



Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia

Dispatches

27 August 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 news of interest, including posts to social media by the Institute. Links to articles are checked at the time they are put into *Dispatches* but may be unavailable at a later date or in some countries other than Canada.

Everyone is encouraged to submit links and other content to be included in *Dispatches*. Submissions and feedback are welcome anytime. Email to RUSINSDispatches@gmail.com. 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 or other government department, the Canadian Armed Forces, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police or the Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia.

If you wish to receive *Dispatches* at a different address (i.e., not your work address), please inform RUSI(NS). Past editions of *Dispatches* may be requested by contacting RUSI(NS).

There will be no *Dispatches* 3 September 2021.

Events:

To list an event in *Dispatches*, email RUSI(NS) by noon Thursday. RUSI(NS) events are by invitation. 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.

7 September, Tuesday - Georgetown University Wargaming Society presentation by Brant Guillory, Armchair Dragoons, titled "Incorporating Professional Perspectives in Hobby Wargaming." 7-9 om ADT. To register (free): <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/incorporating-professional-perspectives-in-hobby-wargaming-tickets-166805420503>

11 September, Saturday – The Halifax Military Heritage Preservation Society (HMHPS) McNabs Island Forts Tour with tour guide and founding member of the Friends of McNabs Island Society, Royce Walker. The tour provides visitors with a particular interest in the military history of Halifax an opportunity to visit the four major forts/gun batteries located on the island along with interpretation of the fort features, and discussion of the role each fort played in the defense of Halifax. A 6 km walk on reasonably good quality trails. There are no park services or running water but 3 composting toilets; the island is not considered accessible. The maximum number of registered participants allowed on the tour boat is 23. Cost \$20 for members and friends. Payment to hold your seat can be made by cash, cheque or e-transfer. Treasurer coordinates, participant requirements, and wharf directions to catch the tour boat to the island are available upon request at rusinsdispatches@gmail.com. 9:30am-to-6:00pm AST. To register, email leo.deveau@eastlink.ca

New: 14 September, Tuesday - Georgetown University Wargaming Society presentation by LTC Thorsten Kodalle, "Educational Wargaming at the German Command & Staff College." 1-3 pm ADT. To register (free): <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/educational-wargaming-at-the-german-command-staff-college-tickets-151113756313>.

New: 19 September, Sunday - Battle of Britain Commemoration 2021 (Ottawa). 10 am Ottawa time. Comd RCAF in attendance. To access event: www.facebook.com/RCAF/ARC. For questions, contact director@airforce.ca (613-612-7223).

Changed - Save the Date: 29 September, Wednesday – RUSI(NS) Distinguished Speaker to be announced. **Note** that the ‘Save the Date’ for 30 September with RAdm Santarpia has been deferred until a later date.

30 September – 28 October, consecutive Thursdays – Canadian Institute for Military and Veteran Health Research Virtual Forum on Serving Military, Veteran, Family, and Public Safety Personnel. Each year, CIMVHR works to engage existing academic research resources, facilitate new research, increase research capacity, and foster knowledge translation. This work is showcased each year, when thought leaders from the government, academia, industry and philanthropic sectors gather at our Forum to present new research, exchange ideas, share insight, learn and collaborate. Free of charge and open to everyone as a virtual opportunity to learn, to connect and to serve those who serve. To register: <https://cimvhrforum.ca/>

New: 12 October, Tuesday - Georgetown University Wargaming Society presentation by Robert Engen, Assistant Professor, Canadian Forces College, titled "Going to the Ground: Virtual Games at the Canadian Forces College." 7-9 pm ADT. To register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/going-to-the-ground-virtual-games-at-the-canadian-forces-college-tickets-168279688077>

Recent Publications:

Except where otherwise indicated, publications are available on request to RUSINovaScotia@gmail.com.

RUSI(NS) Comments "The Rohingya – An Open Letter to Canadian Policymakers" by Jay Heisler, 5 August 2021, <https://rusi-ns.ca/rohingya-refugee/>

RUSI(NS) Position Paper “The RCAF and Canada Need a Bomber Squadron – A Large Water Bomber Squadron”, 30 July 2021, <https://rusi-ns.ca/water-bomber-squadron/>

RUSI(NS) Post “Policing and the Pandemic”, 26 July 2021, <https://rusi-ns.ca/policing-and-the-pandemic/>

RUSI(NS) Presentation “Arctic Special Operations” by Brigadier-General SR Satterfield, 21 July 2021, https://rusi-ns.ca/arctic_special_operations/

New: Canadian Marine Industries and Shipbuilding Association *On Watch*, 25 August edition https://send.successbyemail.com/prvw_message2.aspx?chno=e78c5d1c-d2b4-4cac-84d9-b9663d5a60a7

Edmonton United Services Institute President’s *ENews*, August 2021.

New: Military Institute of Windsor *Communiqué*, Volume XXXIX Number 8 September 2021.

Nautical Professional Education Society of Canada Newsletter *Seatimes*, August 2021.

Royal Alberta United Services Institute *Dispatches* August 2021.

Royal Alberta United Services Institute *News* July-September 2021

<https://www.rausi.ca/news/publications?idU=4>

Royal Canadian Naval Association Admiral Hose Branch *Scuttlebutt*, August 2021 Edition.

New: Royal United Services Institute of Vancouver Island *Newsletter*, Volume 54, 4th Quarter 2021.

Royal United Services Institute Victoria (Australia) *Newsletter*, Volume 20, Issue 2, June/July 2021.

New: Royal United Services Institute Victoria (Australia) *Occasional*, Volume 7, Issue 7, 23 August 2021.

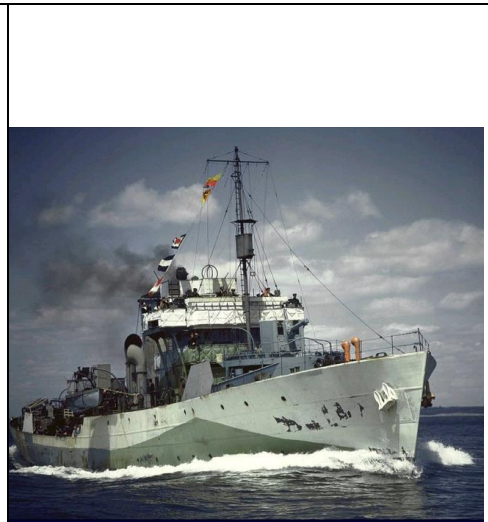
United Services Institute of Nanaimo and North Island *Newsletter*, Vol 29 No 08 August 2021.

University Naval Training Divisions Association of Canada *Gunroom Shots*, Volume 2, Issue 3, July 2021.

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 RUSINovaScotia@gmail.com.

HMS Severn @hmssevern Aug 18 tweeted: A quick visual history of the Western Approaches camouflage scheme. Clockwise from top left: HMCS Regina (Canada); ORP Błyskawica (Poland); HMS Bulldog (UK); HMS Severn (modern tribute)
RUSI(NS) retweeted: RUSI(NS) Information Note "Naval Camouflage and its Application on HMC Ships REGINA and MONCTON: A Brief History" <https://rusi-ns.ca/naval-camouflage-and-its-application-on-hmc-ships-regina-and-moncton-a-brief-history/>
The RCN, RN and others used a number of paint schemes (colloquially, camouflage) in the Second World War depending on time of year and area of operations. Regina and Moncton are painted Admiralty Disruptive Pattern, D-Day. (Dazzle was First World War paint scheme.)
See also: HMCS TRENTONIAN Camouflage Schemes <http://www.rogerlitwiller.com/books/white-ensign-flying/bonus-material-white-ensign-flying/hmcs-trentonian-camouflage-schemes/>



David Pugliese @davidpugliese 24 Aug tweeted and RUSI(NS) retweeted: My latest article....Canadian troops issued new machine-guns that are defective; weapons returned to Colt Canada

<https://ottawacitizen.com/news/national/defence-watch/canadian-troops-issued-new-machine-guns-that-are-defective-weapons-returned-to-colt-canada>



Army U Press @ArmyUPress 22 Aug tweeted and RUSI(NS) retweeted: Leadership in the Social Media Age Properly used, social media is a formidable tool which allows the Army to connect with a global audience. NCOs must recognize that it is also an important part of their Soldiers' lives as well as those of their families.

<https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Journals/NCO-Journal/Archives/2018/January/Social-Media/>



navaltoday @navaltoday 16 Aug tweeted and RUSI(NS) retweeted: Construction of largest naval ship in Canada nearing completion

<https://www.navaltoday.com/2021/08/16/construction-of-largest-naval-ship-in-canada-nearing-completion/>

@RoyalCanNavy #navalship #construction #naval Steve Daly @SteveDaly15 24 Aug Replying to @navaltoday @RUSI_NS and @RoyalCanNavy tweeted: Amphibious operations? Hardly! Maybe in a minor way, but nothing more. It's an AOR, nothing more.

Steve Daly (long time and capable defence writer) picked up on the article's "This joint support ship (JSS) is a multi-role naval ship capable of launching and supporting "joint" amphibious operations." The Protecteur-class, with their powered barges (from Ship-to-Shore Connector project), helicopters, land craft, boats, and extensive onboard personnel quarters and material stowage, in addition to a capability to embark and support a joint headquarters for land operations, qualifies them to 'launch and support amphibious operations.' Maybe these are capabilities/attributes of the ships that need more messaging.



General / Général Wayne Eyre @CDS_Canada_CEMD 26 Aug tweeted and RUSI(NS) retweeted: Earlier today, I provided an operational update on Op AEGIS during a technical briefing. Here is my statement: <https://canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/operations/military-operations/current-operations/operation-aegis/technical-briefing-08-26.html> (Technical Briefing - August 26, 2021)

Canadian Armed Forces Operations @CFOperations 24 Aug tweeted and RUSI(NS) retweeted: Canadian Armed Forces flights continue in support of the relocation of at-risk Afghan personnel and their families who worked with the Government of Canada. For more information on #OpAEGIS – <https://canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/operations/military-operations/current-operations/operation-aegis.html>



Posted on Facebook Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia:

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The Chinese Navy’s ‘Instant’ Helicopter Carrier Is Back In Action

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/davidaxe/2021/08/13/the-chinese-navys-instant-helicopter-carrier-is-back-in-action/?sh=7f81a8464231>



Navies, including Canada's, should have plans in place with government departments and civilian companies for the employment of civil ships in operations in peace and conflict ('ships taken up from trade' - STUFT). There are many roles that can be readily undertaken by civil ships, some roles with and some without conversion of the civil ship. Small states like Canada cannot afford to build as many warships as we need and want for the range of roles envisioned abroad (e.g., humanitarian assistance and disaster relief) and at home (e.g., regional patrol, research and development).

The Frazier Effect in the South China Sea: Illuminate the Gray Zone

<https://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2021/august/frazier-effect-south-china-sea-illuminate-gray-zone>



"Video Is a powerful tool to push back against aggression."

"...legitimacy is a key resource in strategic efforts. ... more than any other media, pictures and video are central to generating or destroying legitimacy."

"An effective response requires rescuing the truth from China’s gray-zone shadows and thrusting it into the light of day."

Your camera may be your most effective weapon.

Why Did the Afghan Army Evaporate?

<https://rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/commentary/why-did-afghan-army-evaporate>



Russia Increasing Submarine Cruise Missile Capacity as US Navy Decreases Its Own

<https://rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/commentary/russia-increasing-submarine-cruise-missile-capacity-us-navy-decreases-its-own>



Red Cell Analysis of a Mobile Networked Control System Supporting a Ground Force

<https://cimsec.org/red-cell-analysis-of-a-mobile-networked-control-system-supporting-a-ground-force/>



"...to determine if multiple, distributed, heterogeneous unmanned systems behave in a manner that may compromise the operations security (OPSEC) of a ground force."

The Texas National Guard Just Unveiled the Largest 3D Printed Structure in North America

<https://www.defenseone.com/technology/2021/08/texas-national-guard-just-unveiled-largest-3d-printed-structure-north-america/184638/>



"So-called performance based requirements are a change from the much more rigid design requirements that can lock the military into designs that are obsolete by the time they are deployed."

3D printing/additive manufacturing is changing the nature of material procurement, logistics and operations.

Leviathan Wakes: China's Growing Fleet of Autonomous Undersea Vehicles

<https://cimsec.org/leviathan-wakes-chinas-growing-fleet-of-autonomous-undersea-vehicles/>



Canada needs to build its own fleet of underwater (and air and surface) drones. Note the general purpose utility of the Chinese drones.

What the 'Blue Arctic' Means for the US Pacific Military Presence

<https://thediplomat.com/2021/08/what-the-blue-arctic-means-for-the-us-pacific-military-presence/>

"The Blue Arctic, the concept that melting ice in the Arctic will eventually result in navigable waters, has created a new arena for great power competition."



Report Examines Russian Military Strategy and Operational Art

<https://www.cna.org/centers/cna/sppp/rsp/russian-military-strategy>

The report explores:

- How the Russian military understands military strategy and the contemporary character of war
- Origin and evolution of key principles in Russian operational art
- Russian views of U.S. concepts and plans
- Specific Strategic Operations (SOs):
 - - Strategic Operation in a Theater of Military Operations (SOTMO)
 - - Strategic Aerospace Operation (SAO)
 - - Strategic Operation of Nuclear Forces (SONF)
 - - Strategic Operation for the Destruction of Critically Important Targets (SODCIT)
- Emerging operational concepts



Soryu Class Submarine: Are they the best diesel-electric attack submarines in the world?

<https://navalpost.com/soryu-class-submarine/>

Likely the Japanese requirement specifications for submarines (e.g., oceanic) are similar to those of Canada. Would the Soryu-class be a good contender for the replacement of Canada's Victoria-class submarines? Not many diesel-powered boat designs to choose from.



Further Success with E-Flexers – Deltamarin Signs Design Contracts for Three RoPax Ships

<https://deltamarin.com/2021/08/further-success-with-e-flexers-deltamarin-signs-design-contracts-for-three-ropax-ships/>



Chinese-built "Vessel no. 10 will be chartered by a Canadian federal Crown corporation, Marine Atlantic, from Stena RoRo. The vessel will have a capacity of 1,100 persons and approximately 2,600 lane meters."

Hmm, RoPax (combination vehicle roll-on/roll-off and passenger) ships could make good landing (a.k.a. amphibious transport) ships 'taken up from trade.' Oh, the Chinese have already thought of (and done) that...

Solving Communications Gaps in the Arctic with Balloons

<https://cimsec.org/solving-communications-gaps-in-the-arctic-with-balloons/>

Hasn't there been some research in Canada using balloons for communications in the Arctic? How did that go?



Vehicle Mobility in the High North

<https://www.thinkdefence.co.uk/2021/08/vehicle-mobility-in-the-high-north/>

Some really neat kit.



US military must prepare for POW concerns in the deepfake era

<https://www.c4isrnet.com/opinion/2021/08/23/us-military-must-prepare-for-pow-concerns-in-the-deepfake-era/>

"Photo warfare."

And not just an issue for the US.



Caterpillar Bulldozers Are Leading the Fight Against the Islamic State

<https://www.popularmechanics.com/military/weapons/a26730/bulldozers-leading-the-fight-against-isis/>

Old article, but sometimes one has to remember that there is a lot more to equipping a military than tanks, artillery and light armoured vehicles. Engineering and logistics need attention, too, in defence policies and procurement.



How the Canadian Rangers are responding to COVID-19 in the N.W.T.'s Sahtu

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/rangers-covid-response-nwt-1.6150428>

"Approximately 15 Canadian Rangers are being activated to support N.W.T. communities dealing with a surge of COVID-19 cases ..."



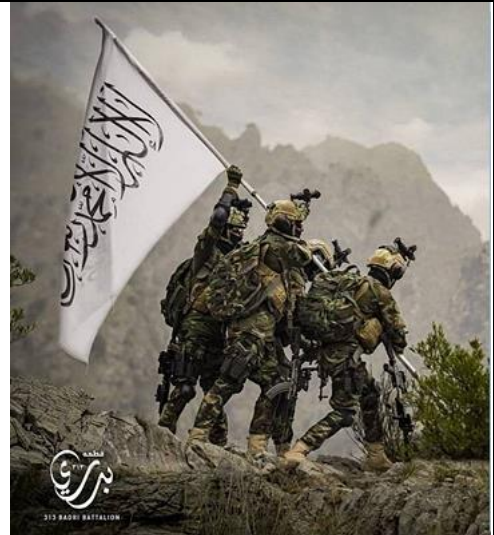
Taliban photo appears to mock Iwo Jima flag raising in latest propaganda push

<https://www.marinecorpstimes.com/off-duty/military-culture/2021/08/21/taliban-photo-appears-to-mock-iwo-jima-flag-raising-in-latest-propaganda-push/>

The Taliban have shown others that they are quite capable in the use of social media, targeting the hearts and minds of people in Afghanistan and in the world generally (see: "The Taliban Want You to Keep Your Phone On" <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/23/opinion/taliban-afghanistan-social-media.html?>). After all, it is the support of populations, their willingness to spend lives and national treasure, that is the basis for sustaining a conflict. But to mock an icon of the history and culture of a nation, particularly a powerful opponent, may be too much, enrage too many who otherwise would have been satisfied to leave things be, and invite retribution.

A possible 'photo war' backfire.

Another article on the matter: In an Image Mocking the Marines, the Taliban Shows Off New Propaganda Savvy <https://www.military.com/daily-news/2021/08/24/image-mocking-marines-taliban-shows-off-new-propaganda-savvy.html>



Other Sources:

#Afghanistan

Why Did the Afghan Army Evaporate?

<https://rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/commentary/why-did-afghan-army-evaporate>

#election

Guidelines on the conduct of Ministers, Ministers of State, exempt staff and public servants during an election

<https://www.canada.ca/en/privy-council/services/publications/guidelines-conduct-ministers-state-exempt-staff-public-servants-election.html>

The Caretaker Convention. Or why so much can't be done during an election.

Election Resource Centre

<https://cdainstitute.ca/election-resource-centre/>

Parties' positions on national defence and security.

#information operations

The Information Apocalypse Part X: The Road Ahead

<https://warroom.armywarcollege.edu/articles/the-information-apocalypse-part-x/>

The earlier parts can be googled.

#wargames

“No, nothing will be fine” — but could these misinformation games help at least a little?

<https://www.niemanlab.org/2021/08/no-nothing-will-be-fine-but-could-these-misinformation-games-help-at-least-a-little/>

#reading

Pay Heed to the Enlisted: Reading Recommendations for Lieutenants

<https://fromthegreennotebook.com/2021/08/25/pay-heed-to-the-enlisted-reading-recommendations-for-lieutenants/>

#warfare

Thucydides in the Data Warfare Era

<https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2018/5/30/thucydides-in-the-data-warfare-era>

#wargames

Introduction to Wargaming

<https://cove.army.gov.au/article/introduction-wargaming>

Other:

Canadian Defence Review Volume 27 Issue 4 Special RCN Edition

<http://www.canadiandefencereview.com/>

MILNEWS.ca Blog

<https://milnewsca.wordpress.com/>

Good news collator, worth a (free) subscription. Lots of Afghanistan-related content of late.

US Army **Military Review** September-October 2021

<https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Journals/Military-Review/English-Edition-Archives/September-October-2021/>

contents:

Clausewitz’s Perspective on Deterring Russian Malign Activities in Cyberspace

Enduring Competition in a New Age of Power

The Battle for Hong Kong: Insights on Narrative and Resistance for the Army in Strategic Competition

The Trouble with Mission Command: Army Culture and Leader Assumptions

Multi-Domain Operations in Urban Terrain and Implications for the Medical Line of Effort

Combat and Operational Stress Control in the Prolonged Field Care Environment

Factor Analysis: A Valuable Technique in Support of Mission Analysis

“We Who Wear the Cloth of Our Nation”: Using Character Development and Education to Combat

Partisan Polarization in the Military

Leading the Change: The Field Grade Leader’s Role in Responding to the Fort Hood Report

The Case for an Information Warfighting Function

The Philippine Constabulary: An Example of American Command of Indigenous Forces



**Conference of Defence Associations
Statement On The 2021 Federal Election**

The forthcoming election is a timely opportunity for Canada's political parties to explain how they propose to ensure that Canada is prepared to respond to a broad range of national security issues.

In an era of renewed great power competition, this obviously includes potential military threats to Canada and its allies, but it also includes issues of economic security and the adequacy of supply chains to produce and deliver critical items for national security. This shift in focus regarding international security should not however undermine the continued challenges posed by non-state actors and rogue states.

Three security and defence issues are of such magnitude that it is critical that Canadians know precisely where each of the political parties stand. The Conference of Defence Associations and the CDA Institute ask each party to provide straightforward answers to these questions:

1. What modifications or updates if any would your party bring to the current defence policy? Do you agree that the resources for National Defence outlined in the Strong, Secure and Engaged Defence Policy of 2017, and projected forward for a twenty-year period at that time, remain the minimum amount which should be committed for defence purposes going forward, understanding that some reallocation within that timeframe may be necessary to allow for changing circumstances?
2. How does your party envision working with the USA on the territorial defence of North America? Do you agree that the modernization of North American Aerospace Defence Command (NORAD), foreseen as a critical upcoming issue when the current Defence Policy was released, but for which no specific resources were allocated at that time, is now an urgent priority for which new and additional resources should be provided quickly?
3. Sexual misconduct has been a long-term persistent problem in the Canadian Forces under both Conservative and Liberal governments. What specific actions would the political parties take to ensure rapid cultural change in the Forces?

While we believe that these are currently the three most important national defence and security issues which parties need to address now, we recognize that Canadians are also seized with many other issues related to Canada's defence and security which are worthy of consideration: the significance of climate change and short and longer terms impacts on Arctic sovereignty and domestic emergency operations such as flooding and forest fires; our nation's resiliency towards domestic and foreign cyber-attacks and disinformation campaigns, the composition and diversity of Canadian Armed Forces, the procurement of specific pieces of military equipment, such as new fighter aircraft for the Air Force,

and new Surface Combatants for the Navy; and the adequacy of support for Canadian service personnel and their families. These are examples of the type of issues Canada's political parties should be prepared to address if they aspire to govern Canada in the years ahead.

During this election the full scope of national defence issues should be fully debated and explored. Canadians deserve to be informed of the threats we face as a nation and what commitments we have made to our allies. Therefore, party Leaders should be expected to provide the fullest and most detailed positions on national defence issues, just as local candidates across Canada should be asked for their views in interviews, at speaking opportunities, and in all candidate meetings.

With this in mind, we have invited the three major national parties to take part in a debate on these issues and hope to receive a positive reply shortly. We are prepared to work with organizations trying to facilitate a comprehensive debate to ensure that discussion of defence is well informed, that fact checking is rigorous, that specificity and detail is demanded and received, and that accountability will be possible in the years ahead.

The Conference of Defence Associations (est. 1932) and the CDA Institute have a long record of leading and promoting discussion of defence. We have sponsored the publication of many reports on defence and security issues and have convened many conferences and seminars with the participation of defence experts from across Canada and around the world. It is our objective to ensure that defence issues are addressed during this election, that the quality of the debate is elevated, and that Canadians are equipped to make well informed decisions on election day.

Security Affairs Committee Synopsis

O Canada

One aspect of the federal election campaign is disturbing and that is the lack of focus on foreign relations which is absolutely critical for any full economic recovery. Our media tends to keep the general public in the dark on major international issues or they simply seem to lose interest in events and activities that will actually have a major effect on Canadian citizens. Canada is a trading nation. It is a fact of life yet, the silence is deafening on this issue.

Despite our severe economic losses to industrial espionage and cyber-security, our political parties have failed to react to the threats and hemorrhage of intellectual properties. The biggest example is the major security breach at our level 4 research lab in Winnipeg, now without a proper investigation involving two scientists with dual citizenship to the People's Republic of China. Two highly virulent viruses were handed to a hostile country as a result; the details are yet to be made public. The second is the actions of a senior civilian member of the RCMP who apparently was selling information to the highest bidder. Both indicate a lack of attention to this important yet neglected issue.

There is little to no discussion of defence despite the deteriorating international situation, increasing threats to Canada's sovereignty in the North and the rust out of Canada's military equipment, sexual misconduct issues, poor recruiting process, issue of military law, military police actions or inaction as the case may be and the unhealthy beheading of the military by way of allegations and as yet unfounded allegations which all have left the military in worse shape virtually since its foundation. Lack of action on the North Warning System replacement, lack of understanding of the nature of modern warfare such as hyper-sonic missile, cyber-attacks/defence, exploitation of the electromagnetic spectrum, space, modern information warfare, coastal artillery defence and an endless list, which makes the SSE needing to be re-assessed as to its utility. Quite simply, Canadians have been living in

a bubble of ignorance as to foreign affairs, security and defence issues. Ignorance is not bliss and the almost willful blindness to increasing threats will be more expensive in the long run. Canadian politicians of all stripes need to focus on a radically changed world and the rise of authoritarian regimes. Canadians deserve better.

The Afghan situation continues to be a mess at best. In 2010 there was a move to try to have Afghan interpreters and support workers come to Canada. A retired member of my former regiment was sent to assess the various cases. By chance we happened to run into each other as I was heading out after my first tour, as he was coming in to do the assessments on individual threats to our support staff prior to be offered immigration to Canada. In our brief discussion, he covered the criteria that were necessary to show that there was in fact a threat against an individual. The criteria were a fine example of Ottawa-based thinking, bearing little resemblance to reality on the ground. Ottawa's main criteria was the existence of a Taliban "Night Letter," which is an actual letter, instead of being delivered by more up to date methods such as social media, phone threats, texting. etc. Afghanistan had changed.

To be noted are our attempts as soldiers and civil servants who served there to try for ten years to have our interpreters and support staff brought to Canada. There is no reason for the mess currently occurring nor any need for any of our former staff to die unnecessarily. But here we are and as of this time only about 5% have been evacuated. President Biden has maintained that 31 August 2021 would be the final date. The Taliban government has also stated that there will be no more Afghans allowed to leave the country once Kabul airport is emptied. According to US media only about 5000 Afghans are currently left at the airport awaiting flights. The combination of these two announcements make it impossible for Canada to even get a small fraction of our former people out as most would have to move from Kandahar to Kabul, an almost impossible situation. Canada has failed this vital mission to people who were loyal to us without question. As Diane Francis put it, it is a stain on our national honour.

China

China continues its self-destructive actions against its most profitable technical businesses. This past week, the Xi regime has tried to gain more access to data accumulated by these businesses. This would mean ever increasing access to the data of foreign citizens by the Communist Chinese Party (CCP). It was finally noticed by Western financial and investment firms that perhaps China was not a great place to invest. The Xi regime is apparently busy taking China back to centralized planning model similar to the pre-opening efforts of Deng Xiaoping. It is a reminder that the Chinese markets are not open but are subject to the whims of the CCP. No investment is truly safe and no Chinese company can be secure with the CCP in charge. As a result several trillion in investments lost their value, all by the actions of President Xi.

A new wrinkle became apparent this week as at least one Chinese firm "gave" all its quarterly profits to a rural development fund. It should give Western investors second thoughts of how their investments will be dealt with in the near future. It is likely a sign of things to come as Xi starts his newest campaign to have excessive profits used to fund overall development. It is unlikely that this will change in the near term as Xi tightens his overall control of CCP and thus China and its businesses. Profit is now a "bad" word once again as central planning efforts seem to be making a return.

In 2016, the International Courts found in favour of the Philippines in regard to claims in the South China Sea, in particular China's claim to the area within the 9 dashed line covering 90 % of that sea. China's claims are unfounded and illegal. The legitimate claims of nations surrounding that sea are still to be fully determined but there should not be a process that is determined by activities other than war

as China is trying to do. China is a corrupt, authoritarian regime with massive military and civil capabilities but legally it is very much in the wrong.

China has increased the number of naval exercises to 104 in the South China Sea this year partly in response to Western exercises but also as a further method of coercion of its neighbours. The CCP has the necessary capability to intimidate and if necessary fight all its neighbours successfully but has chosen "the sausage slice" approach by not doing anything too overt as to cause a major conflict but slowly but surely to achieve the CCP's aim if the community allows.

The US withdrawal from Afghanistan is being used by the CCP-controlled media to state that the US has no capacity to defend Taiwan or any other of its neighbours. It states that it would be in their best interests to negotiate directly with China for a "win-win" solution to bilateral problems. It is expected that the CCP will continue to push this agenda in the near future. There is little doubt that this US withdrawal from Afghanistan has been ham-fisted and done with little thought of allies and the issues of saving their folks. It should be fully expected that all allies will now have some doubts as to America's long term agenda due to their recent actions by both the Trump and Biden administrations.

Russia

Russia has a sphere of influence once again, all with major problems and issues that require extensive military and security efforts, in Belarus, Eastern Ukraine, Crimea, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kirgizstan, Transnistria, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, not to mention Russian interventions in Syria, Libya, Sudan, Central African Republic and others. Certainly, Russian citizens are increasingly unhappy with these efforts and their expense.

Russia officially has had nearly 7M people infected by the Covid 19 virus. Most have recovered but there are officially over 550K active cases as of 24 August 2021 according to the Moscow Times. There have been strong suspicions as well as anecdotal evidence that both the case rate and the number of deaths is vastly underreported and that the vaccination rates are still not achieving the desired effect despite an increasing effort to raise the rate of vaccinations. This ongoing failure has also led to increasing dissatisfaction with the efforts of the Putin regime.

That most demonstrations are gradually dying out as non-effective, coupled with increasing crackdowns on demonstrators and the folks who organize the demonstrations, has made the appearance of the regime gaining control over the country. This has also been done by eliminating most of the independent media and individual reporters in a manner similar to the efforts in Belarus. Even comparatively non-aligned independent media is being labeled as "foreign agents" or "illegal organizations" as part of the crack down on opposition, real or imagined. Most of this is in preparation for the Duma elections scheduled on 18 September 2021. The opposition, such as Alexei Navalny's organization, have been successful in developing a program of "anyone but United Russian" candidates. This is a trend that the Putin regime has tried to stop but has not found the "magic formula" to achieve.

Belarus

On 18 August 2021, Belarussian security forces were filmed forcing migrants into Lithuania. They were apparently equipped with full riot gear. Poland has sent more troops to its border with Belarus and is building a wall to prevent migrants from entering Poland. This is part of Belarus' efforts to fight back against EU sanctions and has been largely successful at this point.

Belarus is continuing its talks with Russia on a Union Agreement. There is little support within Belarus for this effort now as it will mean the loss of Belarus independence to Russia. Russia has been increasing its security forces in Belarus as a way to back up the illegitimate Lukashenko regime. The size of these forces varies and is difficult to determine, especially in light of the upcoming Zapad 21 exercise which will involve several countries and will be held throughout Western Russia and Belarus. It is expected that most of this year's efforts on this exercise will occur in Belarus. The number of troops remaining in Belarus post-exercise will have to be monitored. If the Union Agreement does become official, one will likely see an increased number of Russian forces deployed inside Belarus.

Other

There are many areas and conflicts that need comment, especially the ongoing issues in Afghanistan and throughout the tortured area of the Middle East as well as the most brutal and vicious wars in Africa such as the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) that have cost the lives of millions but are seldom reported in the western press especially the Canadian Press which continues to fail Canadians. As Canadians, we are privileged beyond privileged. We have had the luxury of ignorance but unfortunately this is likely to end as the West continues to trip over itself and as Western countries continue to lack the recognition of the authoritarian threat in all its aspects. The West needs to reunite in common cause whether environment, cyber criminals corruption or the threat from authoritarian regimes. Failure to take action will not be in our best interests.

Strategic Airlift

Marcel on Twitter: "@HillridgeOSINT Was not aware the IL-76 can be fitted with an 'upper deck' for transporting troops and in this case people from Kabul. <https://t.co/zG9dPCnIR4>" / Twitter
<https://twitter.com/marcelvandenber/status/1430827755940241409>

A query was made to the RCAF about whether RCAF CC177 and CC130 have this configuration. The reply: "Ops confirmed that an 'upper deck' is not an approved capability for the CC-177. We expect the same for the CC-130J."



And, finally, for your amusement (and education)...

