

# Flaherty steps down as finance minister

**'I leave feeling fulfilled.'** Flaherty is among Canada's longest-serving finance ministers

Jim Flaherty is leaving the federal cabinet after more than eight years as finance minister to prepare for a return to the private sector, saying the move is unrelated to his recent health problems.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper is expected to name his replacement Wednesday.

Flaherty, who delivered his final budget last month, said he made the decision with his

family earlier this year.

"As I begin another chapter in my life, I leave feeling fulfilled with what we have accomplished as a government and a country during one of the most challenging economic periods in our country's history," he said in a statement.

An official in the Prime Minister's Office said Flaherty would be retaining — at least for now — his seat in the House of Commons, meaning he remains an MP for the time being.

Flaherty is among Canada's longest-serving finance ministers, appointed to the key economic post when the Conservative government first came to power in 2006.

He managed the country's economy through one of its worst economic crises in 2008-2009, running up large deficits but leaving the books virtually balanced after his Feb. 11 budget.

Speculation about Flaherty's future has risen in recent years after he acknow-



Finance Minister Jim Flaherty stands in the House of Commons during Question Period on Parliament Hill, in Ottawa on March 4. Flaherty says he is leaving the federal cabinet and returning to the private sector.

FRED CHARTRAND/THE CANADIAN PRESS

ledged suffering from a rare skin condition, requiring him to take medication that led to weight gain and apparent fatigue in public appearances.

His long farewell message to Canadians, delivered unexpectedly on a government website, listed accomplish-

ments such as cooling the housing market and introducing tax-free savings accounts.

Harper, who has staked his government's reputation on steady economic management, said he regretted the loss of his No. 1 money man.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

## Poll. 1 in 4 Canadian kids admit to online bullying

About one in four Canadian kids surveyed about cyberbullying admitted they have been "mean or cruel" to someone online, while more than one in three say they've been a victim, according to a newly released study.

But experts say cyberbullying is probably not as rampant or serious as some parents would believe.

Most commonly, students said the bullying act they committed was name-calling (78 per cent), while very few students owned up to more serious bad behaviour. Just 12 per cent said they made fun of someone's race or religion, seven per cent said they teased a peer about their sexual orientation, and four per cent said they sexually harassed someone.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



## Canadians welcome troops back home

MCpl. Anthony Alliot and Sarah Tooth embrace after the last Canadian troops from Afghanistan returned to Ottawa on Tuesday. The last Canadian soldiers to leave Afghanistan arrived home Tuesday to tears, hugs from family and friends and a pledge from Prime Minister Stephen Harper that May 9 will be set aside to honour their contributions and sacrifices.

ADRIAN WYLD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

## Legal Matters



### How to choose a personal injury lawyer

Leonard Kunka, Personal Injury Alliance

**Q** I recently suffered a serious personal injury — should I simply call any lawyer for legal advice?

**A** No, not just any lawyer. These types of cases are highly technical with statutory time limitations, complex insurance benefits, and other legalities. You need a lawyer who specializes in personal injury.

**Q** How do I find a personal injury lawyer?

**A** Ask other lawyers and medical professionals you know if they can refer you to someone who is qualified. There are peer reviewed publications and accreditations that can help, too. For example, the Law Society of Upper Canada provides accreditation to "certified specialists" in the area of civil litigation. The Lexpert Directory (lexpert.ca) has a list of personal injury lawyers who excel in the field. Canadian Lawyer magazine (canadianlawyermag.com) publishes a "best lawyers" feature that is based on a peer review survey.

**Q** How do I make the final decision?

**A** We recommend you meet with a few lawyers and candidly ask about their credentials, expertise, and trial experience. For a great summary of questions to ask, see pialaw.ca/choose. The lawyer and firm you choose should have a proven track record in personal injury cases, as well as the financial resources to properly build your case. Your prospects for a positive recovery can depend on this. Also, personal injury claims can take years to complete, and the lawyer is going to become intimately involved in your life and recovery. You have to feel a level of trust and connection from your initial meeting.

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# Crimea back into the fold



Putin's speech on Crimea in Sevastopol, Crimea, Tuesday. Fiercely defending Russia's by the West to take Ukraine into its influence. VADIM GHIRDA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

### Quoted

**"I have heard residents of Crimea say that back in 1991 they were handed over like a sack of potatoes."**

Russian President Vladimir Putin, who declared that the collapse of the Soviet Union made Russians "the largest divided people in the world."

"In people's hearts and minds, Crimea has always been an integral part of Russia," he declared, dismissing Western criticism of Sunday's Crimean referendum as a manifestation of the West's double standards.

Often interrupted by applause, Putin said the rights of ethnic Russians in Ukraine had been abused by the new Ukrainian government and insisted that Crimea's vote to join Russia was in line with international law and reflected its right for self-determination.

Putin said his actions followed what he described as Western arrogance, hypocrisy and pressure, and warned that the West must drop its stubborn refusal to take Russian concerns into

account.

"If you push a spring too hard at some point it will spring back," he said, addressing the West. "You always need to remember this."

While Putin boasted that the Russian takeover of Crimea was conducted without a single shot, a Ukrainian military spokesman said one Ukrainian serviceman was killed and another injured when a military facility in Crimea was stormed Tuesday by armed men just hours after Putin's speech.

Putin argued that the months of protests in the Ukrainian capital of Kyiv which prompted President Viktor Yanukovich to flee to Russia had been instigated by the West to weaken Russia. He cast the new Ukrainian

government as illegitimate, driven by radical "nationalists, neo-Nazis, Russophobes and anti-Semites."

In response, Ukraine's new government called Putin dangerous.

"Today's statement by Putin showed in high relief what a real threat Russia is for the civilized world and international security," Ukrainian foreign ministry spokesman Evhen Perebinis said on Twitter. "(The annexation) has nothing to do with law or with democracy or sensible thinking."

Displaying strong emotion, Putin accused the West of cheating Russia and ignoring its interests in the years that followed the 1991 Soviet collapse.

"They have constantly tried to drive us into a corner for our independent stance," Putin said. "But there are limits. And in the case of Ukraine, our Western partners have crossed a line. They have behaved rudely, irresponsibly and unprofessionally." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

### The view from home

## Canadian sanctions won't isolate Russia, says ambassador

Russia's ambassador to Canada says sanctions from the West over Ukraine won't isolate his country, and expelling it from the G8 would only hurt stability around the world.

Energy-thirsty Asian countries such as China are waiting in the wings if Europe and North America decide they won't want Russia's resources, Georgiy Mamedov said Tuesday.

Canada joined the United States and other countries in imposing sanctions on Russia as a result of Sunday's vote in Crimea, but Mamedov shrugged off the sanctions. "I've been around and you can't isolate Russia," he said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

the Kremlin, Putin said he was merely restoring order to history by incorporating Crimea.



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