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ISLAMIC STATE

Ottawa boosts military presence in Iraq

Advisers › Additional special forces troops head overseas, will increase total current deployment to 69
Debate › Liberals, NDP reject Conservative plan for air strikes, urge focus on humanitarian aid, a position Tories call insufficient

STEVEN CHASE

DANIEL LEBLANC, OTTAWA

The number of Canadian military advisers deployed to Iraq is rising as the Harper government defends its plan to send CF-18 fighters to strike Islamic State militants by telling Parliament that humanitarian aid alone is an insufficient response to the Mideast crisis.

A source said Monday that additional special forces troops have departed for northern Iraq and will boost Canada's total deployed there to 69 from 26. Ottawa authorized as many as 69 elite soldiers last month to help Iraq and Kurdish forces combat Islamic State jihadists but only about two dozen were initially deployed because that was all that was originally needed.

The Conservative government kicked off a special debate in the Commons Monday over its plan to join air strikes against Islamic State militants by announcing \$10 million in aid to help victims of sexual violence and other human rights abuses committed by the jihadist group. But Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird said humanitarian aid does not replace the need for air strikes.

"We must be careful not to draw a line between security and humanitarian assistance," Mr. Baird said. "That is not just a false distinction, it is a dangerous one." The Conservatives face a divided Commons with both the NDP and Liberals, which together hold about 44 per cent of the seats, rejecting air strikes and urging a focus on humanitarian aid. A Conservative motion endorsing

an aerial combat mission of as many as six months is expected to be put to a vote Tuesday night and the Tory majority in the Commons means it will easily pass. Within a matter of weeks, six Canadian CF-18 fighter bombers, two surveillance planes and a refuelling tanker aircraft are expected to join allies against Islamic State forces in Iraq. **Iraq, Page 4**

DEMONSTRATIONS
Old-guard activists

AROUND THE RIM

Hongkongers in Canada doubt Beijing will be foolhardy



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Hugh Chow remembers the lure of Tiananmen Square. He was at university in Hong Kong in 1989 and recalls all of his classmates in front of TV sets as the protests grew larger, as the leaders refused to back down, as the Goddess of Democracy statue rose beneath the portrait of Mao. Some of his friends even flew to Beijing, where the burgeoning democracy movement was about to be crushed. "I was literally one step away

from getting on a plane," Mr. Chow said. But Mr. Chow never went: He was worried he'd miss his exams. As with others who grew up among Hong Kong's skyscrapers, he worked hard and made his money. And like others in the former British colony, he eventually got on a plane to Canada – where many arrived seeking stability in the tense years before Britain's 1997 handover of Hong Kong back to China, continuing a historic flow of migra-

tion across the Pacific. Now, Mr. Chow is part of an influential community of Hong Kong-connected Canadian business people – in Toronto and Vancouver, but also in Hong Kong, where there are 300,000 Canadians and dual-citizens – who are watching the "Umbrella Revolution" from a unique vantage point, one that at least partly explains Canada's muted stand on the protests. The demonstrations in Hong Kong have been the largest pro-

tests to hit China since Tiananmen. The protesters even erected a statue of a person holding out a yellow umbrella. But Mr. Chow – who co-founded a semiconductor chip company called ViXS and travels every couple of months back to Hong Kong, where the company has about 40 employees – is not alone as he hopes for a quick return to the profitable stability for which Hong Kong is renowned. **Marlow, Page 3**

Marlow: Democracy 'is not a perfect cure for all nations'

» Views differ, but many are cautious of being seen as anti-Beijing, of potentially ruining Hong Kong's reputation for freewheeling business, of rushing forward out of step with broader reforms on the mainland. Mr. Chow and his diverse cohort – which includes such famous Hong Kong-Canadians as Thomas Fung of the Fairchild empire, architect Bing Thom and others – were almost all born under British rule in Hong Kong. They recall the colony's governors being appointed in London, even as protests now centre on China's rather illiberal interpretation of "universal suffrage."

"I am hopeful that the system can be fine-tuned and maintained as it requires."

Thomas Fung
Businessman

Many other Hong Kong-Canadians profited from the exodus from Asia into Canada's property market, while others used Hong Kong as a springboard to benefit from the immense growth in China. Unlike the younger generation in Hong Kong, which has grated under the increased presence of mainland Chinese, the older, wealthier generation has gained substantially from closer ties to China. David Choi, of Vancouver's Royal Pacific Realty, jokes that people in Hong Kong are like people anywhere else: Democrats when they're young and Republicans when they're old. Plus, many have watched China's advances with

awe, seen leaders' attempts to rein in corruption, and hope this development eventually leads to political evolution. "I am hopeful that the system can be fine-tuned and maintained as it requires," Mr. Fung wrote to me in an e-mail arguing that democracy "is not a perfect cure for all nations," while acknowledging China's system, if left unreformed, can lead to corruption. "We still need to walk with the pace of our parents," Benedict Leung, a Toronto accountant who frequently travels back to Hong Kong, told me separately. People like Mr. Chow and Mr. Leung praise the peaceful nature

of the protests, strongly support the right to free speech and doubt Beijing will do anything foolhardy. They hope Hong Kong can return to normal. It is a practical hope, likely shared by many diplomats – who speak loudly in support of democracy elsewhere, such as Ukraine. But Mr. Choi still thinks there should be a dialogue that bridges business interests with the democratic aspirations of younger Hong Kong people, many of whom will carry the spirit of the protests with them for the rest of their lives. *Iain Marlow is the Asia Pacific correspondent for The Globe and Mail.*