



Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia

Dispatches

11 September 2020

The Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia provides a forum for the study, promotion and debate of defence and security issues.

Dispatches is a weekly collection of links and news of current interest, included those tweeted and posted by the Institute on social media. Links to articles are checked at the time they are put into *Dispatches* but may be unavailable at a later date or in some states other than Canada.

If you are not a routine recipient of *Dispatches* but wish to be so, email the Institute's Chief Information Officer (CIO) at RUSINovaScotia@gmail.com. If you do not want to receive *Dispatches*, or wish to receive it at some different frequency, please inform the CIO. If you wish to receive *Dispatches* at a different address (i.e., not your work address), please inform the CIO. Past editions of *Dispatches* may be requested by contacting the CIO.

Everyone is encouraged to email to the CIO links and other content to be included in *Dispatches*.

Submissions and feedback are welcome anytime. Comments to articles can be from members or non-members of RUSI(NS). Any comment in *Dispatches* is the sole opinion of the author and does not necessarily represent the views of the Canadian Department of National Defence, the Canadian Armed Forces, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police or the Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia

RUSI(NS) also publishes:

1. a weekly Dimensions Newsletter, (formally called *Defence & Security Newsletter*) aimed at opinion leaders and industry. If you are interested in receiving this newsletter, email admin@duncom.ca; and
2. a weekly *China Open Source Newsletter* of articles curated from Chinese military-related websites based inside mainland China. If you are interested in receiving this newsletter, email RUSINovaScotia@gmail.com.

Events:

To list an event in *Dispatches*, email the CIO by noon Thursday. RUSI(NS) events are by invitation only. If you are interested in attending and have not been invited, email RUSINovaScotia@gmail.com. RUSI(NS) events may be cancelled at short notice – email RUSI(NS) if there is a question of an event occurring.

New: 11 September, Friday - Wilson Center's Canada Institute webinar "The High-Tech Future of North American Defense." 2-3 pm (Eastern time?). See: <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/event/high-tech-future-north-american-defense>

30 September, Wednesday - RUSI(NS) Distinguished Speaker LCol Barry Pitcher, CO Princess Louise Fusiliers, will present "Reservist Leadership during Crisis: CAF Response to COVID-19 in Atlantic Canada." 1300-1500, via Zoom. The talk will cover the Land Component Command of Operation LASER, the CAF response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Registration is required. To register, email RUSINovaScotia@gmail.com by close of business Sun, 27 Sep. Zoom instructions will be emailed by end Mon, 28 Sep.

New: 14 October, Wednesday – RUSI(NS)/Canadian Marine Industries and Shipbuilding Association shipbuilding supply chain webinar. 1400-1600, via Zoom. Call for registration to follow.

28 October, Wednesday - RUSI(NS) Distinguished Cdr Helga Budden, Commanding Officer, Canadian Armed Forces Transition Unit Nova Scotia/Newfoundland and Labrador, speaking on transition from serving to retirement. 1300-1500, via Zoom. Call for registration to follow.

New: 18 November, Wednesday – RUSI(NS)/NORAD & NORTHCOM will host Distinguished Speakers from JTFN and N-NC to present "Arctic Continental Defense: Canada and U.S. Perspectives." 1300-1500, via Zoom. Call for registration to follow.

Recent Publications:

New: Naval Association of Canada presentation "Here Be Dragons? Chinese Submarine Operations in the Arctic" by Adam Lajeunesse and Tim Choi, 8 September 2020, is available on request to RUSINovaScotia@gmail.com.

RUSI(NS) Information Paper "Urban Search and Rescue" by Peter Ziobrowski, 28 August 2020
<https://rusi-ns.ca/usar/>

RUSI(NS) Presentations "Policing in a Pandemic Environment" by Insp Blair Bannerman, Cpl Shawn Reynolds and Cpl Deepak Prasad, 26 August 2020
<https://rusi-ns.ca/policing-in-a-pandemic/>




The Newsletter of the Royal United Services Institute of Vancouver Island Volume 52, 3rd Quarter 2020 is available on request to RUSINovaScotia@gmail.com. Articles include:
Australia's Defence Strategic Update: It's All About China
Pulling Out of Germany: Trump Adjusts the Military Furniture
"For Our Enemies, We Have Shotguns": Explaining China's New Assertiveness
Hot Issue – The Houthi Art of War: Why They Keep Winning in Yemen
China-India Skirmish: Part of Maritime Versus Land Power Struggle
It Only Took Days for a Fire to Hinder the US Navy's Pacific Fleet for Years to Come
Kra Canal: China is Creating Another Naval Route to Escape a Blockade by India and Only Thailand Can Stop It

The Military Institute of Windsor Communiqué, Volume XXXVIII Number 8 September 2020 is available on request to RUSINovaScotia@gmail.com.

The Edmonton United Services Institute President's Enews September 2020 is available on request to RUSINovaScotia@gmail.com.

The United Services Institute of Nanaimo and North Island (USINNI) Newsletter Vol 28 No 9 September 2020 is available on request to RUSINovaScotia@gmail.com.

Tweeted by @RUSI_NS: RUSI(NS) tweets may also be viewed by clicking on the icon at <https://RUSI-NS.ca>. To have something tweeted or retweeted, email the CIO at RUSINovaScotia@gmail.com.
Original article title in parentheses.

<p>Roger Litwiller -Canadian Naval Author/Historian @RLitwiller 5 Sep tweeted: #OTD 5/9/1942 #RememberRCN -In a daring night attack German U-Boat U513 enters the harbour at Conception Bay, NF and torpedoes & sinks the merchant ships SS Lord Strathcona (Canadian) & SS Saganaga (British). 36 Sailors are killed, many homes are damaged from the explosions. RUSI(NS) retweeted: Should be 'ocean war grave' to be covered by heritage wreck regulations being developed by @ParksCanada under Wrecked, Abandoned or Hazardous Vessels Act https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/annualstatutes/2019_1/page-14.html#docCont #OceanWarGrave @Transport_gc #MerchantNavyVeterans #MerchantNavyDay3Sep</p>	
<p>CDA Institute @CDAInstitute 4 Sep tweeted and RUSI(NS) retweeted: From Australia to Canada, this recent CDA Institute piece in cooperation with Peter Jennings, Director of the Australian Security Policy Institute has become one of this year's most widely read articles on our website. Click to find out why. @ASPI_org (Canada + Australia in the Indo-Pacific https://cdainstitute.ca/peter-jennings-interview-canadian-australian-collaboration-countering-china-in-the-indo-pacific/)</p>	
<p>GNWT/GTNO Infrastructure @GNWT_INF 2 Sep tweeted: Four new double-hulled barges have arrived in #Tuktoyaktuk to the join the #MTS fleet. An open and competitive process was used for the procurement of the barges, which will improve marine operations for #NWT communities: https://gov.nt.ca/en/newsroom/government-northwest-territories-celebrates-addition-new-double-hulled-barges-mts-fleet (Government of the Northwest Territories celebrates addition of new double-hulled barges to MTS fleet) Transport Canada @Transport_gc 2 Sep retweeted: These double-hulled barges, mainly funded by the #OceansProtectionPlan, will help keep CAN's 🇨🇦 coastal communities & waterways safe. RUSI(NS) retweeted: 4 new fuel barges in CAN 🇨🇦 #Arctic/North add to marine infrastructure/logistics robustness. Support to @RoyalCanNavy & @CoastGuardCAN for integrated approach to defence, security & safety. Hopefully future barges will be built in CAN 🇨🇦</p>	

War on the Rocks @WarOnTheRocks 7 Sep tweeted: Re-imagining the defense of North America as the Arctic thaws (Beyond the North Warning System <https://warontherock.com/2020/09/beyond-the-north-warning-system/>)

Canadian Global Affairs Institute @CAGlobalAffairs 7 Sep retweeted and RUSI(NS) retweeted: Piece from our fellow, @AndreaCharron. For more analysis on NORAD, North American Defence, and the Arctic, think of visiting those pages on the CGAI website! https://cga.ca/tags/north_america_norad <https://cgai.ca/tags/arctic>



MARLANT @RCN_MARLANT 2 Sep tweeted: Members of #HMCSHarryDeWolf ship's company trial their new Multi-Role Rescue Boat (MRRB) to enhance seamanship and navigation skills. The boat's primary role is rescue and tactical operations like supporting the Enhanced Boarding Party. Flag of CanadaAnchor #WetheNavy
RUSI(NS) retweeted: Capable boats considerably add to warship's options for operations, whether search&rescue #SAR, boardings or pax/cargo transfer. @RosboroughBoats NS has delivered such boats for #Arctic&Offshore Patrol Vessels #AOPV. More such for #RCNavy would ensure fleet commonality/logistics



Posted on Facebook Royal United Services Institute NS with comments:

Use of predictive policing tools in Canada highlight need for federal action, report says

<https://nationalpost.com/pmnn/news-pmnn/canada-news-pmnn/use-of-predictive-policing-tools-in-canada-highlight-need-for-federal-action-report-says>



Interesting that a project to "identify those at risk of going missing" has been funded in part by Defence Research and Development Canada. Good to see research being done and applied across sectors.

Allies and Former U.S. Officials Fear Trump Could Seek NATO Exit in a Second Term

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/03/us/politics/trump-nato-withdraw.html>



The US withdrawing from NATO "... would be one of the biggest global strategic shifts in generations and a major victory for ... Russia."

"World First": Remote In-water Ship Surveys via ROV

<https://www.marinelink.com/news/world-first-remote-inwater-ship-surveys-481332>



Hmm, wouldn't have thought this would be a 'first,' but rather something already done by Fleet Maintenance Facilities and Fleet Diving Units.

Submarines: the industry policy puzzle

<https://navalinstitute.com.au/submarines-the-industry-policy-puzzle/>



"Sovereign industrial capability" - now, there's a concept that needs more attention in Canada. Certainly recent focus on sourcing personal protective equipment (PPE) during the pandemic has raised public awareness of such a concept even if that term isn't being used. What is and should be Canada's sovereign (defence) industrial capability? Are there government and academic studies of it? Is there a government program in support of ensuring it is sufficiently robust?

The major Canadian shipyards and related marine industries associations are well engaged in the area what with the yards' need to ensure secure suppliers and chain of supply. Interesting to read the article's point that the Australian government's failure to support the auto industry had a downstream adverse impact on shipbuilding. Yes, manufacturing is much more related than is generally appreciated (think about otherwise innocuous industries that converted to wartime manufacturing in the world wars).

What is the capability of Canadian industry to support building submarines (crewed or drone) in this country to replace the current Victoria-class? That's assuming we don't buy offshore. Does this country need to develop industry towards ensuring we can build submarines?

Lessons for the Navy's New Frigate From the Littoral Combat Ship

<https://warontherocks.com/2020/09/lessons-for-the-navys-new-frigate-from-the-littoral-combat-ship/>



Lessons from the deck plates, including: innovation (be selective in doing so), crewing (fewer is not necessarily better), systemic approach (consider infrastructure, doctrine and procedures), and training (it's people, people!).

How Do You Actually Measure Military Capability?

<https://mwi.usma.edu/how-do-you-actually-measure-military-capability/>



"The Military Equipment Index is a general, weighted, relative measure of total medium and heavy equipment stocks possessed by each country's military in a given year. It measures the relative quantity, modified by technological capabilities, of military hardware by domain for all countries from 1970 to 2015."

Russia's 'slow-motion Chernobyl' at sea

<https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20200901-the-radioactive-risk-of-sunken-nuclear-soviet-submarines>



If (when?) there is an emergency with a nuclear-powered vessel in Canadian Arctic or Northern waters, what is our country's capability to respond? Not just to rescue the mariners (submariners if the vessel is a submarine and the emergency is a SUBSAR) but to deal with (salvage?) the vessel?

Palau Provides Pentagon With Green Light for US Military Base Construction

<https://sputniknews.com/military/202009041080369603-palau-provides-pentagon-with-green-light-for-us-military-base-construction/>



Building a defence and security installation on Palau would be an appropriate counter-move to the Chinese in their global game of Go as they buy or build bases as part of a world-spanning logistics and support network. Basing US Coast Guard at Palau is a neat idea - local issues there (e.g., illegal fishing) are probably the sort better handled by a coast guard.

For New Robotic Ships, Pentagon Ignores China's Dangerous "Phony War Fleet"

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/craighooper/2020/09/07/for-new-robotic-ships-pentagon-ignores-chinas-dangerous-phony-war-fleet/#2b883047b3c0>



China's "Phony War Fleet", "a massive Coast Guard, civilian 'fishing fleet' militia and an array of "ad hoc public/private" logistical partnerships," is not incapable nor something to underrate. Navies such as the Royal Canadian Navy, indeed other government agencies such as the Canadian Coast Guard and Transport Canada, need to understand the phony war fleet, and take it into account in plans, operations, tactics and operations. Hmm, could make for an interesting exercise scenario.

How America's Defense Strategy Left Us Unprepared for a Pandemic

<https://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2020/09/how-defense-strategy-left-america-unprepared-pandemic/168301/>



Considerations for when Canada next reviews its defence policy. (There seems to be a tendency for the US to use the term strategy where Canada uses policy and reserves 'strategy' for the next level down, matching means and ways to ends. But then, what is strategy is still subject to much discussion, academic and otherwise.)






Happy Hunting For Russian Subs? Britain Could Scrap Its Anti-Submarine Fleet

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/michaelpeck/2020/09/08/happy-hunting-for-russian-subs-britain-could-scrap-its-anti-submarine-fleet/#67ba5122aa33>



Will Canada see a parallel? Right now it looks like our upgraded Halifax-class will remain operational until replaced by frigates of the Canadian Surface Combatant project, presuming that project remains funded and on schedule. The ramifications of fewer frigates would be similar. And though Canada is not an island nation like the UK dependant on overseas trade, much of our commerce, even with the US, does travel by water. Numbers count.

Posted on Facebook Royal United Services Institute NS: RUSI(NS) postings may be viewed by clicking on the icon at <https://RUSI-NS.ca>. To have something posted or commented, email the CIO by noon Thursday.

 <p>https://mailchi.mp/rusi.org/4-september-169610?e=a539211a30</p>	
<p>Norway Expands Key Arctic Port For More US Nuke Sub Visits</p> <p>https://breakingdefense.com/2020/09/norway-expands-key-arctic-port-for-more-us-nuke-sub-visits/</p>	
<p>If the Czech Republic Can Do It, So Can We: J. Michael Cole for Inside Policy</p> <p>https://www.macdonaldlaurier.ca/czech-republic-can-can-j-michael-cole-inside-policy/</p>	
<p>Canada set to begin NATO enhanced Air Policing mission</p> <p>https://vanguardcanada.com/2020/09/03/canada-set-to-begin-nato-enhanced-air-policing-mission/</p>	

Eyeing China, Taiwan urges alliance against 'aggressive actions'

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-taiwan-security/eyeing-china-taiwan-urges-alliance-against-aggressive-actions-idUSKBN25Z0IV>



Northrop wins US Air Force's contest for next-gen ICBMs

<https://www.defensenews.com/space/2020/09/08/northrop-wins-the-air-forces-contest-for-next-gen-icbms/>



US, NATO Warships Exercise Off Russia's Arctic Coast

<https://breakingdefense.com/2020/09/us-nato-warships-exercise-off-russias-arctic-coast/>



China sends aircraft carriers on unprecedented dual missions in Bohai, Yellow seas

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3100540/china-sends-aircraft-carriers-unprecedented-dual-missions-bohai>



China's latest FC-31 Gyrfalcon stealth fighter prototype may have been on a test flight

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3100569/chinas-latest-fc-31-gyrfalcon-stealth-fighter-prototype-may>



The End of Hope in the Middle East

<https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/09/05/middle-east-end-hope-recovery-yemen-lebanon/>



China's Air Force Might Be Back in the Nuclear Business

<https://thediplomat.com/2020/09/chinas-air-force-might-be-back-in-the-nuclear-business/>



Other Sources: Recommendations for 'themes' (e.g., #drones) to list in this section are welcome.

#Arctic

China's 'Antarctic gateway' review

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/nation/politics/chinas-antarctic-gateway-review/news-story/feb36083f6cb5b07392f9cb87c94cf0f> [PDF available on request to RUSINovaScotia@gmail.com for those who cannot get past the firewall]

"China has become an active, vocal and at times disruptive, unconstructive presence in Antarctic Treaty System meetings"

Lessons for Canada-China relations in the Arctic.

The Australian Strategic Policy Institute report "Eyes wide open: Managing the Australia-China Antarctic relationship" mentioned in the article can be found at: <https://www.aspi.org.au/report/eyes-wide-open-managing-australia-china-antarctic-relationship>

#China

Beijing's Strategic Ends: Harmony through Hierarchy and the End of Choice

<https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2020/9/1/beijings-strategic-ends-harmony-through-hierarchy-and-the-end-of-choice>

#COVID

The COVID-19 infodemic: What can be done about the infectious spread of misinformation and disinformation

There are lessons for IA and other staff: <https://thebulletin.org/2020/09/the-covid-19-infodemic-what-can-be-done-about-the-infectious-spread-of-misinformation-and-disinformation/>

#information operations

Fake News Is Wreaking Havoc on the Battlefield. Here's What the Military's Doing About It
<https://www.military.com/daily-news/2020/08/16/fake-news-wreaking-havoc-battlefield-heres-what-militarys-doing-about-it.html>

Americans See Skepticism of News Media as Healthy, Say Public Trust in the Institution Can Improve
<https://www.journalism.org/2020/08/31/americans-see-skepticism-of-news-media-as-healthy-say-public-trust-in-the-institution-can-improve/>

A Tale of Two Influencers: Some Advice from the Cheap Seats - From the Green Notebook
<https://fromthegreennotebook.com/2020/09/04/a-tale-of-two-influencers-some-advice-from-the-cheap-seats/>

The difference between the facts and the truth
<https://medium.com/1st-draft/the-difference-between-the-facts-and-the-truth-59e23c6185d>

#innovation

Terror and Technology From Dynamite to Drones
<https://warontherocks.com/2020/09/terror-and-technology-from-dynamite-to-drones/>

#intelligence

ODNI Releases Procedures Governing Foreign Intelligence Collection
<https://www.lawfareblog.com/odni-releases-procedures-governing-foreign-intelligence-collection>

The way in which the Chinese intelligence services operate
<https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2020/09/06/the-way-in-which-the-chinese-intelligence-services-operate/>

The US Intelligence Community Is Being Disrupted
<https://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2020/06/us-intel-community-being-disrupted/166372/>

#law of sea

No “right to innocent passage” through NW Passage for NZ sailor: Transport Canada
<https://nunatsiaq.com/stories/article/no-right-to-innocent-passage-through-nw-passage-for-nz-sailor-transport-canada/>

#NATO

NAEW&C Force - Airborne Early Warning & Control
<https://defence.frontline.online/article/2020/1/14610-NAEWC-Force>

#naval warfare

Marines and Mercenaries: Beware the Irregular Threat in the Littoral
<http://cimsec.org/marines-and-mercenaries-beware-the-irregular-threat-in-the-littoral/45409>

#Royal Canadian Navy

Your Navy Today - August 2020
<http://www.navy-marine.forces.gc.ca/en/news-ynt/2020/08-your-navy-today.page>

#space

White House releases new Space Policy Directive
<https://thesimonscenter.org/white-house-releases-spd-5/>

#strategy

Dueling with Dragons and Sparring with Snakes: US Strategy in an Era of Varied Threats

<https://mwi.usma.edu/dueling-with-dragons-and-sparring-with-snakes-us-strategy-in-an-era-of-varied-threats/>

#warfare

Predicting pugnacity - How to forecast armies' will to fight

<https://www.economist.com/science-and-technology/2020/09/05/how-to-forecast-armies-will-to-fight>

The Soft Power Army of the 2020s

<https://wavellroom.com/2020/05/28/the-soft-power-army-of-the-2020s/>

The Soft Power Army of the 2020's: An Alternative Perspective

<https://wavellroom.com/2020/09/01/the-soft-power-army-of-the-2020s-an-alternative-perspective/>

#wargaming

Wargaming Cyber Security

<https://warontherocks.com/2020/09/wargaming-cyber-security/>

Other:




#job opportunity

Veterans' Ombudsman, Office of the Veterans' Ombudsman

<https://pcogic.njoyn.com/cl3/xweb/Xweb.asp?tbtoken=ZVIZRkXCBoCFnB2NIFVCFVNeBBEcCMpLiUuQC4kXkgjIFi5E2xfXDIYLDYadBNyeAkbURdTSXYqWA%3D%3D&chk=ZVpaShw%3D&CLID=52106&page=jobdetails&JobID=J0520-0291&brid=56324&lang=1>

New RCN Junior Ranks

Junior Rank Names (Abbreviated)

			
Master Sailor (MS)	Sailor 1st Class (S1)	Sailor 2nd Class (S2)	Sailor 3rd Class (S3)

Royal Canadian Air Force
@RCAF_ARC 6 Sep tweeted and
RUSI(NS) retweeted: Ever heard of
JRCC? This map gives a good clue,
but check out our September #SAR
Spotlight post on our Facebook page
for the full answer:
<https://facebook.com/RCAF.ARC/?ref=bookmarks> #RCAF #RCAF Proud
#ThatOthersMayLive

SEARCH AND RESCUE IN CANADA



Every year, the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) receives thousands of calls from people in need. Working with partners, the CAF conducts search and rescue from the air, and coordinates search and rescue from the water.

FROM COAST TO COAST TO COAST, CANADA'S SEARCH AND RESCUE TEAMS ARE HERE TO HELP

#ThatOthersMayLive

A map of Canada with colored dots representing search and rescue incidents. Purple dots are concentrated in the west, blue dots in the center, and green dots in the east. Three orange maple leaf icons mark the locations of Joint Rescue Coordination Centres: Victoria, Trenton, and Halifax. Icons for "Boats in distress" and "Aircraft in distress" are also present.

Boats in distress

Aircraft in distress

Victoria

JOINT RESCUE COORDINATION CENTRES

Trenton

Halifax

A photograph of a yellow rescue helicopter with the number 902 and the word "RESCUE" on its side. Three rescue team members in orange gear are walking towards the helicopter on a dirt road.

National Défense nationale



The Watch (NORAD/USNORTHCOM) is now on Face Book. To visit their Face Book page <https://www.facebook.com/TheWatchNorthcom/>

Security Affairs Committee

The SAC meets every two weeks by Zoom. In the SAC call-to-meeting, at times the chair comments on the geo-strategic situation. This week's comments follow:

These past two weeks have shown that authoritarian regimes are on the rise. One still hears that China is not being called out for its violent comments in relation to Taiwan. One senses that at least in Canada there is a willingness almost to have the Peoples' Republic of China take Taiwan despite the fact that it is a liberal democracy with 27 million people. Canada's approach (or lack thereof) has the feel of 1938 and the German demands on Czechoslovakia. British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain negotiated the dismemberment of the Czechoslovakian Republic and came home to Britain waving a piece of paper and stating that "I believe this will bring peace in our time." It was not worth the paper it was printed on then as it is with authoritarian regimes now. It should be made clear to the PRC that Taiwan can only be made part of the PRC if the citizens of Taiwan vote to do so and that any other action will be met by force. This is in spite of the One China Policy. It might be mentioned that the One China Policy meant there was one China...it does not mean it is agreed to that it would be the PRC. It simply said there was one China. China continues to hold more than 100 Canadians prisoners including some folks kidnapped and held without consular support since 2006. The two 'Michaels' have been held since December 2018 but receive more support because of the higher profile. Canada's inaction speaks loudly.

I have been listening and reading Canadian news sources to see what Canadians are getting as news. Most unfortunately seems more along the line of "infotainment" as opposed to looking at major issues such as perhaps the ongoing low level conflict between three nuclear armed powers or the fact that Iran has now amassed sufficient enriched uranium for weapons research despite the problem that that it wasn't supposed to do that while the treaty with in effect. They lied and the US unfortunately was correct and that they were developing the necessary material for nuclear weapons all along. Canadians are blissfully unaware...there is only COVID as a serious issue according to the Canadian media. That would be wrong - our media sources are not providing the necessary information to the public. Speaking of Canadian media, there are reports that 80% of the Chinese language press in Canada is funded at least by grants by the Chinese Communist Party. If even remotely true, is it time for a review into this issue?

Events of the last two weeks:

Belarus is following the tried and true method of traditional dictators, arrest of key leadership of the opposition. Most of the leadership of the Coord Council has been exiled from the country except for Nobel winning author Svetlana Alexievich. Unfortunately for the Lukashenko regime, the internet makes it virtually impossible to eliminate the overall effectiveness of the opposition. Huge demonstrations continue. The Russian regime of Vladimir Putin has shown that it will support Lukashenko over the opposition. There was even reports of Russia's 'little green men' in the streets of Minsk. Before one gets too excited, the 'little green men' issue is not comparable to Crimea. In Crimea, the population was mainly Russian and there were large numbers of Russian service personnel in location plus a friendly country not expecting to be stabbed in the back by an alleged ally. In this case, the population is not supportive of the current regime and a strong move by Russia could in fact turn yet another friendly country into a staunch enemy. It will be a balancing act for Putin.

Russia not surprisingly has its own issues with unrest. Alexei Navalny was poisoned apparently with Novichok, a nerve agent developed for the Russian military according to German medical authorities. The Putin regime did its usual denial all the while smiling. Putin's popularity continues to sag and demonstrations are continuing throughout the country. Regional council elections are to be held on 13 September 2020. Navalny's opposition is forbidden to participate but they have had some success by having folks vote for anyone but the ruling United Russia Party which supported Putin in his rise. In the meantime, we can only watch and wait.

Iran has sufficient enriched uranium for ongoing weapons research. This means the treaty was being violated for some time in military nuclear facilities. This did not happen overnight or even since the US dropped out of the treaty. Wonderful, imagine an Iranian regime with the bomb. No cause for concern there.- not!

Speaking of other folks that shouldn't have the bomb, North Korea has been subjected to severe weather causing major damage to agricultural efforts. North Korea has always had an issue with providing enough food for its population. This will not help. North Korea also closed its borders to China recently due to conflicts between fishing fleets which resulted in the deaths of several fishermen. One should expect large scale starvation, but North Korea has shown that it is willing to lose large numbers of citizens rather than lose face by having to ask for assistance. Kim Jong Un has been seen in public again but there are continuing speculation on his long term health. It is still being reported that his younger sister has become number 2 in the regime and the next in line for the leadership. She has not been seen of late, keeping a low profile. This will bear watching closely.

On 7 September India took positions above Pangong Lake in the Ladakh region along the Line of Actual Control. This puts Indian troops in a superior position over Chinese positions. China has protested needless to say but they were seen to be armed with spears and clubs in an apparent attempt to repeat the actions of the Galwan Valley which resulted in 20 Indian fatalities and an unspecified number of Chinese casualties. So the situation continues to evolve in this area. Warning shots apparently were fired by both sides. Here is the surprise and it is worthy of note and concern. The Indian unit involved was the Special Frontier Force (SFF) which is all Tibetan exiles who have little love of China. Needless to say China does not take this well. A young SFF officer was recently killed in a mine strike. India made a considerable display of his funeral which included high ranking members of the ruling Indian party, the BJP. India has had this unit since 1962 but generally has been quiet about it especially its composition. Will China view this as a budding 'Free Tibetan Army'? Things are likely to further deteriorate in this area and despite the altitude of over 3000 metres, the military build up continues.

China has been beset with multiple problems. There is an ongoing leadership issue, especially since a member of Xi's own family has been caught in a corruption investigation. No real details as yet, but someone feels safe enough to attack the family directly. The fallout from flooding continues and the regime has not been effective in providing support to the millions of displaced people. On top of this is the widespread destruction of crops and agricultural areas. This may have longer term effects due to contamination of agricultural land. China also lost an SU-35 fighter which was initially thought to have been shot down by Taiwan; more than likely it was a technical fault. China didn't react so it is unlikely that an actual confrontation took place. China is seeing considerable unrest in Inner Mongolia, a province of China. The population is ethnically Mongolian. New school curriculum emphasizes Mandarin at the expense of Mongolian. It is another example of China's ongoing cultural genocide operations like Xinxiang province (occupied East Turkestan, invaded and occupied by the PRC in 1950), Tibet and now Inner Mongolia. Unrest is expected to continue. Lastly, both of China's aircraft carriers are conducting separate exercises off the Chinese coast. This is the first time this has occurred and is an indication of how far China has come in carrier operations.

A new Canadian throne speech is about to occur ; it is expected that the Liberal Government will set a new path for the country making it more 'green.' Most parties are expected to listen and are not expected to reject the throne speech. The real issue will be the upcoming budget which will give the details of such a program. The deficit is expected to be around \$100 billion according to media speculation. This would be on top of \$353 billion of COVID funding. None of this spending has had the necessary oversight and the auditor general has not received the necessary funding to conduct the necessary audits. What is a concern is whether this money has been spent appropriately. Should Canada go into a major deficit and increase the debt before there is a firm grip on the finances of the country and its long term effects if lending rates go up even marginally? It is expected that DND will take a significant hit even as the world stumbles towards potential conflict.

Clearing the Way: Combat Engineers in Kandahar

Battle of Op MEDUSA, Sep 2-17, 2006

To honour the sacrifice of our soldiers and their ISAF allies I have decided to make "Clearing the Way" available for viewing at no charge beginning today, September 5th, for the duration of the battle until Sept. 17th. This is a story that needs to be told.

The link: <https://vimeo.com/273545724>

Password: Medusa (good until tuesday, September 17th.).

Background Information and Introduction

Length: 96 minutes (strong language & violence)

Featuring Col Mark Gasparotto (ret'd) of London, Ontario, Canada. Members serving with 23 Field Squadron in Afghanistan.

Based on the book by Col Mark Gasparotto (ret'd), "Clearing the Way" is considered a classic study in the engineer experience of asymmetric warfare in Afghanistan. Considered by Canadian Engineers and ISAF nations to be one of the most realistic documentaries of the Afghan war. The film covers from Aug 06 to Feb 07, in particular, the Battle of Op MEDUSA, Sep 2-17., 2006. 98% of photos and footage in the field were shot by the soldiers themselves. The footage of the Battle of Op MEDUSA in this film is historic. It is the first battle footage ever shot by Canadian soldiers of Canadian soldiers in combat. A copy of the book and DVD were gifted in June 2018, to Queen Elizabeth II during an audience at Buckingham Palace with the Commandant of Engineers, BGen Steve Irwin (ret'd).

In October 2017, "Clearing the Way" won the Audience Choice Award after its world premiere at the Forest City Film Festival, London, Ontario. In August 2018 it was the opening film of the Regina

International Film Festival. In November 2018, CTW made its American debut to a full house of US veterans at the Branson MO Military Film Festival, Branson MO. Since then, copies of "Clearing the Way" have become part of the libraries of not only Canadian Forces engineer schools but the Australian and New Zealand engineer schools as well.

Please be advised there is strong language and violence. If home viewing, would not recommend anyone under the age of 14 be present. Finally, the film is 96 minutes. If people want to take a break, we suggest to do so at the 58 min mark. There is a natural break between the events of the Sep 3 assault on the White School and the morning of Sep 4 friendly fire incident.

Thank you for your support. This film was made possible through the donations and support of the Canadian Engineers, their families & friends.

Be safe and be well. God bless our veterans and the men and women serving in the Canadian Armed Forces.

Cheers,

Paul

Paul C. Culliton

Producer

Clearing the Way, Combat Engineers in Kandahar