORD COUNT:** 192

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**SOURCETAG** 0804170771  
**PUBLICATION:** The Edmonton Sun  
**DATE:** 2008.04.17  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** Editorial/Opinion  
**PAGE:** 11  
**BYLINE:** GREG WESTON, SUN MEDIA  
**WORD COUNT:** 508

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# Edmonton soldiers honoured by Governor General

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**SOURCETAG** 0804170972  
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**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
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**BYLINE:** GRANT CREE, WESTERN SENTINEL  
**TYPE :** Supplement  
**WORD COUNT:** 357

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Her Excellency the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean, Governor General and Commander-in-Chief of Canada presented awards on Mar. 26 to four soldiers from Edmonton Garrison.

## FIRST IN 13 YEARS

The Governor General gave kudos to CF members in Afghanistan as she presented the military valour decorations, the first such presentation in 13 years. The ceremony was conducted at Rideau Hall, Ottawa.

"Canada's military involvement in Afghanistan has thrust you into the deadliest combat situations since the Korean war," said the Governor General, "And no matter what the circumstances, you must draw upon your courage, your calm initiative and ingenuity, but also on your compassion, because you are there to help men, women, children and communities."

Gen Rick Hillier, the CDS, also attended the ceremony.

"The individuals who receive their military valour decorations here today have experienced, I know, some of the most demanding days of their lives – physical and emotional stresses of the most difficult kind, some unimaginable," he said. "You've marked a new chapter in our military history."

Maj Thomas Bradley of 1 CMBG received the Meritorious Service Medal for having developed an organizational framework to secure the Kandahar City Afghan development zone. As chief of operations at Joint Task Force Afghanistan headquarters, Maj Bradley spent eight months developing that strategic plan. It proved successful, and subsequently spread to much larger areas.

## VERY RESOURCEFUL

MWO William John Crabb, a member of the LdSH (RC) also received the Meritorious Service Medal. MWO Crabb served as sergeant major of an armoured squadron from February to September 2007. In its press release, the Governor General's office stated that Crabb's "resourcefulness and exceptional co-ordination skills ensured the success of replenishment operations throughout the Kandahar and Helmand provinces despite repeated exposure to improvised explosives attacks and mine strikes."

The Meritorious Service Decorations (MSC) were created by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in 1984 to recognize individuals whose specific deeds or activities have demonstrated an outstanding level of service, set an exemplary standard of achievement, and brought honour or benefit to Canada.

The award permits recipients to use the letters "M.S.C." or "M.S.M." after their name. All awards are

published in the Canada Gazette which is a record of all acts of the parliament of Canada.

KEYWORDS=EDMONTON

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**SOURCETAG** 0804170669  
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**BYLINE:** GREG WESTON, SUN MEDIA  
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At a time when the country is suffering a critical dearth of inspirational leadership, Hillier's departure leaves a void of national proportion.

As well-deserved tributes continue to pour in for the colourful Newfoundlander who led the Canadian military in transition from peacekeeping corps to modern fighting force, the inner circle of Stephen Harper's government is apparently suffering some ambivalence.

Hillier arrived to a kind of hero's welcome at a CTV bash Tuesday evening as political and media celebs alike lined up to shake his hand, and share the same picture frame.

## OPINIONS SPLIT

Yet the numerous ministers of the Harper cabinet in attendance seemed divided between those desperately seeking a photo-op with the general, and others equally determined to avoid one.

It is no secret that Hillier's outspoken style caused bouts of terminal heartburn for the control freaks around this PM.

The general's honest assessments of Canada's efforts in Afghanistan were definitely not grease for the Conservative spin machine.

Hillier's assertion, for instance, that creating stability in Afghanistan could take another decade or more, likely did not enhance the Harper government's political strategy to move Canada's commitment ahead in relatively short increments.

Similarly, the script for government's grand public relations campaign to emphasize Canada's humanitarian efforts in Afghanistan certainly did not include Hillier's famous quote: "We are not the public service of Canada. We are not just another department. We are the Canadian Forces and our job is to be able to kill people."

When the general said this week (with a straight face) that he got along famously with the PM and staff, he was overlooking the famous collegiality that helped win former defence minister Gordon O'Connor a well-earned cabinet demotion.

No matter. As Hillier marches out the exit this summer, we are all the better for his candour.

His departure may also leave the Harper government with new challenges easily as problematic as a general's occasional shots from the lip.

Fact is, Hillier's blunt-talking, down-home style helped to win the hearts and trust of Canadians for a war effort that might otherwise be fiercely unpopular.

Pollsters also report that Hillier's overt and unswerving devotion to his soldiers and their families seems to have connected with a group not naturally attracted in the majority to either war-making or the Conservatives — namely, women.

#### NO POLITICIAN

"I admit I am no politician, and I don't think I'm very wise," Hillier said. "But I represent the 87,000 forces members and their families." What mother could resist?

Finally, among all those who have occupied the office of highest command, Hillier has been the most effective advocate for re-equipping the military in decades.

The good news is General Rick leaves behind a number of highly capable successors, albeit with the nearly impossible task of filling some very large running shoes.

# Hillier exit hits troops hard

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**SOURCETAG** 0804170662  
**PUBLICATION:** The Calgary Sun  
**DATE:** 2008.04.17  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** 10  
**ILLUSTRATION:** photo of RICK HILLIER Leaving post  
**BYLINE:** CP  
**DATELINE:** KANDAHAR  
**WORD COUNT:** 192

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It was a "dark day" for Canadian soldiers at Kandahar Airfield, who woke to news yesterday that Gen. Rick Hillier was stepping down as chief of defence staff in July after more than three years in Canada's top military job.

Word of his departure was on the lips of every soldier in a uniform with a Canadian flag on the shoulder.

Lt.-Col. Dan Drew, deputy commander of Canada's Operational Mentor and Liaison Team, described Hillier as a "personal hero" who won't be easily replaced.

Hillier almost single-handedly breathed fresh life into a Canadian Forces that had been robbed of its resources and its sense of value, Drew said.

"He took us out of the dark ages of the 1990s and reshaped us, reformed us, made us proud to be who we are, and he made the Canadian people know who we are and to be proud of us again," Drew said.

'MORE FOCUSED'

"We're more focused on operations now, we care more about our own people, and Gen. Hillier's the guy who led us out of that darkness."

Hillier, 52, was the most visible Forces leader in a generation, a blunt, straight-talking "soldier's soldier" who showed visible affection for the "soldiers, sailors, airmen and airwomen" under his command and constant admiration for their work.

"He is one of the pinnacle figures in the Canadian Forces that is going to be missed," Master Cpl. Bob Gaudet said. **KEYWORDS=WORLD**

# Groundhog Day on the Hill: repeating the same mistakes

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**IDNUMBER** 200804170058  
**PUBLICATION:** Montreal Gazette  
**DATE:** 2008.04.17  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** Editorial / Op-Ed  
**PAGE:** A23  
**COLUMN:** L. Ian MacDonald  
Photo: MIKE CARROCCETTO, CANWEST NEWS SERVICE / ElectionsCanada  
**ILLUSTRATION:** notified both the media and the Liberal Party before conducting a raid on the Conservative Party's headquarters. ;  
**KEYWORDS:** POLITICAL PARTIES; POLITICS; POLITICIANS  
**BYLINE:** L. IAN MACDONALD  
**SOURCE:** Freelance  
**WORD COUNT:** 805

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In the 2006 election, the Conservatives formed a minority government with 36 per cent of the popular vote, while the Liberals became the official opposition with 30 per cent. In a Strategic Counsel poll for the Globe and Mail this week, the Conservatives were at 36 per cent, while the Liberals were at 30 per cent. Groundhog Day, the movie, all over again.

In poll after poll over the last 26 months, every time the Conservatives close in on majority territory between 38 and 40 per cent, they hit a glass ceiling and fall back to 36 per cent. Stephen Harper as Bill Murray. For their part, every time the Liberals crater into the high 20s, they are pulled back to 30 per cent by the resilience of their brand in Ontario.

This occurs whenever stuff happens on the Conservative watch that confirms the general suspicion of hidden agendas, or a propensity for just screwing up, as happens nearly every day in government.

Like Jean-Pierre Blackburn, the Labour minister, thinking out loud in an interview about a new constitutional round to entrench the Québécois nation resolution in the constitution. Of course, the government is not contemplating such political suicide in English-speaking Canada, and there isn't even any demand for this from Quebec.

The story referred to a Conservative plan, when there is no such thing. After two days of editorial scolds, the story went away, but not before it had swamped coverage of the prime minister's getting the 1,000 additional troops he asked for at the NATO summit as a condition for Canada remaining in Afghanistan. He might as well have stayed in Ottawa for all he got out of it.

Or like the tape of the Conservative MP Tom Lukiwski's intolerant comments about gays, dredged up by the NDP from a Saskatchewan basement, that went straight to all news, all the time, to say nothing of YouTube. That the tape was a 17-year-old locker-room rant didn't mitigate its sensational effect, nor did Lukiwski's abject apologies.

Or like Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier emerging from a briefing with senior Afghan officials and musing to reporters about "the question to maybe have a new governor" of Khandahar province, where

Canadian troops are based and where Governor Asadullah Khalid is the subject of rumours of official corruption and torture of Taliban prisoners.

Only a year ago, Bernier was considered a rising star of the Harper cabinet, the obvious Quebec candidate in the next leadership cycle. That was when he was industry minister, before his transfer last summer to Foreign Affairs, where he has stumbled badly on more than one occasion. Friends warned him that this portfolio was a minefield, and that he'd better do his homework, but his learning curve remains steep.

Or like the RCMP raid on Conservative Party headquarters, at the request of Elections Canada, in search of documents about whether disputed advertising from the 2006 campaign was entered in the right column, or moved around from another one. That'll create an uproar in question period. And there's tape. Elections Canada tipped off the media and the Liberal Party before visiting Tory headquarters with the RCMP.

Or how about Rick Hillier, the popular chief of the defence staff, who is taking retirement after his normal three-years as Canada's top soldier? Was he encouraged to leave?

All these things relate to hidden agendas, social tolerance, competence and the integrity of the Conservatives. Are they devising a special-status deal for Quebec? Are they social knuckle draggers, as some Canadians still suspect? Can Max Bernier take a brief? Are the Tories cooking their election books? Are they crazy enough to dump a general who is by far the best salesman of the Afghan mission?

The answer to the last question is clearly no. There's a sense that Hillier wants to move on. He's only 53 and a bright future awaits him in the private sector. It was clear from Harper's comments in the House, as he thanked the general for his service, that he has a high regard for Hillier.

If the Conservatives thought their poll numbers went soft this week, wait till next week.

All this occurred while the House was sitting. And it's a rule of thumb that the opposition does better when the House is in, while the government does better when the House is out.

When the House is on break, or in summer recess, that's different. That adds up to about six months of the year, when the government controls the communications agenda, with the prime minister's tour, ministerial announcements, handouts for ridings and so. It's easy to be on message when the House is out. The challenge is to be control when it's in. And the Tories are on a bad roll.

The polls move up and down. They always seem to end up in the same place. Groundhog Day.

[www.lianmacdonald.ca](http://www.lianmacdonald.ca)

# Almost enough to lower the flag

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**IDNUMBER** 200804170050  
**PUBLICATION:** Montreal Gazette  
**DATE:** 2008.04.17  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** Editorial / Op-Ed  
**PAGE:** A22  
**ILLUSTRATION:** Colour Photo: Rick Hillier: The rock from The Rock restored Canada's military to a world-class institution. ;  
**KEYWORDS:** 0  
**SOURCE:** The Gazette  
**WORD COUNT:** 82

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The general, Rick Hillier, is stepping down. What a sad day for Canada and the Canadian Forces.

Many Canadians who are not in uniform look up to this rock from The Rock for increasing Canada's military strength.

General Hillier has been an inspiration to all of us for his plain speaking about the many problems involved with restoring our ailing military to world-class status.

He has kept Canadians informed and challenged them to support our military when it counts – at budget time.

With his leaving, another Canadian soldier will have been lost in action. It's almost enough to lower the flag on the Peace Tower.

Ray Anderson

Beaconsfield



# Hillier left lasting impression on troops in Afghanistan; General 'is personal hero of mine'. Obtained more funding for equipment

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**IDNUMBER** 200804170027  
**PUBLICATION:** Montreal Gazette  
**DATE:** 2008.04.17  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** A10  
**ILLUSTRATION:** Colour Photo: CANWEST NEWS SERVICE / General Rick Hillier was known for listening to front-line soldiers. ;  
**KEYWORDS:** CANADIANS  
**DATELINE:** KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan  
**BYLINE:** RYAN CORMIER  
**SOURCE:** Canwest News Service  
**WORD COUNT:** 355

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Soldiers spoke yesterday with regret about the impending loss of a leader who gave them a renewed sense of national pride in their work and the tools to ensure it was done properly.

News of General Rick Hillier's resignation began to filter through the ranks Tuesday night as soldiers crowded together in concrete shelters after a rocket attack on the Kandahar Airfield. By yesterday morning, everyone had heard of the loss of a man they consider the head of their family.

"General Hillier is a personal hero of mine," said Lt.-Col. Dan Drew, deputy commander of the Operational Mentor and Liaison Team.

"He took us out of the dark ages of the '90s. He re-shaped us, re-formed us and made us proud to be who we are. He made the Canadian people know who we are and be proud of us again. That was an amazing accomplishment."

When Drew heard of Hillier's resignation, he emailed the chief of defence staff. Five minutes later, he had a response. It's what soldiers have come to expect from a leader who always put them first.

Hillier's visits to the Kandahar Airfield were a major event for troops, including one a month ago when he brought the Stanley Cup along with him.

"He's absolutely fantastic for morale," said Master Cpl. Bob Gaudet. "We look very much forward to him coming out here. We enjoy having him out here. He's our leader."

Hillier will step down in July.

His reputation was that he considered a conversation with a private in the trenches every bit as important, if not more, than speaking with politicians or heads of state.

Cpl. Brian Lussier, a reservist with the Royal Edmonton Regiment, fondly remembers meeting Hillier on his last visit.

"It's hard to take orders from someone if they don't come out and see what's going on with the troops," Lussier said.

"He was very involved in overlooking all the development over here. He was very supportive. If he found out one of us had a problem, he took care of it quick."

A lot of the equipment used by the troops in Afghanistan exists because of Hillier's persistence in pressing for more funding so his soldiers had everything they needed to do their job well.

Among the items Hillier crossed off the military shopping list since he was appointed in 2005 are C-17 and C-130-J transport aircraft, armoured logistical trucks, precision artillery guns, mine-detection vehicles and computerized war rooms.

Hillier left lasting impression on troops in Afghanistan; General 'is personal hero of mine'. Obtained more fun

# Gen. Hillier; A legacy of accomplishment

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**IDNUMBER** 200804170028  
**PUBLICATION:** The Windsor Star  
**DATE:** 2008.04.17  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** Editorial/Opinion  
**PAGE:** A8  
**SOURCE:** Windsor Star  
**WORD COUNT:** 242

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The Canadian military's hard-earned reputation for punching above its weight is largely the work of the proud and pugnacious General Rick Hillier, who stood up for the troops and up to the politicians who had gutted Canada's military.

Hillier, who will retire July 1 after three years as Canada's top soldier, served notice in his first day on the job that he was a soldier's soldier and not a minion who would sell the troops short to satisfy his political masters.

"In this country, we could probably not give enough resources to the men and women to do all the things that we ask them to do," said Hillier at a public ceremony with uncomfortable government officials looking on. "But we can give them too little, and that is what we are doing now. Remember them in your budgets."

Hillier wasn't one to mince words and told the Canadian public in 2005 that the Taliban in Afghanistan were "detestable murderers and scumbags" who detested Canada's freedoms and liberties. Such blunt talk is unusual in this country but helped remind Canadians why we were fighting in Afghanistan and why our young soldiers were heroes.

Canada's military was underfunded and still stained with the blight of Somalia when Hillier took command but it is now a well-equipped, well-funded and well-respected institution. Our military's successes in Afghanistan have not only enhanced Canada's international prestige but our national pride.

Thanks to Hillier, Canadians are proud, as they should be, of their armed forces.

# RICK HILLIER'S REPLACEMENT Picking our top soldier is a rather casual affair The Afghan backdrop may concentrate the PM's mind

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**PUBLICATION:** GLOBE AND MAIL

**IDN:** 081080195

**DATE:** 2008.04.17

**PAGE:** A19 (ILLUS)

**BYLINE:** DOUGLAS BLAND

**SECTION:** Comment

**EDITION:** Metro

**DATELINE:**

**WORDS:** 836

**WORD COUNT:** 882

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DOUGLAS BLAND Chair of the Defence Management Studies Program at Queen's School of Policy Studies  
Canadians might think that the selection of the chief of the defence staff – our top soldier – would greatly occupy prime ministers.

After all, the CDS is the government's military adviser, sharing responsibility for the defence of Canada, managing a budget of billions of dollars, commanding more than 80,000 members of the Canadian Forces, and holding their lives in his hands. Yet, the history of how officers are selected for this office reveals a surprisingly casual process.

In interviews with every officer who has held the office since its establishment in 1964, the usual response to the question "Why were you selected as the CDS?" is simply, "I have no idea." Officers did sometimes speak about the circumstances of the day, the "luck of the timing" in the sense that they were in an advantageous position when the incumbent stood down. But all agreed that the selection process had no set criteria and no predictable outcome.

The chief of the defence staff "serves at pleasure." He (and some day she) is formally appointed by the Governor-General on the prime minister's recommendation. There is no set period of service – officers usually serve for three or four years, though some have served longer and one has held the office twice. There is no rotation by service between naval, army and air force officers – six air force, five army and two naval officers have held the office.

The National Defence Act sets out the basic duties of the CDS, but, other than custom, there is no other significant indicator to guide the prime minister's assessment of candidates. Indeed, there is no legal requirement that the CDS be an officer of the Canadian Forces. During one changeover period in the early 1980s, a Reserve general officer wrote to the minister of national defence and "volunteered" to be the CDS. His selfless gesture was turned down promptly.

Chiefs of the defence staff are usually selected after a quiet bureaucratic hunt for advice from the serving CDS, former chiefs, other senior retired officers, and civilians and academics associated with the Canadian Forces. The serious inquiry, however, takes place mostly inside the Ottawa establishment, where former and serving clerks of the Privy Council and assorted deputy ministers are asked to weigh the qualifications of candidates.

Prime ministers have often left the final recommendation to others, notably to their defence ministers and senior members of the Prime Minister's Office. In the PMO, a candidate's "political reliability" and his understanding of the government's (usually limited) interests in matters of defence policy have carried considerable weight. Like Mackenzie King, every prime minister is keen on "silent soldiers and sailors, too." The search for General Rick Hillier's replacement will now begin in earnest and is likely to follow this informal process. Certainly, because of Canada's commitment in Afghanistan, the Prime Minister and his staff will be more engaged in reviewing the suitability of the obvious candidates – serving three-star officers – than has been common in the past.

But what might be their criteria? They probably will look at the candidates' professional qualifications, their presence in front of the media, linguistic abilities, and public statements. But one suspects they will be most interested in the candidates' sensitivities to the government's need to manage the public's perception of the war in Afghanistan.

Sensitivity in this context means finding a CDS who would be content with a somewhat diminished public profile and who would agree to calm the rhetoric in public debates between political objectives and military doctrine. The Prime Minister probably will look for an officer who is not keen to out-Hillier Gen. Hillier – that is, someone who is less personally attached than Gen. Hillier is to the history of the Canadian Forces' strategic decisions in Afghanistan.

In return, the incoming CDS will want to retain a clear distance from partisan politics and set his own agenda for the Canadian Forces.

That agenda will most likely require the government to agree in advance to help the next CDS in his major challenge – rebuilding Canada's overburdened and under-resourced armed forces after 2011.

The domestic 2011 political ceasefire on Canada's future in Afghanistan provides an ideal respite during which Gen. Hillier can depart quietly – "mission accomplished." It will also allow the new CDS a relatively quiet period to change the military's relationship with the government without diminishing Gen. Hillier's enormous successes in connecting the Canadian Forces to Canadians and reinforcing the chief of the defence staff's vital roles in assisting governments in formulating and directing Canada's defence policy.

But following the usual practice might depend on MPs not insisting that their parliamentary committees should for once have a say in, or at least an opportunity to interview, the candidates who might command the Canadian Forces in dangerous times. But who would bet on such reasonable co-operation in the House of Commons today? Douglas Bland is the author of *Chiefs of Defence*.

ADDED SEARCH TERMS:

GEOGRAPHIC NAME: Canada

SUBJECT TERM: defence; policy; government; political

PERSONAL NAME: Rick Hillier

ORGANIZATION NAME: Armed Forces

# Goodbye to a general

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**PUBLICATION:** GLOBE AND MAIL  
**IDN:** 081080192  
**DATE:** 2008.04.17  
**PAGE:** A18 (ILLUS)  
**BYLINE:** JIM CORKER  
**SECTION:** Letter to the Edit  
**EDITION:** Metro  
**DATELINE:** Conception Bay South, Nfld.  
**WORDS:** 106  
**WORD COUNT:** 104

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Jim Corker Conception Bay South, Nfld.

I'd sure like to shake General Rick Hillier's hand. Perhaps I'll be lucky enough the next time he's in St. John's. Your editorial, Timely Leadership, Timely Departure (April 16) says it well. Death and destruction are part of war; Gen. Hillier acknowledged it and lived with it. War is a dirty business that he managed to conduct with guts and integrity.

His commitment to the mission, the forces, and the men and women in the service will be his legacy.

Other measures will decide the merits of the Afghan war. He knew his job and, plainly, how to get it done.

ADDED SEARCH TERMS:

GEOGRAPHIC NAME: Canada

SUBJECT TERM: defence

PERSONAL NAME: Rick Hillier

ORGANIZATION NAME: Armed Forces

# Goodbye to a general

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**PUBLICATION:** GLOBE AND MAIL  
**IDN:** 081080191  
**DATE:** 2008.04.17  
**PAGE:** A18 (ILLUS)  
**BYLINE:** CHRIS DOTSON  
**SECTION:** Letter to the Edit  
**EDITION:** Metro  
**DATELINE:** Vancouver BC  
**WORDS:** 36  
**WORD COUNT:** 59

---

Chris Dotson Vancouver Good riddance, Rick Hillier. Canada needs a top soldier who takes orders from the elected representatives of the people, not one who considers it his job to convince Canadians about the need to go to war.

ADDED SEARCH TERMS:

GEOGRAPHIC NAME: Canada

SUBJECT TERM: defence

PERSONAL NAME: Rick Hillier

ORGANIZATION NAME: Armed Forces

# Goodbye to a general

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**PUBLICATION:** GLOBE AND MAIL  
**IDN:** 081080190  
**DATE:** 2008.04.17  
**PAGE:** A18 (ILLUS)  
**BYLINE:** TONY STRONG  
**SECTION:** Letter to the Edit  
**EDITION:** Metro  
**DATELINE:** St. John's NF  
**WORDS:** 51  
**WORD COUNT:** 38

---

Tony Strong St. John's I spent most of my working life as a member of the Canadian Forces.

Oh, how I wish I had been able to serve under Rick Hillier's command.

My career was governed by people who knew nothing of the military.

No one spoke up for us. He will be missed.

ADDED SEARCH TERMS:

GEOGRAPHIC NAME: Canada

SUBJECT TERM: defence

PERSONAL NAME: Rick Hillier

ORGANIZATION NAME: Armed Forces



# THE AFGHAN MISSION: MILITARY ADVERTISEMENTS Latest Canadian Forces ads omit Afghan mission New commercials depict domestic operations with no reference to overseas combat; critics suggest Tories playing down controversy

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**PUBLICATION:** GLOBE AND MAIL

**IDN:** 081080150

**DATE:** 2008.04.17

**PAGE:** A4 (ILLUS)

**BYLINE:** STEVEN CHASE

**SECTION:** National News

**SOURCE:** STAFF CP

**EDITION:** Metro

**DATELINE:** Ottawa ONT

**WORDS:** 534

**WORD COUNT:** 545

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STEVEN CHASE With a report from The Canadian Press OTTAWA One thing is missing from the Canadian Forces' latest generation of TV recruitment ads unveiled this week: any mention of Afghanistan or overseas combat.

It's an odd omission given that Canada is engaged in its biggest military operation since the Korean War in Afghanistan, a mission that has revitalized the Forces and driven a lot of its new equipment spending.

Instead, the two new TV ads – Hard Landing and Drug Bust – paint a job in the Forces as an exclusively domestic career: rescuing survivors of a downed airplane in the Canadian North and catching drug smugglers off the East Coast.

"These ads will be seen on television throughout the spring – including in the 2008 Stanley Cup playoffs," the Department of National Defence announced this week.

Peter Donolo, a partner with the polling firm the Strategic Counsel, said the minority Conservative government is likely trying to play down the controversial Afghanistan mission in case it is defeated and must go to the polls, while playing up two issues it has long championed to political acclaim: Arctic sovereignty and border security.

"Maybe they don't want to remind voters about Afghanistan any more than they have to in this pre-election period," he said, adding that polling shows "an ongoing malaise" about the mission, in which 83 Canadians have died since 2002.

The new ads' focus on domestic military operations differs from the past two generations of recruitment ads for the Forces, in 2006 and 2007, both of which included one ad dwelling on overseas missions and Afghanistan.

One 2006 ad featured soldiers moving stealthily through an Afghanistan streetscape, rifles at the ready, and included a clip of troops breaching a door, and a glimpse of a homemade bomb studded with nails. One of the 2007 ads used the same clip of soldiers moving through an Afghan street, but dropped the label "Afghanistan." General Rick Hillier, Canada's top commander, said this week that "these new advertisements demonstrate the reality of serving in today's Canadian Forces." Yet the reality is that many soldiers will also end up in Afghanistan.

More than 12,000 Canadian troops – regular force and reservists – have been through Afghanistan in six-month rotations of roughly 2,500 each since the latest deployment to the Afghan province of Kandahar began two years ago.

Dan Dugas, director of communications for Defence Minister Peter MacKay, said the new ads will simply complement those of previous years – all of which will continue to be broadcast.

"These ads focus on another one of our priorities, Arctic sovereignty and border security, and will be added to the mix and run alongside the ads previously recorded for the campaign," Mr. Dugas said.

Newly released documents show that keeping soldiers in uniform is proving to be a difficult task as Canada settles in for three more years of fighting in Afghanistan.

Briefing materials prepared for Mr. MacKay show army attrition – the number of people choosing to retire or not renew their contracts – has reached 13 per cent, almost double the average for all three branches of the military. Figures show the overall size of the land force declined by 1,846 soldiers between May, 2005 and May, 2007.

ADDED SEARCH TERMS:

GEOGRAPHIC NAME: Canada

SUBJECT TERM: defence; recruitment; advertising; political

ORGANIZATION NAME: Department of National Defence; Armed Forces

# THIS COUNTRY: HOCKEY: SENATORS As the Peace Tower clock strikes midnight, there's no tomorrow for Sens

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**PUBLICATION:** GLOBE AND MAIL

**IDN:** 081080126

**DATE:** 2008.04.17

**PAGE:** S1

**BYLINE:** ROY MACGREGOR

**SECTION:** Sports Column

**EDITION:** Metro

**DATELINE:** Ottawa ONT

**WORDS:** 933

**WORD COUNT:** 827

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ROY MACGREGOR rmacgregor@globeandmail.com OTTAWA 'It felt like the walls were closing in on us,' Jason Spezza all but whispered when all was over and done with.

He was speaking not just of the game – his Ottawa Senators' 3–1 defeat by the Pittsburgh Penguins – and not just of the series, now embarrassingly lost in four consecutive games, but of an entire year clouded in mystery.

For a team that, not so many years back, came within a lighted candle of holding a seance to call upon the spirits of One-eyed Frank McGee for help, it was hardly surprising last night the Senators would be looking for a little magic.

They began with the Peace Tower clock striking midnight on the scoreboard – a reminder required by no one that there would, indeed, be no tomorrow if the Senators failed one more time against the surging Pittsburgh Penguins.

Coach Bryan Murray had even changed his shoes for luck. To fire up his charges further, he had trotted out his own version of Wayne Gretzky's call to arms in Salt Lake City, saying "The world's against them" when, in fact, it was only the local fans fast losing faith in a team they had expected to skate all the way to the Stanley Cup.

They had talked for days about "33," the handy little "omen," as Spezza called it, that argued since 33 years had passed between the first astounding rebound from being down three games to none, Toronto Maple Leafs in 1942, and the second, New York Islanders in 1975 – then surely 33 years on it would be Ottawa's year for a miracle.

They even dressed up retiring Chief of Defence Staff General Rick Hillier in a new uniform – a Senators jersey – and stood and cheered in the hope that perhaps the popular general might inspire.

But it was all for naught.

Long before the real Peace Tower clock struck midnight, it was over.

Apart from that one resounding standing ovation for Hillier, there was little to cheer about this balmy night in the nation's capital as the once–best–team–in–hockey completed its baffling freefall into oblivion.

THIS COUNTRY: HOCKEY: SENATORS As the Peace Tower clock strikes midnight, there's no tomorrow for

A year ago Stanley Cup finalists. Only months ago the best start for a team in NHL history.

And ever since, confusing.

"That's hockey," Spezza's linemate Dany Heatley tried to explain it away. But, of course, it explained nothing.

Pittsburgh goaltender Marc-Andre Fleury had even earlier tossed out the worn cliché: "The fourth game is always the hardest" to win – but not this night, not this series where Ottawa managed only five goals in four games and threatened only once.

Murray even put together his big trio of Spezza, Heatley and captain Daniel Alfredsson – dubbed "The Cash Line" by the Ottawa Citizen as they take up most of the team payroll – but it did not pay off despite Heatley's pregame hope that they could "get the chemistry back." Spezza, in fact, played as if elements were colliding, coughing up a puck on a bad pass that led to Pittsburgh's go-ahead second goal in the second period.

"One assist in four games," Spezza said. "I was pretty disappointed in myself." The Penguins dominated, though at one point it seemed as if Ottawa had tied the game 2–2 in the second, only to have the hockey gods – or whoever it is sitting in the NHL's "War Room" back in Toronto – rule that Antoine Vermette had kicked the puck into the Pittsburgh net.

Ottawa continued its habit – particularly annoying to Murray – of picking up "silly" penalties. It was on a power play that Evgeni Malkin scored on a backhand with only one hand on the stick.

It happened by accident, yet it was a telling image as the powerful Russian sophomore demonstrated, once again, that he is very much a man playing against boys in what is said to be the best league in the world.

He was chosen first star of the game. He has been first star of the entire series.

Had it not been for the admirable play of Ottawa goaltender Martin Gerber, the subject of so much doubt this past season, the Penguins would have crushed the Senators almost as easily as Ottawa's One-eyed Frank blew away a Stanley Cup contender more than a century ago with 14 goals in a single game.

But there was no McGee this night. And no Big Line, either.

Heatley had one assist in the series, as did Spezza. Alfredsson, who played only two games, had zero points. But he, at least, had an excuse, having returned after only 11 days from injuries that were slated to keep him off the ice for six weeks.

On the other side, Malkin and Sidney Crosby continued to star, with Crosby scoring the final goal of the series into an empty net.

However far the Penguins now go, it will be because of their play and that of the goaltender, Fleury.

"He has been phenomenal," Pittsburgh coach Michel Therrien said.

In the end, they shook hands and one team tried to shake off a dreadful year that will be dissected and analyzed and debated in this city longer than anything before Parliament.

"There's going to be some changes," a disheartened Murray said.

"There has to be." One thing that will not change is Ottawa's admiration for Alfredsson, who came back when he probably should not have.

THIS COUNTRY: HOCKEY: SENATORS As the Peace Tower clock strikes midnight, there's no tomorrow for

In the end, they stood and chanted his name: "Alfie! Alfie! Alfie!" And then it was time to snuff out the candles.

ADDED SEARCH TERMS:

SUBJECT TERM:hockey; playoffs

ORGANIZATION NAME: Ottawa Senators; Pittsburgh Penguins

# The folly of 'soft power'

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**IDNUMBER** 200804170071  
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**COLUMN:** Canada' S Biggest Mistake  
**ILLUSTRATION:** Color Photo: Master Corporal Ken Allan / A Canadian peacekeeper in Ethiopia in 2001. ;  
**BYLINE:** Michael Ross  
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The National Post comment pages present Canada's Biggest Mistake, a series of articles in which our columnists identify the most disastrous blunders imposed on this country by its policymakers. In today's final instalment, Michael Ross writes about the "systematic de-clawing" of our military.

I left the now-disbanded Canadian Forces Special Service Force in 1982 for a variety of reasons. But primary among them was the fact that our government wasn't living up to its end of the age-old bargain between a nation and its warriors. That bargain, roughly stated, went like this: "I am willing to die fighting for my country, but you had better provide me with the tools necessary to make that a difficult task for the enemy."

I thought things could only improve. I believed that, unlike us, future Canadian military recruits would finally be provided with the tools they needed to do their jobs effectively. But I was wrong. With the end of the Cold War, the 1990s brought even more severe cutbacks for our Forces.

In my view, Canada's biggest mistake is more than a social-policy blunder or constitutional miscalculation. I believe our biggest mistake has been the systematic emasculation of our military since Lester B. Pearson accepted the Nobel Peace Prize in 1957.

In Canada, we like to see ourselves as "peacekeepers" who insert themselves into other nation's conflicts, and "honest brokers" in the realm of international relations. This conceit may have inflated our self-image, but it has weakened our position on the world stage. And —notwithstanding recent advances highlighted by our outgoing Chief of Defence Staff, General Rick Hillier —it has reduced our military might.

While the quality of our military personnel is excellent and held in high regard throughout the world, our role as peacekeepers is not as prominent, nor as central to conflict resolution on the international stage as many Canadians have been led to believe by former prime minister Jean Chretien. (Paul Martin also gave our military short shrift. But I single out Chretien because it was he who, in 1999, outrageously compared peacekeeping to boy-scouting — I wonder how the veterans of Medak Pocket or the Turkish invasion of Cyprus feel about that).

In fact, Canada ranks around 34th among nations in the provision of peacekeeping soldiers, trailing behind such military superpowers as Fiji and Bangladesh when it comes to putting forces on the ground in between warring parties.

The simple fact of the matter is that we opted for peacekeeping because it was cheap, carried little or no domestic political risk (because it was UN-sanctioned), and allowed us to smugly declare that our soldiers,

sailors and airmen are more like aid-workers in uniform— unlike those nasty, blood-thirsty American warmongers.

But even peacekeeping is effective only if it is backed up by deadly force of the type that reminds all parties concerned that there are consequences to breaking the peace. One need only consider the Dutch peacekeepers' shameful non-action in Srebrenica to understand that there is more at stake than just posing as "honest brokers."

In today's world, where Canada is an active combatant in the war on terror, our forces are facing difficult challenges in Afghanistan, fighting an enemy that is hard to identify (let alone locate), has no compunction hiding among the civilian population and has mastered the art of attrition warfare. It's a frustrating way to fight — even more so when you climb into a vehicle knowing it will not withstand an IED attack, or have to watch other NATO forces being transported over bandit country in helicopters that your nation doesn't have.

When former Liberal foreign affairs minister Lloyd Axworthy was peddling our advocacy for soft power in the 1990s, I sincerely doubt he considered that the Taliban and transnational terrorist groups such as al-Qaeda were diligently implementing the orthodoxies of hard power through the use of terrorism, repression and ideological indoctrination. Soft power in the modern age is seen by our foes as a byword for weakness. It is a disingenuous excuse for not providing our fighting forces with the equipment they require to do their crucial job.

In some cases, such "soft-power" policies have even cost some of our Canadian soldiers their lives. Case in point: On Oct. 2, 2003, two members of the Royal Canadian Regiment were killed in Afghanistan after their very lightly armoured Iltis Jeep ran over a land-mine. The Iltis, a soft-skinned, under-powered Volkswagen built by Bombardier in Quebec for \$27,200, provides the best example (or perhaps second best, after our Sea King helicopters) into how much the Liberal governments really cared about protecting our soldiers.

Essentially, the Liberals opted to buy cheap "coffins on wheels" as a means to keeping voters in Quebec happy. Why else would they have not purchased Humvees and other better armoured vehicles from our neighbours to the south?

The neglect of our Armed Forces is more than our biggest national mistake — it is our biggest national disgrace.

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**KEYWORDS:** 0

# 'This country needs defenders of values and valour'

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**ILLUSTRATION:** Black & White Photo: / (See hardcopy for Photo Description);  
**BYLINE:** Isaac Glick, Lt.-Col. (ret')  
**SOURCE:** National Post  
**WORD COUNT:** 120

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Re: A Soldier's Soldier, editorial, April 16.

It is remarkable to see tribute given to a soldier and commander on the newspaper pages in this time of political games and posturing. This country needs defenders of values and valour. In an era of political turmoil around the world and uncertainty of our relations with some of the superpowers, we need to develop the ability to think and act on our feet. I just hope that the next choice for chief of the defence staff will be as worthy as was Rick Hillier.

Perhaps it will be Lieutenant-General Andrew B. Leslie -- infantrymen and gunners are the best soldiers, as I know from my own experience.

Isaac Glick, Lt.-Col. (ret'), Israel Defense Forces, Thornhill, Ont.

**KEYWORDS:** 0



# 'This country needs defenders of values and valour'

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**BYLINE:** Tom Tulloch  
**SOURCE:** National Post  
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Re: Exit Timing Suits Hillier, Don Martin, April 16.

It is disappointing that in his commentary on the announced retirement of Rick Hillier as Chief of the Defence Staff Don Martin felt the need to disparage the General's predecessor. General Ray Henault is a outstanding officer, in his 40th year in uniform, who continues to serve his country and the free world as the current Chairman of the NATO Military Committee -- the senior military officer in all of NATO. He engineered Canada's swift response to the terrorist attacks of 9/11 and steered the Canadian Armed Forces very capably in his four years as chief of the defence staff.

General Henault deserves better than Mr. Martin's cheap shots.

Tom Tulloch, Captain (Navy), Canadian Forces, Toronto.

**KEYWORDS:** 0

# The RCMP came knocking, but call it even

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**COLUMN:** Don Martin  
**DATELINE:** OTTAWA  
**BYLINE:** Don Martin  
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OTTAWA –Just in case television and Liberal campaign cameras missed it the first time, the RCMP staged an instant replay of its Elections Canada "raid" or "visit" on Conservative headquarters yesterday.

After spending Tuesday freely roaming offices emptied of all party officials, flipping through files or sifting through e-mails at leisurely will, police-escorted Elections Canada staff still had not satisfied their material desires and returned for a second look. They may well be back at it again today before the three-day search warrant expires, although I'm betting any damning documents initially overlooked have been severely shredded by now.

Of course, we don't officially know what they're looking for because the warrant remains sealed. But it's undoubtedly concerning the old-fashioned "in-and-out," a scheme to funnel party cash through local candidates as a way to dodge a national limit on campaign spending, an allegation now the subject of a civil lawsuit between the Conservatives and the elections czar.

It's all a bit of a head-scratcher because the search warrant is an invasion tactic of last resort when polite requests and increasingly angry demands to hand over evidence have been rebuffed by the party under investigation.

The Conservatives insist nobody from Elections Canada has bothered to contact the party to request any documents for the past three months.

The real interesting part, which has a lot of Conservative MPs in a lather, is how two camera crews magically surfaced to stake out both floors rented by the Conservative party within minutes of the search warrant being executed.

The RCMP cruisers were unmarked and the police scanner didn't broadcast the "visit," so unless CBC journalists are telepathic, the only plausible explanation is that they were tipped by Elections Canada.

And being dedicated Newsworld watchers, gleeful Liberals armed with their own cameras were scrambled to record the "visitation" within minutes of the news being broadcast.

It should be noted that the Conservatives, instantly grasping the damning optics, promptly leaked General Rick Hillier's retirement bombshell a day ahead of schedule, the better to split the salivating newsies between two major stories. Yes, it worked like a charm.

Still, with footage in the can and a campaign script that writes itself, this is no longer an issue of guilt or Conservative innocence in the showdown with election officials.

That's the beauty of securing a conviction in the court of public opinion — optics, hearsay and circumstantial evidence can instantly gas-chamber the innocent with no avenue of appeal.

And on this particular count, shots of warrant-bearing cops wandering the headquarters of the allegedly clean Conservatives are Tory tarnish and Grit gold.

This is why I find Election Canada's behaviour somewhat squeamish. Nobody can recall such heavy-handed behaviour before, and there's no explanation why police were required when a phone call might have sufficed.

The Conservatives insist they'll have their day in court and argue convincingly that Elections Canada will be proven wrong. There's documentation suggesting the other three parties are not without sin at the ins and outs of creative campaign financing.

Perhaps the only explanation for these tactics is this being return fire from an ongoing feud between the Conservatives and the ballooning Elections Canada bureaucracy.

This party has a history of campaign chicanery dating back to its Alliance days, and has been in almost constant conflict with election authorities for a wide variety of alleged improprieties.

The bottom line may well be a pox on all federal party houses. They're all guilty of having fun with election financing figures and voting procedures at some time in their history. Besides, it all evens out in the end.

The last time the RCMP tarred and feathered a federal party, it was in the middle of the 2006 election campaign when the force revealed it was investigating the Liberals for income trust leaks, a charge ultimately dismissed.

When armed RCMP knocked on its door this week, it was just the Conservatives' turn to be smeared with guilt by insinuation. Perhaps, then, the Prime Minister should stop fighting his own officers of Parliament and call it even, Stephen.

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**KEYWORDS:** POLITICAL PARTIES; POLITICS; POLITICIANS; PARLIAMENTARYPROCEDURES

# Hillier hangs up his helmetMilitary chief applauded for being candid

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CNS OTTAWA — His personal military mission accomplished, Gen. Rick Hillier will step aside as Canada's top soldier this summer.

Known for speaking his mind, Hillier said his departure from the post of chief of defence staff is entirely voluntary. "If anything, the pressure was the other way to keep me around," he said in an exclusive interview.

With the Kandahar mission extended until 2011 and the purchase of heavy-lift planes, upgraded tanks and helicopters, Hillier said it was a good time to go because it allows him to claim a legacy of reinforced pride inside the military.

"We've achieved the irreversible momentum that I wanted to have," Hillier said. "It's a transition to a whole different mode and I'm quite comfortable that I can leave on a high and leave hopefully enabling Canadian Forces to carry on to much greater things." In the House of Commons on Tuesday, Prime Minister Stephen Harper called Hillier "a great Canadian," even though the Conservative government was never comfortable with Hillier's outspoken nature.

"Gen. Hillier has worked very well with the government, he has done an excellent job in rebuilding Canada's Armed Forces. He is a great Canadian and we are very proud to have worked with him." Hillier said he never aspired to the military's top job, and that he had been planning his departure since last fall. He said he was waiting for the fate of the Afghanistan mission to be determined and that he only planned to stay in the job for two years.

He finally delivered the news to Harper on Tuesday, and the prime minister accepted his resignation, which Hillier said he would formalize in a letter later. The two men shook hands. "His last words were 'thank you for what you've done,'" Hillier said.

Liberal Leader Stephane Dion also praised Hillier's dedication.

"...his influence far exceeds our own Armed Forces," Dion said in a statement. "As a commander of NATO forces in both Bosnia-Herzegovina, as well as in Afghanistan, he demonstrated a level of professionalism that won him praise from soldiers and leaders of all our country's military allies." Even NDP Leader Jack Layton, whose party opposes Canada's military mission in Afghanistan and has called for the immediate withdrawal of the 2,500 troops there, had praise for Hillier.

"There's no question that he was very controversial and direct at times," Layton said. "I always felt it came from the heart and we might not have agreed with absolutely everything he recommended but I never doubted this man's sincerity or his commitment to the country..." The general, appointed by Liberal prime minister Paul Martin in 2005, said recent governments have put Canada on the road to serving as a global power.

"I can only repeat what one of my commanders once said when he noted we're not trying to be one of the big boys, we are one of the big boys and we have to start acting like it," Hillier recalled.

"That's a very good comment because that reflects our place in the world. Canada has had a significant re-profiling in the world. We're one of the big boys now." With his outspoken sometimes self-deprecating wit, Hillier transformed the job of Canada's chief of defence staff from that of dull departmental deputy minister who dutifully and quietly implemented government policy, to that of a chief soldier, an advocate on the behalf of the men and women who serve under him.

In recent years, Hillier's post has become increasingly politicized.

He incurred the wrath of the Liberal opposition by referring to the preceding 15 years of budget cuts that started under the Mulroney Conservatives as a "decade of darkness." His take-no-prisoners, straight-talking style also irked the Conservatives, who were never comfortable with Hillier speaking his mind on Afghanistan.

The Conservatives were roundly criticized in the recent Manley report as being poor communicators on the mission.

Hillier became the most eloquent spokesman for Canada's military mission in Afghanistan.

— Canwest News Service {Ottawa ONT}

# A soldier's soldier Gen. Rick Hillier will be sorely missed by troops and civilians

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Freelance Writer Ray Crabbe Canada's colourful chief of defence staff, Gen. Rick Hillier, submitted his resignation to Prime Minister Harper Tuesday, bringing an end to three years of dynamic and much-needed change to Canada's military.

The defence staff chief is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the prime minister, with appointments usually lasting three to four years. Whether Hillier is resigning of his own volition or at the behest of the prime minister remains to be seen, but regardless, he has left an indelible print on Canada's military, and history will record him as one of the best chiefs Canada has had in several decades.

His accomplishments under very trying circumstances are significant and have been achieved largely as a result of his dogged, determined approach and unquestionable leadership and loyalty to the troops under his command.

The war in Afghanistan has dominated his three years. Every single day for the past three years, Hillier has been personally involved with Afghanistan, and the successful prosecution of that very difficult and dangerous mission will be part of his legacy. Never in recent history has the Canadian Forces needed so much a fearless leader, strategic operational thinker and relentless go-getter to command and manage a dirty, nasty war. Hillier's previous experience as the overall commander in Afghanistan — coupled with his intimate knowledge of the country, its people and its enemies — has had a positive influence on Canada's participation in and conduct of that operation.

Gen. Hillier's transformation of the forces from a Cold War force, focused to a large extent on peacekeeping, to one based on the realities of the real threats to our national security, was perhaps his second biggest challenge. To implement such fundamental changes in an institution of its magnitude and diversity requires leadership, grit and determination, as well as the support of the civilian component of National Defence Headquarters. This particular accomplishment, focused on the creation of the new command and control structure and an operational culture within the military, was achieved in very short order because of Hillier's personal drive, determination and guts to oversee such drastic changes where others had not dared be so bold. Under his watch, the Canadian Forces was transformed from an organization somewhat mired in Cold War think, to one more than capable of responding to the mounting threat posed by terrorism. It is unlikely that Canada's military would be able to sustain and support the war in Afghanistan and the many other operations on behalf of the Canadian government, without these critical changes within the military.

Hillier inherited a military long neglected by a succession of Liberal governments, and devoid of the essential weapons and equipment to fight and win Canada's wars, or participate effectively in peace-making operations. His predecessor, Gen. Ray Henault, started the ball rolling, and Hillier turned the entire re-equipping program around in an unbelievably short period of time with the procurement of equipment required for the men and women of the forces to do their jobs effectively. The recent procurement of the C-17 Globemaster strategic lift airplane in perhaps the most visible example of the results of Hillier's tenacity. He has been the driving force behind the equipment procurement programs and has done so by working hand in hand with his civilian counterparts in National Defence Headquarters to ensure Canada can participate

effectively with NATO, NORAD, the UN and in support of domestic operations here in Canada.

Gen. Hillier will be remembered as the defence staff chief who solidified the national values of Canada's military as one of its most precious and important institutions in which Canadian men and women from all provinces and territories take pride in representing this nation. His personal no-nonsense approach has won him the admiration of millions of Canadians. He has rekindled a genuine interest in Canada's military as a national institution, and in turn has generated overwhelming support from the society that it serves. He has given the Canadian government and Canadians a military that is capable of fighting and winning Canada's wars and defending the nation's interests.

But above all, he will be remembered for his genuine and personal attention to looking after the troops under his command, and their families. This is especially true of those casualties suffered in Afghanistan. He stripped away the human resource bureaucracy and red tape within the military, and developed close and much-needed working relationships with Veterans' Affairs to ensure the troops were cared for after their service. He worked with leaders in Canada's business communities to set up scholarships and trust funds for soldiers and their families of those killed and wounded on duty.

He ensured all members of the forces — and especially casualties — were treated with dignity and respect. He stood up for better pay and benefits for the soldiers, sailors and airmen and women.

He shared the dangers and discomforts of the war in Afghanistan on numerous occasions. In short, he was a leader and commander who won the full confidence and trust that he was looking after their interests and those of their families.

Canada and its military have been very well served by Rick Hillier, an outstanding chief of defence staff who has irreversibly changed the manner in which Canada's military is viewed. Within the forces, some soldiers will miss his wry sense of Newfoundland wit and humour, others his drive and determination to see through on promises made.

Many will miss his operational focus and quick analytical mind, his uncanny ability to converse freely with all ranks of the military and their families, and his dedication and commitment to make soldiering an honourable and attractive profession for all Canadians.

He will be sorely missed by the troops and by Canadians.

Lt.-Gen. Ray Crabbe (retired) is a former deputy chief of defence staff.