

Decision angers Canadian nationalists

Harper stirs controversy with military name change

TORONTO, Aug 21, (AP): Canadians were thrilled when Prince William and Kate traveled across the country on their first official trip as a married couple. They barely noticed when their pro-monarchy Conservative prime minister appointed Prince Philip, Queen Elizabeth II's husband, an honorary admiral on his 90th birthday.

But Prime Minister Stephen Harper's decision to restore the royal name to the Canadian armed forces and other recent moves to embrace the monarchy have raised hackles in this former British colony that has largely been indifferent to the fact that the queen remains the titular head of state.

It's reflective of Harper's broader agenda to shift the country's ideological bearings from center-left to center-right -

a project that lays greater stress on such traditional symbols as the monarchy, military, ice hockey and Arctic sovereignty. And there has been resistance to such moves in a traditionally liberal and increasingly diverse country.

Last week's decision by Harper to restore the word "Royal" to Canada's air force and navy angered Canadian nationalists who say Harper is out of touch with modern-day Canada even though he received a stronger mandate by gaining a coveted parliamentary majority in May's elections.

Former Defense Minister Paul Hellyer, who removed the royal labels from the armed forces in 1968 when he served in Liberal Prime Minister Lester Pearson's government, accused Harper of trying to turn back the clock to a day that doesn't exist anymore.

"I'm incredulous," Hellyer said. "Canada should be for Canadians at this stage of our development and we should emphasize our achievements whether they be in the field of art or in the field of armed forces and no longer just try to be a pale imitation of somebody else."

Hellyer, 88, said if they were still alive Pearson would be appalled and former Liberal Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau would "probably say something that wouldn't be printable."

But the current defense minister, Peter MacKay, defended restoring the royal connection as correcting a 43-year-old mistake. He said veterans' groups actively lobbied Harper's government to restore the former navy and air force names.

"It's a recognition of historic ties to England that simply exist. It's a historic

fact," MacKay said.

Retired Lt Gen Angus Watt, a former chief of the air force, said the Royal Canadian Air Force and the Royal Canadian Navy were once special names under which men and women fought and died during World War II and the Korean War. He said Harper's name restoration is simply a matter of recognizing the great pride the military took in those names.

"It's just a nice thing to do that really doesn't cost very much. It doesn't change any command relationships, it doesn't alter the operational complexion of the Canadian Forces," Watt said.

"It gives men and women in uniform and those who are retired a little bit of a pat on the back that we not only treasure their service but those that went before them."

Decades have passed since Canadians

abandoned the British Union Jack for the Maple Leaf flag and replaced "God Save the Queen" with "O Canada" as the national anthem. But Harper's Conservatives represent the most pro-monarchy Canadian government since the 1950s, and the prime minister's ambition is to foster a national identity that is more conservative and more aware of its historical roots.

Gerry Nicholls, who worked under Harper at a conservative think tank, said the prime minister's long-term goal is to kill the widely entrenched notion that the Liberal Party is the natural party of government in Canada. The Liberals made Canadian independence and autonomy from Britain a key message since World War II - particularly Trudeau's government in the 1970s which fostered pride in Canadian nationalism.

"He's trying to roll back the Trudeau revolution," Nicholls said. "Trudeau did a lot of things that upset traditional minded Canadians, introducing more socialism, making government bigger and going after traditions like the military and the monarchy."

Pearson's Liberals removed the royal label from the military in 1968 when Hellyer controversially melded the navy, army and air force under a single command called the Canadian Forces. The Royal Canadian Navy became Maritime Command, the Royal Canadian Air Force became Air Command and the Canadian Army became Land Force Command. The changes led to resignations and caused a severe blow to morale. Military personnel from all three branches were forced to wear the same green uniform.

Makkah is in

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God Almighty has announced that this is the sacred spot for His House, so we can say that money will be spent on the spiritual capital of the Muslims to make it a world beacon of faith and civilization.

Those who serve the House of God are the happiest people on Earth. The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques is undoubtedly a happy man because he embarks on mega projects in Makkah. Spending money on these projects will benefit the Kingdom and its people. The recent expansion is the largest in the history of the Grand Mosque. The expansion is based on the vision of King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz that the number of pilgrims will reach five million, considering that about 3.5 million pilgrims visited the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia last year.

Moreover, the Kingdom has issued five million visit visas for people who want to perform Umrah. King Abdullah, the pious, is keen on providing all the facilities to the pilgrims this year.

The entire Muslim world will praise God because He has put His House in honest hands — the hands of a leader who wants to ensure that the most sacred place in the world offers modern services for the comfort and safety of the people.

All Muslims continue to pray to God to ascertain the successful implementation of huge projects in the sacred land and for King Abdullah to enjoy good health.

Ramadan: a return

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have seen it change and grow and I have grown and changed with it.

Everything has changed, including Ramadan. I remember my first Ramadan as a chubby, wide-eyed girl of 11, enjoying the baklawas, the kataif, and all the sweets and savouries, drinking sweet tamarind juice, Vimto, laban after the drying heat of the hot day. The memories have stayed, more have been made, and along with them came the realisation of what Ramadan really is, what it stands for ... which is so much more than the amazing sweets and the gifts and Girgi'an.

It's a time when all of us should pause, be still and look inside. Inside into our very soul and see what is there really. Do we like what we see? Do we like the person we see in the mirror every day, or could we do better, by being true to the real purpose of our lives, which is really well summarised by the five pillars of Islam.

Fasting or 'Suum' is the fourth of the five pillars of Islam:

1. Declaration of Faith or 'Shahada,' which is the confession of one's belief in God and in his Prophet Mohammad (PBUH). La Il'Allah Illallah wa Mohammad Rasullu la — There is no God but God and Mohammad (PBUH) is his Prophet/Messenger. This is the basic, most fundamental pillar of Islam. Faith keeps us all alive, for with the knowledge that there is a power greater than ourselves, a power that is just, merciful, caring, gentle, loving, gracious, omnipotent and omnipresent, the ultimate power that is God, we can face any difficulty.

2. Prayer or 'Salat.' The faithful should observe the five times of salat or prayer each day: before sunrise, after midday, at mid-afternoon, shortly after sunset, and in within the fullness of night. All Muslims face the Holy City of Makkah during prayers, where the ancient and holy Ka'aba stands.

3. Charity or 'Zakkat,' is done by all Muslims for the benefit of the poor and needy, regardless if they are kin or strangers. Zakkat can also be given anonymously (which I think is the real Zakkat).

4. Fasting or 'Suum,' observed during the Holy Month of Ramadan, is the practice of abstinence from eating, drinking, smoking or having sexual relations from sunrise to sunset.

5. Pilgrimage or 'Hajj.' Every Muslim who is of sound body, mind and can afford the journey should make a pilgrimage to the Holy City of Makkah at least once in their lifetime.

If we have no faith, we are nothing but an empty shell, that is being washed to and fro by the ocean of life, drifting aimlessly between car loans and parties, between new iPhones and the next Gucci bag....a shell without purpose, without aim. When we get all those empty wishes, what next? Faith is the belief in the power of something pure, beautiful and absolute.

Faith can make us happy, not the car or the iPhone, for with faith comes understanding, and with this understanding comes purity, an aim which is worthwhile. Faith requires prayer, which in itself is a look into our soul as well, and with that look and the decision of whether we are all we want and can be comes the part when we ask Him, The All-Mighty to give us the inner wisdom, the freedom to be all that.

We ask Him in our humble prayer to guide us and give us strength to do what we know in our heart of hearts to be right,

to hurt no one, and to treat all equally, regardless of who they are.

Ramadan is also a time to forgive, for forgiveness is one of the greatest powers on earth. We are not God, therefore who are we to judge anyone. We can only judge ourselves and we can only aim to change ourselves. We should love, appreciate and be grateful for everyone and everything, for as much as we may complain, we are so much better off than most of the world. We have a lot to be grateful for.

Charity is in a way a kind of gratitude too. Look around you, from the street cleaner to the starving children in third world countries. Poverty there is a way of life, yet the child with flies on her eyelids is managing a smile as well as the cleaner on the street who greets you every morning and goes about his work. They are grateful for the little almost next to nothing they have, yet look at us, with all our luxuries, we are glum and unhappy.

They have faith, they believe, therefore they are happy with the little they have because to them it is a lot. We can make a difference in so many lives in so many ways, and Zakkat during the Holy Month of Ramadan is just the beginning.

Fasting, aaaa, fasting! The real idea of fasting seems to be somewhat lost in the last years. It is meant to make us understand what those less fortunate than us in any way feel. What does it mean to have no food, no water and no necessities? Sadly, from what I have seen lately, fasting has turned into somewhat of a feeding frenzy. Fasting during the day and eating like there's no tomorrow in the night defeats the whole purpose of the fast.

As it says in Chapter 20, Verse 81 of The Holy Qur'an: 'Eat of the good things We have provided for your sustenance, but commit no excess therein, lest My Wrath should justly descend on you: and those on whom descends My Wrath do perish indeed!'

Furthermore, a lot of supplies are wasted during Ramadan, and not even given to the poor, contrary as it says in Chapter 7, Verse 31 of The Holy Qur'an: 'O Children of Adam! Wear your beautiful apparel at every time and place of prayer: eat and drink: But waste not by excess, for Allah loveth not the wasteful.'

Also in Ramadan, breaking the fast gives us the chance to spend time with our families, friends and other people close to us with whom we have no chance to see during normal times because of work, etc. It's also a way to celebrate family values, togetherness, sharing that special time of breaking the fast.

Pilgrimage, the last but not least important pillar of Islam, the one that gives us the chance to get that much closer to the Creator, and join the thousands of other faithful, some of who have continuously saved their whole life just for that one trip. Those are the real people of faith, those and the little old men you see, who've stopped on the side of the road in the desert and prayed. There is no one to see him but God!

I was brought up Greek Orthodox, but have studied all religions, and have discovered a trait, a path, where they all meet, where they all agree. In Islam: 'Nothing is said to you (Mohammad PBUH) except what was said to the messengers who came before you: that thy lord has at his Command (all) forgiveness as well as a most Grievous Penalty.' (Chapter 41, Verse 43 of The Holy Qur'an)

All religions have one common message: 'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.'

Live your religion feel it, respect it, love it and do what it says every day of your life. The Holy Month of Ramadan is the perfect time for Muslims and non-Muslims alike to look inside and look around and go back to our values, go back to what matters and what heals us and those around us, go back to faith with all its beauty and power and wisdom.

Enough said except Ramadan Kareem and may the blessings, wisdom and strength of Allah be with each and every-one of you during this month and always.

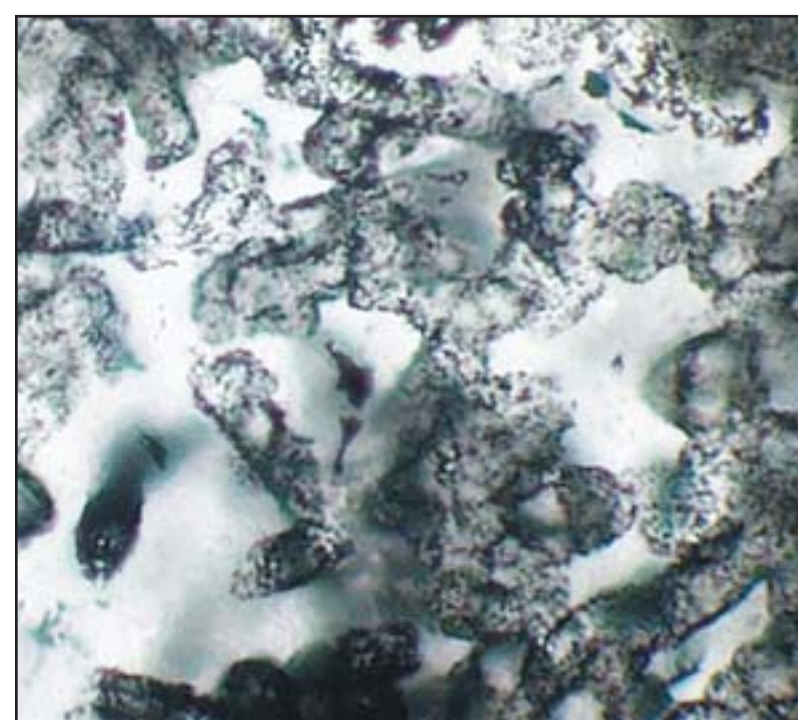
MP bailed

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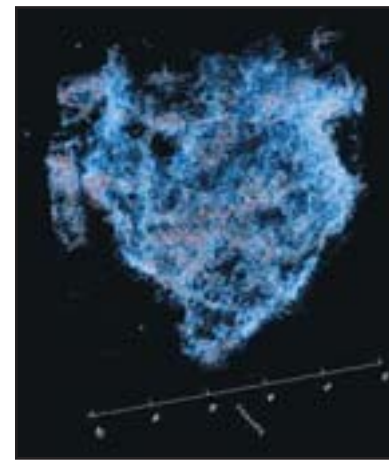
Speaker of Parliament, Jassem Al-Khorafi, however said that the decree adjourning the emergency session was issued and published formally. He revealed that he had contacted the public prosecution to release Hayef without bail and cited parliamentary immunity and a similar case involving former MP, Khodair Al-Enezi, who was released without bail. However, Al-Khorafi said, they were adamant that Hayef pay the bail for his release.

Al-Khorafi revealed that the public prosecution suggested that the National Assembly pay the bail for Hayef, however Al-Khorafi rejected the suggestion on principle. He added that Hayef had no choice but to pay his bail because the public prosecution is an independent authority and its decisions have to be respected.

Earlier, Chief Prosecutor Hamoud Al-Shami ordered the MP's detention within the premises of the Criminal



Hand out picture (above), released by journal Nature Geoscience of a collection of tubular microfossils (resembling the protective sheaths of modern bacteria) found in between sand grains in a 3.4 billion-year-old sandstone from Western Australia. According to a study published in 'Nature Geoscience' on Aug 21, microfossils were discovered in a 3.4 billion-year-old sandstone at the base of Strelley Pool in the remote Pilbara region of Western Australia (top), confirming that bacteria were living then without oxygen, and making the fossils the oldest ones found on earth. The tubes are mostly about 10 micrometers in diameter. (AFP)



A 3D reconstruction of a 3.4 billion-year-old microfossil from Western Australia (left). Cross sections through the reconstruction (right), emphasize the spherical nature of this ancient cell. The microfossil is about 10 micrometers in diameter. (AFP)

Investigations Department when he refused to pay the bail amount, as directed by the Public Prosecution.

About 150 people, including MPs Al-Barrak, Khaled Al-Tahous and Buramiya through the CID headquarters in Salmiya to protest against the detention. They were met by a strong security team led by Assistant Undersecretary for Criminal Security Affairs Major General Sheikh Ahmad Al-Khalifa.

According to a source, the officers interrogated Hayef for about four-and-a-half hours, starting from 9:30 pm Saturday until 2 am on Sunday. The prosecution accused him of harming ties between two friendly nations, spreading false information and threatening the life of the Syrian Ambassador. The lawmaker denied all the accusations.

Under Kuwaiti law, MPs enjoy immunity that shields them against arrest or questioning as long as Parliament is in session, but the House is currently in summer recess until late October.

Kuwaitis held a number of rallies in support of pro-democracy protests in Syria and called for the expulsion of the Syrian ambassador from the country.

Oldest fossils

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the same region just 35 kilometres (20 miles) away, said they had found bacteria fossils in the same formation.

But the claim was disputed, with some experts saying that the tiny pockmarks were not the signatures of once-living organisms but the result of mineralisation of the rocks.

Drawing on the latest electron microscopy and spectroscopy techniques, the authors of the new study say they have triple proof that their sample is biological in origin.

The microbes fed on sulphur com-

pounds to survive, they believe.

The marks measure only about 10 millionths of a metre (0.0004 inches) long.

Their shape and clustering are not only consistent with bacterial cells, say the scientists.

They also have minute crystals of pyrite, an iron-and-sulphur compound also known as fool's gold, which are a clear by-product of metabolising sulphur and sulphates, according to their argument.

The team, led by David Wacey of the University of Western Australia, report the finding in the journal Nature Geoscience.

"At last we have good solid evidence for life over 3.4 billion years ago. It confirms there were bacteria at this time, living without oxygen," Martin Brasier, a professor at Oxford University, said in a press release.

Sulphur-loving bacteria "are still common today", said Brasier.

The bugs are found in smelly ditches and soil but also as "extremophiles" in hot springs and thermal vents in the deep ocean.

Rebels take

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Libyan state television aired an angry audio message from Gaddafi Sunday night, urging families in Tripoli to arm themselves and fight for the capital.

"The time is now to fight for your politics, your oil, your land," he said. "I am with you in Tripoli - together until the ends of the earth," Gaddafi shouted.

The day's first breakthrough came when hundreds of rebels fought their way into a major symbol of the Gaddafi regime - the base of the elite 32nd Brigade commanded by Gaddafi's son, Khamis. Fighters said they met with little resistance.

Hundreds of rebels cheered wildly and danced as they took over the compound filled with eucalyptus trees, raising their tricolor from the front gate and tearing down a large billboard of Gaddafi.

Inside, they cracked open wooden crates labeled "Libyan Armed Forces" and loaded their trucks with huge quantities of munitions. One of the rebels carried off a tube of grenades, while another carted off two mortars.

"This is the wealth of the Libyan people that he was using against us," said Ahmed al-Ajdal, 27, pointing to his haul. "Now we will use it against him and any other dictator who goes against the Libyan people."

One group started up a tank, drove it out of the gate, crushing the median of the main highway and driving off toward Tripoli. Rebels celebrated the capture with deafening amounts of celebratory gunfire, filling the air with smoke.

Across the street, rebels raided a huge warehouse, making off with hundreds of crates of rockets, artillery shells and large-caliber ammunition. The warehouse had once been used to store packaged foods, and in the back, cans of beans were still stacked toward the ceiling.

The prisoners had been held in the walled compound and when the rebels rushed in, they freed more than 300 of them.

"We were sitting in our cells when all of a sudden we heard lots of gunfire and people yelling 'Allahu Akbar.' We didn't know what was happening, and then we saw rebels running in and saying 'We're on your side.' And they let us out," said 23-year-old Majid al-Hodeiri from Zawiya. He said he was captured four months ago by Gaddafi's forces and taken to base. He said he was beaten and tortured while under detention.

Many of the prisoners looked disoriented as they stopped at a gathering place for fighters several miles away from the base. Some had signs of severe beatings. Others were dressed in tattered T-shirts or barefoot. Rebels fighters and prisoners embraced.

From the military base, about 16 miles west of Tripoli, the convoy pushed on toward the capital.

Mahmoud al-Ghwei, 20 and unarmed, said he had just come along with a friend for the ride.

"It's a great feeling. For all these years, we wanted freedom and Gaddafi kept it from us. Now we're going to get rid of Gaddafi and get our freedom," he said.

At nightfall, the fighters reached Janzour, a Tripoli suburb. Along the way, they were greeted by civilians lining the streets and waving rebel flags. One man grabbed a rebel flag that had been draped over the hood of a slow-moving car and kissed it, overcome with emotion.

"We are not going back," said Issam Wallani, another rebel. "God willing, this evening we will enter Tripoli."

The uprising against Gaddafi broke out in mid-February, and anti-regime protests quickly spread across the vast desert nation with only 6 million people. A brutal regime crackdown quickly transformed the protests into an armed rebellion. Rebels seized Libya's east, setting up an internationally recognized transitional government there, and two pockets in the west, the port city of Misrata and the Nafusa mountain range.

Gaddafi clung to the remaining territory, and his forces failed to subdue the rebellion

in Misrata, Libya's third-largest city, and in the Nafusa mountains. Since the start of August, thousands of rebel fighters, including many who fled Gaddafi-held cities, joined an offensive launched from the mountains toward the coast.

The fighters who had set out from the mountains three weeks ago rushed toward Tripoli on Sunday, start out at dawn from a village just east of the coastal city of Zawiya. Only a day earlier had the rebels claimed full control of Zawiya, an anti-regime stronghold with 200,000 people and Libya's last functioning oil refinery.

Syria

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad said on Sunday unrest sweeping the country had become more militant but he was confident it could be controlled and warned that any military action against his nation would backfire.

Assad faces Western calls to step down over his harsh crackdown on five months of protests in which the United Nations says around 2,000 civilians have died, but he said Syria would not accept outside interference.

"As for the threat of a military action ... any action against Syria will have greater consequences (on those who carry it out), greater than they can tolerate," he said in an interview broadcast on Syrian television.

"First, because of Syria's geopolitical location and second (because of) Syrian capabilities. They know part of it but they do not know the other parts and they will not be able to afford the results," he said. Syria, which borders Israel, Lebanon, Iraq, Turkey and Jordan, has regional influence because of its alliance with Iran and its role in Lebanon, despite ending a 29-year military presence there in 2005. It also has an influence in Iraq and supports militant groups Hamas, Islamic Jihad and Hezbollah.

No country has yet proposed the kind of action against Syria which NATO forces have carried out in support of Libyan rebels seeking to topple Muammar Gaddafi.

But the United States and Europe called on Assad last week to step down and Washington imposed new sanctions, including freezing Syrian state assets and prohibiting imports of Syrian

Syria might take advice from countries in the region, "but we do not allow any country to interfere in our decision," Assad said.

Assad's government has blamed armed groups for the violence and has said more than 500 soldiers and police have died since the unrest erupted in March.

"As for the security situation (it) has become more militant in the recent weeks," Assad said. "We are capable of dealing with it... I am not worried."

Team 'learns'

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through a molecular guillotine called a cysteine protease, which only becomes active when a molecule called InsP6 is present in large concentrations inside a cell.

Once inside the cell, the toxin releases its payload, killing cells that line the intestine and triggering inflammation and diarrhea.

Savidge's team discovered that once this process starts, the body releases neutralizing chemicals that gum up the molecular guillotine, preventing the toxins from being chopped up and damaging the cell.

Inspired by this natural mechanism, the team developed a treatment that mimics this process, shutting down the guillotine and preventing the toxin from damaging the cell.

"If you shut them down before they can interact with the cell we can alleviate the disease."

Mice with C. difficile who were treated with the drug became less ill and were more likely to survive their infections than untreated mice.

Patients who get these infections currently are treated with antibiotics, which contributes to the problem of antibiotic resistance.

Newswatch

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west to the border with Haiti. A hurricane watch is in effect for Puerto Rico.

Tropical storm warnings have been issued for the US Virgin islands as well as a host of nearby islands.

Also Sunday, Harvey trekked westward across southeastern Mexico with heavy rains. Recently downgraded to a tropical depression, Harvey was located at about 60 miles (95 kms) east-southeast of Villahermosa, Mexico.

Harvey had maximum sustained winds of 35 mph (55 kph) and was forecast to dissipate over southern Mexico by early Monday. The system still could produce rainfall of 3 to 6 inches across Guatemala and southwestern Mexico.

Isolated amounts of 10 inches of rainfall were possible with a risk of life-threatening flash floods and mudslides, particularly over higher terrain, the hurricane center said. (AP)