



Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia Dispatches 5 February 2021

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.

Visit the Watch. A publication from NORAD/USNORTHCOM on Face Book.

To view go to <https://www.facebook.com/TheWatchNorthcom/>



Events:

. To list an event in *Dispatches*, email the CIO by noon Thursday. If you have an idea for a topic or speaker, please 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.

9 February, Tuesday - Centre for International Governance Innovation "National Security, Economic Prosperity and Canada's Future." Note CSIS Director as speaker. 2:30 pm - 3:30 pm AST. Virtual. To register, see: <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/national-security-economic-prosperity-and-canadas-future-registration-132849367033>.

Emended: 10 February, Wednesday - The Institute for Security Policy at Kiel University "The Americas Series" presentation "Americas as a Market & Mexican Naval Strategy." Via Zoom. To register, see: <https://kielseapowerseries.com/en/the-americas-series.html>.

ISPK future presentations include:

18 February, Thursday - Canada & USA. With RUSI(NS) member Tim Choi.

8 March, Monday - Seapower from a South American Perspective & Colombian Naval Strategy

11 March, Thursday - Brazilian Naval Strategy & China and IUU Problems in South America

11 February, Thursday - 37th J.W. Dafoe Political Studies Students' Conference: "The Legacy of 9/11 and the Defence of North America - Defence Implications of 9/11." 4:30 PM – 5:30 PM AST. Online. To register: <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/the-defence-implications-of-911-tickets-135421917601>.

New: 11 February, Thursday - Henry Jackson Society webinar "UK Maritime Policy: The Role of the Carrier Strike Group." 3-4 pm UK time. For information: <https://henryjacksonsociety.org/event/uk-maritime-policy-carrier-strike-group/>. To register: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_jTh8jBygRrOFG_1isN_adw

Emended: 17 February, Wednesday – RUSI(NS) Distinguished Speaker Commodore James Clarke; Deputy Director of the Strategy, Policy and Plans Directorate; NORAD and USNORTHCOM, titled "NORAD Modernization: Enabling Forward Operations." 1300-1500. Via Zoom. To register, email: RUSINovaScotia@gmail.com. As subject line to registration email, put: RUSI(NS)/N-NC Distinguished Speaker 17 February 2021 Registration.

25 February, Thursday - Royal United Services Institute "Sea Power Virtual Conference 2021: Transforming Maritime Forces for an Age of Persistent Competition." To register: <https://rusi.org/event/sea-power-virtual-conference-2021-transforming-maritime-forces-age-persistent-competition>.

25 February, Thursday - J.W. Dafoe Political Studies Students' Conference and Canadian Global Affairs Institute "9/11 - The Day" with LGen (ret'd) Eric Findley, Director of Operations, NORAD on 9/11, and Paul Samyn, current editor Winnipeg Free Press but journalist in New York on 9/11. 8:30 PM AST. Via Zoom. To register: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEkcU2prTiiH9ekHxg5VDW0eEXrLWiKnxrT>.

10-12 March, Wednesday-Friday - Canadian Defence Associations Institute Ottawa Conference on Security and Defence.

In its 89th year, conference proposes a slate of speakers that includes: Minister Harjit Sajjan, former Prime Minister Stephen Harper, Deputy Minister Jody Thomas, Deputy Minister Marta Morgan of Global Affairs Canada, NATO Deputy Secretary General Mircea Geoana, US Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General John Hyten, NORAD/USNORTHCOM Commander General Glen VanHerck and experts from around the world. Topics range from great power competition and below the threshold warfare, AI and cyber threats, security in space, Arctic sovereignty and climate change, NATO 2030, NORAD modernization, and extremism. The event consists of half days for easier scheduling. There is an early bird registration until midnight 5 Feb, then the regular ticket price (\$300) applies. There is also a student price. For currently serving members with an @forces.gc.ca email, CAF/DND has taken care of the registration with no cost to the individuals. There is a DND/CAF button on the main registration page (<https://cdainstitute.ca/ottawa-conference-2021/>) that can be used.

24 March, Wednesday – save the date, RUSI(NS) **Annual General Meeting**. TBC, 1300-1500. Via Zoom.

Recent Publications:

New: RUSI(NS) Comments “North Warning System – A Question of Sovereignty” by John McLearn, 30 January 2021

<https://rusi-ns.ca/north-warning-system/>

New: RUSI(NS) Presentation “Against Daesh, and for the World Order: An Update on Operation IMPACT in the COVID-19 Era,” by MGen St-Louis, 20 January 2021

<https://rusi-ns.ca/jtf-impact/>

The United Services Institute of Nanaimo and North Island (USINNI) Newsletter Vol 29 No 1 January 2021 is available on request to RUSINovaScotia@gmail.com.

Royal Canadian Navy, in collaboration with Gale Force Wins (podcast hub of former RCN officers Allan Dale and Gerry Carew), Monthly Podcast Series for January 2021 "CPO1 David Steeves, CD – Chief Petty Officer of the Canadian Navy."

<https://galeforcewins.com/2021/01/19/8-cpo1-david-steeves-cd-chief-petty-officer-of-the-canadian-navy/>

Canada Marine Procurement Outlook 7 January 2021

<https://buyandsell.gc.ca/procurement-data/tender-notice/PW-21-00941112>

Public Services and Procurement hosted presentations by DND, DFO and CCG, and TC about upcoming procurements in small vessel construction, repair, refit and life extension, in-service support, sustainment, chartering, disposal and other special projects in the realm of marine equipment.

The Military Institute of Windsor Communiqué, Volume XXXIX Number 2 February 2021 is available on request to RUSINovaScotia@gmail.com.

Canadian Marine Industries and Shipbuilding Association "On Watch" 27 January 2021

https://send.successbyemail.com/prvw_message2.aspx?chno=224f55da-af46-4c9e-80ac-0346fcb55d01

The Edmonton United Services Institute President’s Enews February 2021 is available on request to RUSINovaScotia@gmail.com.

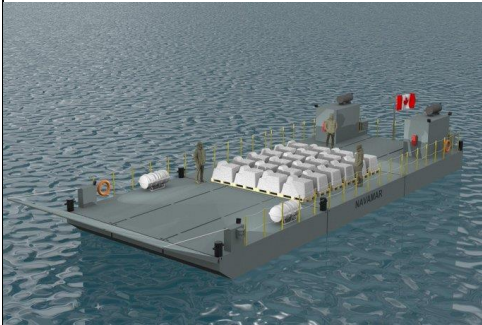




New: Institute for Security Policy at Kiel University "The Americas Series" (Zoom recording) presentation "Sealift and the Merchant Marine, and the US Coast Guard," 28 January 2021

<https://kielseapowerseries.com/en/the-americas-series.html>. See article reporting event: “Navy

Questioning How to Sustain Fleet in High-End Fight, Says Analyst”

<https://news.usni.org/2021/01/29/navy-questioning-how-to-sustain-fleet-in-high-end-fight-says-analyst>

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>Royal Canadian Navy @RoyalCanNavy 23 Jan tweeted: The sea to shore connector are pontoons that will be used primarily to transport equipment, cargo, personnel, and can carry more than 50 tonnes. They are critical in providing flexible capabilities for these types of missions. #FutureFleet @CanadianForces</p> <p>RUSI(NS) retweeted: Navamar-built powered barges for @RoyalCanNavy will provide CAN🇨🇦 gov't more options in humanitarian assistance/disaster response #HADR missions, or supply of austere locations at home & overseas. Example of operation from @federalfleet #MVAsterix: https://youtu.be/UAHryIHRlh0</p>	
<p>RUSI(NS) Comments "North Warning System – A Question of Sovereignty" https://rusi-ns.ca/north-warning-system/ #Arctic #NORAD @CanadianForces @JTFN_FOIN</p>	
<p>Royal Canadian Navy @RoyalCanNavy tweeted and RUSI(NS) retweeted: How do you future proof? We have been developing six use cases for the Canadian Surface Combatant, which were focused on major areas of warfare capability #FutureFleet http://navy-marine.forces.gc.ca/en/innovation/innovation-view.page?doc=using-narratives-helps-future-proof-rcn/kk4cb7lg</p>	
<p>.@RoyalCanNavy using leased #MVAsterix more than planned https://ottawacitizen.com/news/national/defence-watch/canadian-navy-using-leased-supply-ship-more-often-contract-boosted-by-71-million Shows utility/need for more replenishment oilers. Considering CAN geo-strategic situation now/future, 3 maybe 4 AOR would be better for #RCNavy. Ultimately, political decision based on naval advice (Canadian Navy using leased supply ship more often — contract boosted by \$71 million)</p>	
<p>Delivery of 1st Canadian Surface Combatant to @RoyalCanNavy delayed to early 2030s https://www.ctvnews.ca/politics/national-defence-grappling-with-new-delay-in-60b-warship-project-1.5291839 Will delay result in gap at @IrvingShipbuild? What action possible to</p>	

retain workforce, secondary suppliers & workflow? Ordering 9th AOPS probably not best. Build auxiliary?

Posted on Facebook Royal United Services Institute NS with comments:

The War on Drugs on Autopilot

<https://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2021/january/war-drugs-autopilot>



Drones as cargo carriers, for deception ("spoofers") and as refueling points. 'Drone warfare,' drone employment and countermeasures, is getting interesting (challenging) for both defence and security sectors. Hopefully they are collaborating closely. 'Theatre anti-drone operations,' anyone?

Using narratives helps future-proof RCN

http://www.navy-marine.forces.gc.ca/en/innovation/innovation-view.page?doc=using-narratives-helps-future-proof-rcn%2Fkk4cb7lg&fbclid=IwAR0_NgZe4b2TNvgH7Buz7Zwku63FobgIhKkIUytNtNyguX4OtL-twMzATzs



"Use cases are an innovative approach that define desired outcomes before knowing exact requirements. The approach uses a narrative format to focus on improved communications and can be characterized as a collaborative effort on the part of the user and the solution provider – in this case the RCN and defence industry, respectively."

'Narrative format' - storytelling! Those cases could be fun to read. In some respects, an old approach - 'future casting' has long been a style in military writing, albeit more at the strategic and operational levels (and occasionally with science-fiction writers, which adds a whole different level of thinking) than tactical. Maybe some novelty here with use cases for the Canadian Surface Combatant project is the engagement with industry. Could result in much better understanding by industry staff, especially those without a navy background, about what it would (could) be like to operate a warship.

Wargaming is another means to forecast how a ship could/should operate. One can be assured the Royal Canadian Navy is wargaming its ships, individually and operating together.

John Horgan: Future of Canada's shipbuilding industry must focus on B.C.

<https://vancouversun.com/opinion/john-horgan-future-of-canadas-shipbuilding-industry-must-focus-on-b-c>



"Today, we're committed to launching a made-in-B.C. shipbuilding strategy to bring more good jobs to shipyards in our coastal communities."

Is this an attack by BC on the National Shipbuilding Strategy? Or a backhanded compliment, that the NSS has been so successful that BC wants to replicate it at the regional level?

Does BC have the number of yards, with variety of capabilities, to undertake work across the spectrum of shipbuilding? That is, for the contracts for federal ships less than 1000 tonnes. How does BC's industry compare to situations in other regions? That analysis would be an interesting read.

BC just got a large federal investment in its Esquimalt Graving Dock. Will that not put BC in a very good position for the future, especially for maintenance and repair (which can be very lucrative)?

News release about the matter from the Canadian Marine Industries and Shipbuilding Association:

"Put your Provincial money where your mouth is for Made in Canada ships"

<https://www.newswire.ca/news-releases/put-your-provincial-money-where-your-mouth-is-for-made-in-canada-ships-847899876.html>

Will China Trigger the Monroe Doctrine?






<https://www.19fortyfive.com/2021/01/will-china-trigger-the-monroe-doctrine/>



"In fact, there are no routine, apolitical commercial dealings with China. Politics suffuses everything. With commercial influence comes political and perhaps even military influence — a fact not lost on officialdom in Beijing."

An astute observation, one that Canada should bear in mind when dealing with China. Everything China does, whether apparently commercial or scientific or humanitarian or whatever, is part of their political campaign. One may even use the term 'their political warfare' though 'grand strategy' may be even better. Canada does not appear, at least publicly, to have a grand strategy in dealing with China. Yes, we're keeping a low profile, avoiding escalation, with respect to Canadians incarcerated in Chinese jails, and we seem to have denied Chinese acquisition of some Canadian industry and infrastructure, but there needs to be more of an understanding and effort by the general Canadian public and commercial sector that dealing with China means being part of their expansionist efforts.

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.

 <h1>Focus</h1> <p>MONTHLY UPDATE FROM THE ROYAL UNITED SERVICES INSTITUTE</p> <p>https://mailchi.mp/rusi.org/highlights-from-rusi-in-january2021?e=813c0cd331</p>	
<p>China warns Taiwan independence 'means war' as US pledges support</p> <p>https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-55851052?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email</p>	
<p>Interview: The Royal Canadian Navy's Role in the Indo-Pacific Region</p> <p>https://www.navalnews.com/interviews/2021/01/interview-the-royal-canadian-navys-role-in-the-indo-pacific-region/</p>	
<p>Canadian Navy using leased supply ship more often — contract boosted by \$71 million</p> <p>https://ottawacitizen.com/news/national/defence-watch/canadian-navy-using-leased-supply-ship-more-often-contract-boosted-by-71-million</p>	

Xi Tells the World What He Really Wants

<https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/01/29/xi-tells-the-world-what-he-really-wants/>



Navalny's Return Has Thrown Putin Off Balance

<https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/01/29/navalny-return-protests-putin-off-balance/>



North Warning System – A Question of Sovereignty

<https://rusi-ns.ca/north-warning-system/>



National Defence grappling with new delay in \$60B warship project

<https://www.ctvnews.ca/politics/national-defence-grappling-with-new-delay-in-60b-warship-project-1.5291839>



Navy needs to prepare for tough talks over warship delays, cost increases: Norman

<https://www.ctvnews.ca/navy-needs-to-prepare-for-tough-talks-over-warship-delays-cost-increases-norman-1.5293499>



Burke: Keflavik Important to North Atlantic Operations

<https://seapowermagazine.org/burke-keflavik-important-to-north-atlantic-operations/>



Special Forces pulls new pistols from service after soldier injured in misfire

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/somni-1.5897942>



RAF air commodore to be first head of UK Space Command

<https://www.janes.com/defence-news/news-detail/raf-air-commodore-to-be-first-head-of-uk-space-command>



Pakistan says it successfully test-fired short-range missile

<https://www.defensenews.com/training-sim/2021/02/03/pakistan-says-it-successfully-test-fired-short-range-missile/>



Cyber War

SolarWinds Update 5

Observations:

210127

[Fidelis, Mimecast, Palo Alto Networks, Qualys also impacted by SolarWinds hack](#)

210129

[Mimecast Confirms SolarWinds Hack as List of Security Vendor Victims Snowball](#)

210201

[Suspected Russian Hack Extends Far Beyond SolarWinds Software, Investigators Say](#)

[The Hack Roundup: CISA Official Says 30% of Victims Didn't Use SolarWinds](#)

210202

[SolarWinds hack turning into Pandora's box of cyber-risk](#)

[Suspected Chinese hackers used SolarWinds bug to spy on US](#)

Comments:

Until this report, investigation of the SolarWinds (Orion Platform) hack concentrated on: who was attacked and what additional malware was planted. Reports have emerged of organizations who were *NOT* directly part of the SolarWinds hack, who have been hacked. Current estimates are that as many as 30% of the SolarWinds victims did not use the 'Orion Platform'. This means they were hacked by other means.

On January 27th a group of computer security vendors was revealed as having been hacked as part of the SolarWinds hack. [Fidelis](#), [Mimecast](#), [Palo Alto Networks](#) and [Qualys](#) are all world-class computer security vendors. Mimecast issues security certificates to other companies who use Microsoft 365 Web Service. It has been confirmed that these security certificates were compromised, providing the hackers with access to other companies. (The security certificates were used as keys to unlock access).

It has already been determined that the hackers deliberately selected organizations who had tools or capabilities that would enhance their ability to hack additional targets. Given that FireEye is a world class cybersecurity organization, and that their in-house penetration testing tools would be carefully protected, FireEye's detection of the hack *AFTER* the tools were copied tells investigators that the hackers were capable of deep and stealthy penetration of 'secure' networks. Warnings have been published requesting all affected companies to notify and check their supply chains for signs of compromise.

The hackers were not fully successful as they did not get into the production networks of some of the computer security companies. Further, the Microsoft cloud was the only cloud service compromised.

The last observation states that Chinese hackers used the SolarWinds backdoors to access networks. **This is an additional attack.** FBI Investigators found that a federal payroll organization was compromised. How many organizations the Chinese have hacked is unknown.

Analysts Notes: 1. Most hackers do not break contact / leave once they are detected. Even lower tier hackers will usually try and ‘complete their hack’. They are highly aware that they won’t make money unless they complete their hack.

2. Most cybersecurity companies do not usually attribute hacks much past the IP address. For the SolarWinds hack this means they (cybersecurity companies) are not concerned if the hackers wear uniforms or not. What is clear from the target sets of both the Russian hacking teams is, IF they do not wear uniforms, they work for intelligence services who do. It is a safe assumption that the controllers of the hacking teams think in terms of military processes such as: mission orientation, reinforcing success and operational security.

Assessment:

The SolarWinds hack will continue to grow in scope and impact.

A. Exploitation of current attacks will continue.

Neither the Russians nor the Chinese will be slowed by the fact they have been detected.

We can’t conduct effective mitigation because we don’t know what the objective(s) are/were.

We know very little about the Chinese follow-on to the SolarWinds attack.

B. We still don’t have a clear picture of the number of affected organizations. SolarWinds initially claimed forty (40) organizations were hacked. To date we are well over a hundred known penetrations¹. It is reasonable to project that across the nine months that the SolarWinds hack went undetected, hundreds of networks were compromised. That is the *MOST LIKELY* scenario. It is *POSSIBLE BUT LESS LIKELY* that thousands of networks were compromised².

Given the number of compromised organizations, the supply chain data collected from those organizations AND that 30% of the hacks have gone into organizations linked by supply chains, we can conservatively project that more than 250 organizations will be compromised.

C. We know that that one targeting focus for the Russians was to acquire tools they could utilize to improve / increase their hacking capabilities. An example of this is the penetration tools copied from FireEye. This is further confirmed by the number of

cybersecurity targets that were attacked that did not utilize the SolarWinds Orion Platform.

The Russians have additional tools to reverse engineer and build new tools with. This provides Russian intelligence organizations with a major increase in hacking capability.

Expect more and stealthier Russian Intelligence hack attacks.

SolarWinds is NOT going to be the worst hack we will see.

At the political level since neither Russia nor China has been called on previous hacking events, and the Biden Administration is using a measured deliberate response is almost certain that neither country will moderate their current attacks nor their overall hacking approaches.

IF there is no retaliation nor punishment for major hacking attacks, hacking attacks will continue to escalate in scope and more overt objectives.

The scope of the SolarWinds attack should be stated in a different way. Given the U.S. targets, the UK targets as well as the impacts on related Canadian organizations AND impacts on Australia and New Zealand the SolarWinds hack should be described as a “Five Eyes Attack”. As the scope of the hack becomes known this description *MAY* scale up to a general attack on NATO.

1 By my count close to 150 organizations that we know we have been hacked.

2 The caution and effort to stay undetected and the target selection imply a slow and steady methodology rather than an automated ‘kick the doors in’ approach.

This cyber-intelligence product is produced by David Swan as an information service. It is copyright ©David Swan 2020. It *MAY* be circulated.



https://cscis.org/dt_team/12/

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

#Arctic

Adapting to the Cold, Hard Facts of Polar Security: Advice for the Biden Administration
<https://mwi.usma.edu/adapting-to-the-cold-hard-facts-of-polar-security-advice-for-the-biden-administration/>

Britain’s Arctic Conundrum (Part 1): Climate Change and Strategic Uncertainty
<https://defenceindepth.co/2021/02/04/britains-arctic-conundrum-part-1-climate-change-and-strategic-uncertainty/>

#airpower

Research Resources – Recent Articles and Books

<https://balloonstodrones.com/2021/01/30/researchresources-recent-articles-and-books/>

#Canadian Army

Canadian Army Modernization Strategy

<http://www.army-armee.forces.gc.ca/en/news-publications/canadian-army-modernization-strategy.page>

#cyber operations

New maritime cybersecurity centre to fight pirates -- and not the swashbuckling kind

<https://montreal.ctvnews.ca/new-maritime-cybersecurity-centre-to-fight-pirates-and-not-the-swashbuckling-kind-1.5285656>

#cyber security

Canadian Supply Chain Security Landscape

<https://security.frontline.online/article/2021/1/15880-Canadian-Supply-Chain-Security-Landscape>

Resilient Military Systems and the Advanced Cyber Threat

<https://dsb.cto.mil/reports/2010s/ResilientMilitarySystemsCyberThreat.pdf>

#defence policy

French Ministry of the Armed Forces Strategic Update 2021

in English:

<https://www.defense.gouv.fr/content/download/604668/10168898/file/Strategic%20review%202021.pdf>

comments: <https://twitter.com/AntoineBondaz/status/1355140803572752385>

#drones

Game-changing Drone Warfare

<https://defence.frontline.online/article/2021/1/15738-Game-changing-Drone-Warfare>

‘Drone swarms’ are coming, and they are the future of wars in the air

<https://theprint.in/defence/drone-swarms-are-coming-and-they-are-the-future-of-wars-in-the-air/596842/>

#operations

Canada and the Gulf War: In their own words

video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&v=CCknJrOYICU>

Produced with the help of one of our colleagues.

#policing

Helping People Living with Mental Health Issues

<https://security.frontline.online/article/2020/2/15801-Helping-People-Living-with-Mental-Health-Issues>

#Royal Canadian Navy

Your Navy Today - January 2021

<http://www.navy-marine.forces.gc.ca/en/news-ynt/2021/01-your-navy-today.page>

#shipbreaking

The Toxic Tide

<https://www.offthebeach.org/>

#supply chain security

Canadian Supply Chain Security Landscape

<https://security.frontline.online/article/2021/1/15880-Canadian-Supply-Chain-Security-Landscape>

#warfare

Air Operations at the Level of Boots on the Ground

<https://balloonstodrones.com/2018/03/28/air-operations-at-the-level-of-boots-on-the-ground/>

The Haze Gray Zone: Great Power Competition at Sea

<https://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2021/january/haze-gray-zone-great-power-competition-sea>

Other:

Message from the Director of Outreach and Speechwriting

Colleagues and partners in defence,

Further to Quinn Watson’s message to you about his departure last month, I wanted to take this opportunity to reach out to introduce myself as the new, acting Director of Outreach and Speechwriting at the Department of National Defence.

I come to this role after having led the Department’s executive speechwriting team for nearly five years. In that position, I had the opportunity to work with Vance White, Manager of our Stakeholder Engagement Team, in supporting engagements with several of your organizations, as well as to see the important ways you help us tell the Defence story.

In the past year, especially, as the Canadian Armed Forces played a key role in supporting Canadians through the COVID-19 pandemic, your work helping to share timely, accurate information through your networks was meaningful and greatly appreciated. Let me thank you again for the important role you played for the Defence Team and Canadians through that work.

At this time, we will be pausing our bi-weekly stakeholder letters, as the immediate need to regularly and predictably share information about CAF support to Canadians during the COVID pandemic has diminished. We aim to share only the most meaningful, helpful information with our stakeholders, so you can trust that we’ll communicate more of this information with you in the weeks and months ahead, as the need and opportunity arise.

Finally, I want to reiterate the Department's commitment to supporting defence stakeholders to the best of our abilities. In keeping with that commitment, we intend to send out a survey within the coming weeks, seeking your feedback about your level of satisfaction with the way we engage and support you. If there are unrealized opportunities for partnerships, cooperation, or events, we want to hear about them. If there are more effective ways we could engage or communicate with you, we'd love to know. And, if ever you'd like to connect with me to articulate new or evolving priorities for your organizations, please don't hesitate to email or call. We're eager to understand how to best support you in achieving your objectives.

I look forward to a time when I might meet you at in-person events and activities. But until then, it'll be a pleasure to get to know you through virtual channels.

Wishing you a safe and healthy winter.

Sincerely,
Elana Aptowitz

Director, Outreach and Speechwriting
Assistant Deputy Minister (Public Affairs)
Department of National Defence | Government of Canada

Security Affairs Committee Synopsis

It appears that Canada will not have people immunized sufficiently until 2022 according to the Economist, apparently due to politization of vaccine production. On the plus side the Russian vaccine Sputnik V has been assessed as 91%+ by researchers in the UK, so hats off to the Russians, but they never really did phase 3 trials...a bit scary. The PM did state that Canada would be producing the Novafax vaccine that is yet not approved in Canada in a plant in Montreal. This plant is expected to be in operation in late 2021. The other Canadian-developed vaccine entering phase 3 trials and with a plant being developed in Calgary is not funded. One has to wonder whether politics is once again involved. Recently there was an interview by Evan Solomon with Sir John Bell, who was one of the research leads on the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine. In the interview Sir John stated that the UK had no vaccine manufacturing capability either but had decided in February 2020 to create a capability. Britain is now completely independent for vaccines and is considered the "gold standard" for their manufacture. Sir John also questioned Canada's dependence and over-reliance on the US for critical drug manufacturing. It is worth watching the interview.

Apparently General Vance is being accused of having inappropriate relations with female subordinates, which may explain why the government did not support him going to NATO. This being said, he is innocent until proven guilty, but the taint will remain. Trial and conviction by media is a growing and unfortunate phenomena. Just look at the poor doctor in NS this week with a name similar to a child pornographer in the US. He is tainted for life even though he is innocent.

The Canadian Navy just fired a young sailor for being part of a far-right group. One hopes that due process was involved as well and it was not a knee jerk reaction. Canada is adding to the list of terror groups. Bill Blair, the Public Safety Minister, will be announcing further additions to the list of terror organizations which will include domestic right wing groups. This step is long overdue in some respects but one also hopes that a proper review and analysis is also conducted before any group is placed on the list.

Canada has just banned 13 new groups. Most are Al Qaeda/Daish franchises but this also included are four right wing groups: the Proud Boys, Atomwaffen Division, the Base and the Russian Imperial Movement. Blood and Honour and Combat 18 were placed on the list in 2019. The whole list can be found at: <https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/ntnl-scr/cntr-trrrsm/lstd-ntts/crrnt-lstd-ntts-en.aspx>.

On a positive note, two Canadian commodores, Commodore Dan Charlebois and Commodore Bradley Peates, have taken over multi-national squadrons, the Combined Task Force 150 in the Middle East and Standing NATO Maritime Group 1 in the North Atlantic. Congratulations to both on their appointment, it speaks well for Canada's leadership, training and competence in naval operations.

Now to the foreign material.

Russia is once again showing its true colours as one of the most corrupt countries in the world. Alexei Navalny was arrested upon arrival in Russia, but this week saw what can only be described as a kangaroo court but that would give kangaroo courts a bad name. Mr Navalny has been sentenced to two years and eight months behind bars in a trial condemned around the world. Mr Navalny's prestige within Russia has, however, soared as many Russians are now coming out to demonstrate. Most of the demonstrators are younger folks. There is growing frustration within Russia over the Putin regime's overall corruption, incompetence with the pandemic, and the worsening economy. The Navalny video called "Putin's Palace" has now been viewed more than 100 million times and is continuing to receive favourable comments. One of Mr Putin's oligarch friends has stated that the palace is actually his, however, the public is not buying that story. Demonstrations are being carried on in over 80 cities despite a severe crackdown by Russian authorities. The court decision has been a raging success...for Navalny as it makes Putin look small indeed. Mr Navalny has a new name for Mr Putin: "Putin the Poisoner" which seems to be sticking even in the Russian media. It should be noted that President Putin has never used Mr Navalny's name, which was a method also used by Russian mainline media. This has now changed. The demonstrations are not stopping and will likely grow over the next few months - it will be interesting to watch.

Myanmar had a coup this week lead by General Hlaing, the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces. General Hlaing is also noted for his alleged crimes against the Rohingya in the recent past. He overthrew Aung San Suu Kyi who has been detained and has now been charged with importation of illegal communications gear in the form of hand held radios. The main reason for the coup as stated by the coup leadership is a charge of election fraud in the last elections in which the military backed party only won 33 seats in Parliament. The National League for Democracy, however, won by a landslide. The military coup leaders believe this was a result of wide spread voter fraud. It was also interesting to note that China had already batted down the hatches, so to speak, before the coup - this seems to imply some fore-knowledge of the action. It is believed by some South Asian sources that the pre-coup government was going to re-evaluate some projects being built in Myanmar for the Belt and Road Initiative; they would be either cancelled or re-negotiated. The question is did the Communist Chinese Party (CCP) have fore-knowledge, or worse yet, actually colluded with the coup leadership to protect its own projects and avoid losing influence and leverage. It will be interesting to watch.

The CCP has further cracked down on Hong Kong (HK) by disallowing British Overseas Passports after Britain provided a program for HK residents to become British citizens. There are over five million folks able to take advantage of this program. The CCP through its pro-Beijing Council in HK is also looking at dual citizens including 300 K Canadians, 250 K Australians and more than 80 K Americans. Already those people going through the legal system are not being granted Counsellor support but are being treated as citizens of China. There is apparently a program being considered that will force people to declare one way or the other whether they are Chinese or another nationality. If they decide to be a citizen of another country their rights as citizens of HK will be diminished. Some

people awaiting legal action have been forced to renounce their dual citizenship in favour of Chinese citizenship. It seems the CCP is eager to bring this to a decision in the near future.

China also conducted a number of air and sea exercises in the vicinity of Taiwan including entering Taiwan's Air Defence Identification Zone (ADIZ). This was done mainly as a deterrent to what the CCP considers US support for Taiwan independence. The current Government of Taiwan already considers itself independent although it has chosen not to press the issue publicly. The CCP doesn't recognize this as it considers Taiwan an integral part of China, even as a renegade province. The US has moved a carrier battle group into the area. A lot of firepower in a very confined space. The US has also reiterated its support to the Philippines if threatened by China, something that will further inflame the situation from China's point of view.

Canada participated in the Quad exercise for the first time. The exercise included US, Indian, Australian, and Japanese contingents. Our contingent consisted of a frigate and a CP140 of 407 squadron out of Comox. The CP140 won the anti-submarine competition. The UK is firming up ships for their deployment to the South China Sea area. It seems the effort will include Dutch and US escorts as well as a US F-35B fighter squadron based onboard the Queen Elizabeth-class aircraft carrier, *Queen Elizabeth*. I wonder if Canada has offered an escort as well?

Belarus demonstrations continue. Lukashenko has generally lost any credibility there and essentially is kept in power by Russian backing. This backing may have limitations given Putin's own issues.