



Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia

Dispatches

9 February 2024

The Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia provides a forum for the study, promotion and debate of defence, security and safety 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 RUSINovaScotia@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 Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia, the Department of National Defence or other government department, the Canadian Armed Forces, or the Royal Canadian Mounted Police or other agency.

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).

Membership Renewal Reminder

See end of *Dispatches*.

Dispatches

Started with the 12 January edition, *Dispatches* is being published every two weeks rather than weekly. There will also be some content changes.

RUSI(NS) seeks a new editor to replace our editor of several years ago and our editor pro tem since then. Your editor pro tem will be stepping back from the role at our AGM 2024. If you are interested, please email RUSINovaScotia@gmail.com. What *Dispatches* looks like and how often it is published will be up to the new editor.

RUSI(NS) Needs Volunteers!

As of the upcoming AGM, likely March, the following positions need volunteers:

1. editor, *Dispatches*
2. editor, Facebook
3. editor, X

If you are interested, please email RUSINovaScotia@gmail.com.

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.

RUSI(NS) Events:

Emended: 21 February, Wednesday – RUSI(NS) Distinguished Speaker MGen S.Y. Ménard, RCAF Chief Fighter and NORAD Capability (CFNC), “F-35 Update.” 1300-1500 Atlantic time. Via Zoom. To register, email RUSINovaScotia@gmail.com - indicate whether you are RUSI(NS) or, if not, of what department/ agency, unit, association or company you are a member. Put “RUSI(NS) Distinguished Speaker 21 February 2024 Registration” as the subject line of your email.

18 March, Monday – RUSI(NS) Distinguished Speaker RAdm Luciano Carosielli, Commander Cyber Force, the Cyber Force and digital/information management/J6. 1300-1500 Atlantic time. Via Zoom. Details TBA.

17 April, Wednesday – RUSI(NS) Distinguished Speaker MGen Bernard, Canadian Joint Operations Command, "The Canadian Armed Forces and Climate Security Challenges." 1300-1500 Atlantic time. Via Zoom. Details TBA.

Pre-event reading: Draft principles on protection of the environment in armed conflict <https://lieber.westpoint.edu/draft-principles-protection-environment-armed-conflict/>

Other Events:

22 February, Thursday - Royal Alberta United Services Institute presentation "Beyond Greed: How Corruption Threatens Global Security" with journalist and political advisor Sarah Chayes. 6-7 pm MST (9-10 pm AST). Online. For more info and to register: <https://rausi.ca/info-events/rmcscd/622-beyond-greed-how-corruption-threatens-global-security>

9 May, Thursday - Royal Alberta United Services Institute 2024 Keynote Lecture with LGen (ret) The Honorable Roméo Dallaire, discussing key strategic challenges facing Canadian leadership in the current geopolitical landscape. 7 pm MST (10 pm AST) (start time to be confirmed). Via Zoom. For more info and to register: <https://rausi.ca/info-events/rmcscd/625-romeo-dallaire>

Wargaming Events:

Georgetown University Wargaming Society long-range schedule: <https://www.guwargaming.org/guwsevents>

17 February, Saturday - Connections North 2024. 9am-4:30pm EST. New Residence Hall, McGill University, Montréal. Connections North is an annual conference devoted to professional wargaming, conflict simulation, and other serious games. (Connections North 2023

report: <https://paxsims.wordpress.com/2023/06/23/connections-north-2023-report/>.) To register for 2024: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/connections-north-2024-tickets-786729347657>

20 February, Tuesday - Georgetown University Wargaming Society presentation "Integrating Scientific Experiments with Wargaming Mechanics." 7-9pm AST. Online. To register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/integrating-scientific-experiments-with-wargaming-mechanics-tickets-783428314177>

27 February, Tuesday - Georgetown University Wargaming Society presentation "Wargaming Urban Conflict: A PhD in Progress." 1-3pm AST. Online. To register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/wargaming-urban-conflict-a-phd-in-progress-tickets-791327370467>

New: 29 February, Thursday - Center for Strategic and International Studies Maritime Security Dialogue "DoD's Warfighting Concept with the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff." 3-4 pm EST. Via webinar. To register: <https://www.csis.org/events/dods-warfighting-concept>.

23 April, Tuesday - Georgetown University Wargaming Society presentation "Perspective and its Consequences in Historical Game Design." 7-9pm ADT. Online. To register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/perspective-and-its-consequences-in-historical-game-design-tickets-781758088487>

9 July, Tuesday - Georgetown University Wargaming Society presentation "Kriegsspiel - past and present." 1-3pm ADT. Online. To register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/kriegsspiel-past-and-present-tickets-781141072977>

20 August, Tuesday - Georgetown University Wargaming Society presentation "Wargaming outside of War: How NGO's use games and gaming to expand maritime governance." 7-9pm ADT. Online. Development and deployment of an IUU fishing wargame. To register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/wargaming-outside-of-war-how-ngos-use-games-and-gaming-to-expand-maritime-tickets-791506887407>

Publications

RUSI(NS) Comments "Canada's National Disaster Challenge" by Murray Lee, 1 January 2024, https://rusi-ns.ca/national_disaster_challenge/

New: Royal Alberta United Services Institute Research Brief Volume 4 Issue 1 "UK Arms Diplomacy and International Law on the Black Sea" by LJ Howard, 30 January 2024, <https://rausi.ca/publications/research/631-uk-arms-diplomacy-and-international-law-on-the-black-sea>

RUSI(NS) Comments "Should the Royal Canadian Air Force Acquire the E-7 Wedgetail for Arctic and Northern Surveillance?" by Murray Lee, 27 December 2023, <https://rusi-ns.ca/wedgetail/>

RUSI(NS) Presentation “Why Canada Needs Submarines” by VAdm Topshee, CRCN, 26 Dec 23, https://rusi-ns.ca/canadian_patrol_submarine_project/

RUSI(NS) Comments "The RCAF is on another merry-go-round. This time it's the Search and Rescue CC295 Kingfisher." by Murray Lee, 20 December 2023, <https://rusi-ns.ca/kingfisher/>

The following publications are received by RUSI(S) from other associations. The latest edition, where not otherwise indicated, may be requested by emailing RUSI(NS). To readers of *Dispatches* from other associations, sharing of your publications is appreciated.

weekly:

Royal United Services Institute of Victoria (Australia) *Defence Update*
Vancouver Artillery Association and Royal United Services Institute Vancouver *Members News*

bi-weekly:

Canadian Marine Industries and Shipbuilding Association *On Watch*
<https://www.cmisa.ca/cpages/on-watch-current>

monthly:

Canadian Gunner News
Edmonton United Services Institute President's *Enews*
Military Institute of Windsor *Communiqué*
Naval Reserve Association of Canada Mess Deck *ConneXions*
Royal Alberta United Services Institute *Dispatches*
Royal Canadian Logistics Service *The Logistician*
Royal Canadian Naval Association Admiral Hose Branch *Scuttlebutt*
Royal United Services Institute of Vancouver Island *Newsletter*
Veterans Affairs Canada *Salute!*

quarterly:

Royal United Services Institute of Victoria (Australia) *Quarterly Newsletter*

@RUSI_NS on X

@RUSI_NS posts may be viewed by clicking on the icon at <https://RUSI-NS.ca>.
To have something posted or reposted, email RUSI(NS).

Murray Brewster @Murray_Brewster 26 Jan posted and RUSI(NS) reposted: Estimated lifetime cost of military's Cyclone helicopter is now \$15.9 billion. Defence minister says he's "deeply troubled" by the rising estimate but the Air Force will stick with the aircraft.
#cdnpoli #RCAF
(Estimated life-cycle cost of military's Cyclone choppers rises to \$15.9B
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/cyclone-helicopter-canadian-forces-1.7095075>)



CAN🇨🇦 participating under @CJOC_COIC Operation ARTEMIS in international defence of freedom of navigation/of trade to move by sea thru #RedSea <https://www.canada.ca/en/departement-national-defence/services/operations/military-operations/current-operations/operation-artemis.html> Supporting int'l actions/announcements, 3 staff, no ships, no aircraft #OpARTEMIS



David Pugliese @davidpugliese 26 Jan posted and RUSI(NS) reposted: Article is now updated....No, Canada's navy did not sink 312 Chinese ships <https://ottawacitizen.com/news/national/defence-watch/no-canadas-navy-did-not-sink-312-chinese-ships> via @ottawacitizen

Disinformation or sardonic quip?



Royal Canadian Navy @RoyalCanNavy 28 Jan posted and RUSI(NS) reposted: Fresh paint. ✨ #HMCSGooseBay returns to HMC Dockyard #Halifax, painted in an Admiralty Paint Schematic, which was initiated in 2020, as a tribute to our sailors who fought in the #BattleOfTheAtlantic. #HMCSMoncton and #HMCSHalifax (soon!) have these paint schemes



Murray Brewster @Murray_Brewster 30 Jan posted and RUSI(NS) reposted: ANALYSIS: As Europe braces for a wider war, allies call on Canada and others to catch up. #cdnpoli #RussiaUkrainewar (<https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/nato-russia-ukraine-baltics-1.7098660>)



Hanwha Ocean hosts @CAGlobalAffairs, highlights 🇰🇷 KS-III #submarine as potential solution for CAN🇨🇦 Patrol Submarine Project <https://www.navalnews.com/naval-news/2024/01/strategic-maritime-partnerships-canadian-think-tanks-korean-expedition-to-review-hanwha-oceans-submarine/> Capable, open-ocean & especially in-service boat, allowing for expedited delivery to reconstitute @RoyaCanNavy in troubling times *Hanwha Ocean positioning themselves: "Hanwha Ocean accelerates efforts to sell warships in North America"*



https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/tech/2023/11/419_363424.html

National Post @nationalpost Feb 1 posted and RUSI(NS) reposted: Michel Maisonneuve: Don't let challenges diminish pride in our military
<https://nationalpost.com/opinion/dont-let-challenges-diminish-pride-in-our-military>



"Canada🇨🇦 Loses Control of its Shipbuilding Budget: Seaspan, Davie and Irving Turn Up the Heat on Ottawa"
<https://www.bairdmaritime.com/work-boat-world/offshore-world/column-canada-loses-control-of-its-shipbuilding-budget-seaspan-davie-and-irving-turn-up-the-heat-on-ottawa-offshore-accounts/> Fair? Really can't comment on this article, it says it all
#NationalShipbuildingStrategy #NSS



"Canada🇨🇦 used to punch above its weight, but our defence capacity now seems an impossible dream"
<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/article-canada-used-to-punch-above-its-weight-but-our-defence-capacity-now/> "...since at least the end of the Cold War, successive federal governments have done as little as possible in these (foreign, defence & security) policy areas"



.@CaGlobalAffairs "Hard Things Are Hard: Lessons for Complex Procurement Projects"
https://www.cgai.ca/hard_things_are_hard_lessons_for_complex_procurement_projects Insights & recommendations about complex military acquisition projects from someone who's been there
#Canadiandefence #NationalShipbuildingStrategy #NSS #cdnpoli



"Canada's Defence Policy, The Update to Strong. Secure. Engaged is Long Overdue"
<https://vanguardcanada.com/canadas-defence-policy-the-update-to-strong-secure-engaged-is-long-overdue/> "The defence of Canada's interests starts with certainty of government intent provided in a clear, current, and resourced statement of policy."



“Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia” on Facebook

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NATO Societies Must be Ready for War

<https://rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/commentary/nato-societies-must-be-ready-war>

Canada needs to make a clear-eyed assessment of the current dangers in the world, and prepare itself accordingly. The upcoming Defence Policy Update (it is upcoming, isn't it?) needs to prioritize an explanation to the Canadian public why defence expenditures are what they are and how they need to change. People join the military because they believe in defence of the country, and they see support of government and defence. When people see other matters prioritized (who wants to operate equipment older than you are?), then they are not willing, and we end up with a military unable to keep going long enough.



Taking robots and AI to war at sea

<https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/taking-robots-and-ai-to-war-at-sea/>

"The central role of AUKUS allows all three partner states to investigate the full range of possibilities for AI together with autonomous systems, including armed autonomous USVs and UUVs."



Hmm, an aspect of AUKUS that Canada didn't appreciate when it didn't sign up?

Small, cheap and numerous: a military revolution is upon us

<https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/small-cheap-and-numerous-a-military-revolution-is-upon-us/>

"Where these little aircraft are taking warfare isn't clear. What is clear is that we're in the early stages of a revolution."



What is the Canadian Armed Forces drone development plan?

Loose Lips Do Not Sink Ships, Public Apathy Does

<https://gcaptain.com/loose-lips-sink-us-merchant-marine-navy-ships/>

"...a vital lesson: informed public engagement and transparency are indispensable for the safety and effectiveness of maritime operations. The misguided belief that silence and secrecy will protect our ships has been disproven by history and current events. It is a ridiculous notion in today's information age and it's time to acknowledge that informed public awareness, rather than silence, is our strongest ally in ensuring the safety and efficacy of the Merchant Marine and Navy."



This is really an article about public information (reporting) and operational security (OPSEC) of the freedom of trade to move at sea (a.k.a. freedom of navigation).

Canadians would be well served with a better understanding, obtained through more and publicly available information, of the extent to which this country's defence, security, safety and prosperity are dependent on freedom of navigation. Especially in a time when that freedom is being threatened by hostile action in the Red Sea, politically-based and potentially hostile restrictions in the South China Sea, and environmentally-caused restrictions in the Panama Canal.

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Bravo (a box of snookies as award) to RUSI(NS) member Marcel Boudreau for noticing the typo in the poster.

Fire Out On 'Marlin Luanda' After Houthi Missile Strike

<https://gcaptain.com/fire-out-on-marlin-luanda-after-houthi-missile-strike/>

The pictures coming out about the missile strike at and consequent fires aboard the tanker MARLIN LUANDA will be the stuff of naval damage control and air defence lectures for some time. Hopefully the pictures won't be lost in the future amongst a raft of new and similar imagery as other ships are struck. There needs to be more lectures and more public reporting of the importance to global security and prosperity of the freedom of trade to move safely by sea, that is, freedom of navigation.



It was reported that naval personnel from the Indian, US and French navies 'doused the fire' aboard the tanker ("Indian Navy helps douse fire on UK oil tanker attacked by Houthis in Gulf of Aden" <https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/british-oil-tanker-marlin-luanda-ins-visakhapatman-fire-under-control-gulf-of-aden-2494416-2024-01-28>) Fighting fires aboard struck ships is getting a little public coverage but not as much as the attention-grabbing shooting down of missiles and drones by navy destroyers and frigates. What reporting there is of firefighting and other support efforts leads to a number of thoughts:

1. The underappreciated (under-reported?) utility of navy fire and damage control parties ('away teams' or 'away parties' if one can allude to a Star Trek staple).
2. The potential utility of deploying rescue tugs, naval or civil contracted, into the contested area. Large ocean-going rescue tugs have a historical precedent in the Battle of the Atlantic, and are part of larger balanced navies.
3. The potential utility of deploying environmental response resources (ships, boats, booms, skimmers, etc.) into the area to combat oil spills and other threats to the environment. These resources could be Coast Guard or civil contracted.
4. The potential utility of deploying damage assessment and repair teams into the area to stand by to board struck ships, afloat or when they get to a safe harbour.
5. The contribution a local state can make to the international effort protecting freedom of navigation by offering 'safe harbours' for damaged ships.

States, rather than providing high-end air defence destroyers and frigates, could do very well in contributing to the international effort to ensure freedom of navigation by providing other capabilities such as damage control, repair, etc.

The Influence of Weaponry on the Jus ad Bellum

<https://lieber.westpoint.edu/influence-weaponry-jus-ad-bellum/>

Ongoing situations in the world are providing lots of material for legal students. But then, lots of past situations have, too, and should have, to those paying attention.



What opportunities are there, then, for enlightening 'operators', the general public and decision makers? What are the salient points for them?

Legal knowledge is part of the armoury of defence and security staff.

Altered images depict false escalation of South China Sea dispute

<https://factcheck.afp.com/doc.afp.com.34H23ZJ>

"After tensions flared between the Philippines and China in the hotly disputed South China Sea in January 2024, a video showing several images of ships in flames resurfaced in social media posts that falsely claimed a Chinese coast guard vessel was destroyed by an "unidentified weapon".

The images used in the video, however, were altered from photos showing Chinese ships patrolling disputed waters in the South China Sea and East China Sea, and a photo of a Canadian vessel (Editor: Royal Canadian Navy frigate, likely REGINA from the paint scheme) in the Pacific Ocean. While there have been tense standoffs between Chinese and Philippine vessels in the South China Sea, AFP journalists in Manila can confirm there are no reports of any Chinese ships destroyed."



Is this another state's effort to 'stir the pot' between Canadians and the Chinese? Or some troll's efforts to confuse/inflame readers of other states about the relations between the two countries. At least one source is reporting the disinformation. To what extent this clarification was cued by official sources is unknown (unknowable?) but Canadians can be assured that Canadian authorities are fighting the public information war on our behalf. The Royal Canadian Navy has denounced attempts to disinform Canadians about these false events.

Time to take a step forward from analysis to a collective response

<https://euvsdisinfo.eu/time-to-take-a-step-forward-from-analysis-to-a-collective-response/>

"The European External Action Service (EEAS) has released its second report on Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference (FIMI) threats

(https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/2nd-eeas-report-foreign-information-manipulation-and-interference-threats_en)."



A timely read for Canadians. We are not unique in being subjected to foreign interference. And we are a target of minatory states (there, I wanted to use that word).

Top Issues Facing the U.S. Navy: A Compendium from The Madison Sea Power Workshops

<https://cimsec.org/top-issues-facing-the-u-s-navy-a-compendium-from-the-madison-sea-power-workshops/>

"...purpose is to explore key issues facing American sea power as we shift to an era of great power competition."



Interesting reading. Though the opinions are from US 'navalists' and apply to the US Navy, there are parallels with the Royal Canadian Navy. The issues are worth consideration.

The issues:

1. Strategy (Good that 'strategy' is the first issue.)
2. Logistics
3. Training and Education
4. Culture
5. Organization
6. Doctrine
7. Operations
8. Acquisition
9. Material

It is worth keeping an eye out for the recommendations paper that is to follow.

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From a former senior naval officer: A very interesting article. I found myself asking what each of the nine issues meant in a Canadian context and what could be done about them. Can we look after our maritime area domestically and how? How long would our ammunition last in a war and what is our industrial base for resupply? Can we defend the approaches to the Gulf of St Lawrence and the areas off our naval bases east and west. Can we protect the North West Passage? What can our contribution be for an out-of-area deployment? Will our new replenishment oilers be capable of deploying worldwide or do we keep them domestically? The future submarine force is looking at our three oceans - how many can be stationed and for how long in response to a threat to our area? Do we have anti-missile defences for our naval bases and major cities? Take a look at the missile-carrying drones in the Middle East and the requirement for a cone of protection - is there any chance we have a threat here? When was the last time Members of Parliament attended a 'morning brief' with the Atlantic capabilities presented from maritime, air and land perspectives? What tactical exercises are planned for, say, the future next five years? Is it possible to acquire cheap and nasty ships and systems in a faster than ten years process? One could go on. It will be interesting to see the recommendations paper noted in the article for each issue, and then look at them from a Canadian perspective.

How the US is preparing for a Chinese invasion of Taiwan

<https://www.reuters.com/world/china/logistics-war-how-washington-is-preparing-chinese-invasion-taiwan-2024-01-31/>



"But for U.S. war planners preparing for a potential conflict over Taiwan, the high-profile Talisman Sabre exercises had a far more discreet value: They helped create new stockpiles of military equipment that were left behind in Australia after the drills ended..."

Smart move. It's not just about getting the people and weapons to the area of (conflict) operations, it's about sustaining them there. Major bases are vulnerable. Western allies do not have enough logistics ships. Airlift can't move enough. There needs to be an effort for a web of logistics capabilities in the western Pacific.

For Canada, we need more support arrangements with western Pacific allies, and/or more naval logistics ships, and/or arrangements to take up ships from trade ('STUFT'). That's presuming in a major conflict that Canadian forces would be operating forward. We just may find ourselves with an eastern Pacific regional defence responsibility. That may seem limited but it's within our capabilities, and the logistics heading west has to be defended, from North American west coast ports onwards, by someone.

In First, China Tagged as ‘Enemy’ in US-Japan Military Exercise

<https://www.thedefensepost.com/2024/02/05/china-enemy-military-exercise/>

"China has been explicitly labeled the hypothetical enemy for the first time in biennial US-Japan military exercise Keen Edge.



Washington and Tokyo previously used a conditional name for their enemy to avoid backlash. They also utilized maps that slightly differed from the topography of actual countries..."

Naming China as the enemy in an exercise is a significant statement.

Hmm, what colour might be used on maps and charts to depict Chinese units? Orange was the traditional colour for 'exercise enemy' but that also has a historical linkage with Japan. Red, the colour for enemy units, is at times avoided to ensure no confusion between exercise and real units. The colours are related to US war plans from early 20th century - yellow was the colour assigned for China (which was an ally then).

MOD blasted for increasing secrecy over normally public data

<https://ukdefencejournal.org.uk/mod-blasted-for-increasing-secrecy-over-normally-public-data/>

"We reached out to NATO Allies to determine how their governments kept their legislatures informed about their armed forces readiness."



That line above linked to "Ready Forces" (<https://www.canada.ca/en/departement-national-defence/corporate/reports-publications/departemental-plans/departemental-plan-2023-24/planned-results/ready-forces.html>). The Canada.ca webpage had a fair amount of content but it can be questioned whether it really provides an appreciation of the readiness of the Canadian Armed Forces, especially as so much of the content is a catalogue (rather daunting) of exercises and as there are but two 'results' considered: "Canadian Armed Forces are ready to conduct concurrent operations" and "Military equipment is ready for training and operations." Granted, the page states "Financial, human resources and performance information for the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces' Program Inventory is available in the GC InfoBase (<https://www.tbs-sct.canada.ca/ems-sgd/edb-bdd/index-eng.html#start>)." That InfoBase is detailed (somewhat overwhelming at first look) but appears to be good, at least for the general public and maybe for government members.

Interesting, the differences between the services for "Military equipment is ready for training and operations":

"The new methodology (to calculate serviceability rate for maritime key fleets) accounts for all periods when the vessels are not considered serviceable including: docking work periods, alongside work periods when the vessel cannot be assigned to tasks, and periods when the

vessel has suffered an operational deficiency which prevents it from completing an assigned task.

In the army context, the indicator refers to the aggregate number of pieces of equipment that make up the land fleets.

In the air force context, the indicator refers to the aggregate number of pieces of equipment that make up the aerospace fleets."

There are those who try to give weighted figures to calculate and compare fleets. But then one has to reflect what is actually being achieved with such comparisons.

The Tip of the American Spear? How the United Kingdom Could Pursue Military Specialization

<https://warontherocks.com/2024/02/the-tip-of-the-american-spear-how-the-united-kingdom-could-pursue-military-specialization/>



Specialization is not an approach (strategy, if one uses the US understanding of 'preparation strategy') to developing forces that should be undertaken lightly. It should be the result of well-considered foreign, security and defence policies which, amongst other things, appreciate that specialization means that a state will not at times have independent action as a government option, and that the state is tied to great powers, alliances and coalitions.

May be better to craft forces with a limited range of capabilities (that's not really specialization) and appreciate what action they allow and not allow a state to undertake.

Red Sea challenges give naval planners more to ponder about future warfare

<https://www.iiss.org/online-analysis/military-balance/2024/01/red-sea-challenges-give-naval-planners-more-to-ponder-about-future-warfare/>



"Many navies have underinvested in land-attack capability..."

The Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) has a minimal land-attack capability, maybe enough to cover a special or a non-combatant evacuation operation at a critical moment. Certainly not enough or the right type of missiles to make a diplomatic statement. And the type commanders may want to hold to attack enemy surface ships. Maybe land-attack is not a core RCN function.

"The Red Sea situation has further reignited debate over warship numbers..." "The problem facing many navies ... is that an ambition to increase fleet size clashes with available resources and industrial capacity, particularly to move quickly."

Whether sea, land or air, "quantity has a quality all its own." Canada should be prepared to build simple but capable warships quickly and in quantity. We did it with corvettes at the beginning of the Second World War. Considering world tensions and the potential for conflict, Canada should be preparing to do that again. Bring on the corvettes!

Other Sources

#A2R

In Norway, young people compete to serve in the military

<https://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2024/01/norway-young-people-compete-serve-military/393599/>

Some to be learned here?

#China

China Maritime Report No. 34: PLAN Submarine Training in the "New Era"

<https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/cmsi-maritime-reports/34/>

S. China Sea's Subsea Features Get New Chinese Names

<https://maritime-executive.com/article/s-china-sea-s-subsea-features-get-chinese-names-for-china-s-blue-land>

Naming warfare! Part of legal warfare (lawfare).

#defence policy

Whether Trump or Biden wins, Canada must make defence spending a major priority

<https://macdonaldlaurier.ca/canada-must-make-defence-spending-priority/>

#drones

Robot wingmen vs. China: What a think tank's wargame revealed about a key USAF concept

<https://www.defenseone.com/technology/2024/02/robot-wingmen-vs-china-what-think-tanks-wargame-revealed-about-key-usaf-concept/393980/>

and related report:

The Need for Collaborative Combat Aircraft for Disruptive Air Warfare

<https://mitchellaerospacepower.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/The-Need-For-CCAs-for-Disruptive-Air-Warfare-FULL-FINAL.pdf>

Unsure from reading the article whether it was a wargame or a modelling&simulation. Often the former term is (mis)used in public reporting.

#Indo-Pacific #strategy

War with China would be an unmitigated strategic catastrophe

<https://thehill.com/opinion/national-security/4434512-war-with-china-would-be-an-unmitigated-strategic-catastrophe/>

"...instead of taking the lead role in war the U.S. strategic aim must be to defend treaty allies by helping them to defend themselves."

#information operations

Leaked 'wolf letter' leaves military sheepish, internal emails show

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/leaked-wolf-letter-nova-scotia-1.7093141>

Exercise communications, especially communications about concerning activities, need to be appropriately caveated. And warnings sent to those who may inadvertently receive them. (This comment was written by someone who routinely planned nuclear emergency exercises.)

Navigating the harmful consequences of Disinformation in War

<https://euvsdisinfo.eu/navigating-the-harmful-consequences-of-disinformation-in-war/>

#maritime security

Red Sea attacks increase shipping times and freight rates

Good example of the significance of the situation:

<https://www.eia.gov/todayinenergy/detail.php?id=61363#>

#drones

How Yemen's Houthi rebels are carrying out attacks on Red Sea ships

Comprehensive and recommended read: <https://www.reuters.com/graphics/ISRAEL-PALESTINIANS/SHIPPING-ARMS/lgvdnngeyvo/>

#reading #space

U.S. Space Force National Security Space Institute 2024 Space Professional Reading List

<https://www.starcom.spaceforce.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/3664037/nssi-releases-annual-space-professional-reading-list/>

#Russia #strategy

Russian Strategic Corruption - Wagner Group Activities and State Capture in the Central African Republic

https://cradpdf.drdc-rddc.gc.ca/PDFS/unc440/p817116_A1b.pdf

Are we losing Africa?

#Russia-Ukraine War

From scones to drones: inside Putin's arms race that is leaving the West behind

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/world-news/2024/01/26/russia-arming-itself-faster-than-nato/>

One wonders: what are the Canadian defence industry policy and (hopefully) integrated defence industry plan?

Here's how to help solve Ukraine's drone shortage problem

A form of 'industrial warfare': <https://www.c4isrnet.com/opinion/2024/02/05/heres-how-to-help-solve-ukraines-drone-shortage-problem/>

Supplies Limited, Ukrainians Dig In As Russians Attack

<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/02/04/world/europe/ukraine-defense-east.html>

"Guys who surrendered, they shot them all."

#drones

Ukraine levels up the fight with drone strikes deep into Russia

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/jan/27/ukraine-levels-up-the-fight-with-drone-strikes-deep-into-russia>

New Ukrainian Underwater Drone Project To Dominate The Black Sea

<https://www.navalnews.com/naval-news/2024/01/exclusive-new-ukrainian-underwater-drone-project-to-dominate-the-black-sea/>

Doesn't matter whether Ukrainian autonomous underwater vehicles (AUV)/uncrewed underwater vehicles (UUV) are effective yet. Just the threat is good information operations.

#shipbuilding

Hunter Class frigate project in Adelaide triggers alarm

<https://www.adelaidenow.com.au/news/south-australia/alarm-bells-are-ringing-about-adelaides-45bn-hunter-class-frigate-project/news-story/39f80c599e67529e3c538f4b66d77e7a>

Not evident whether this means anything for the Canadian Surface Combatant project.

#space

Spying From Space

<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/spying-space>

#United Kingdom

Britain's armed forces are stretched perilously thin

<https://www.economist.com/britain/2024/01/29/britains-armed-forces-are-stretched-perilously-thin>

Fascinating, the parallels between the situation in Canada and in the UK.

Troubling capability shortfalls of British Army laid bare

<https://ukdefencejournal.org.uk/troubling-capability-shortfalls-of-british-army-laid-bare/>

#warfare

Three Dates, Three Windows, and All of DOTMLPF-P

<https://madsciblog.tradoc.army.mil/trashed-3/>

"...object of intelligentized warfare is to directly control the enemy's will."

Term Alert! "Intelligentized warfare."

To Uppgun Seapower in the Indo-Pacific, You Need an Army

<https://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2024/february/upgun-seapower-indo-pacific-you-need-army>

The great seapower theorists, Corbett et al, said the same thing. To pit navy versus army versus etc., is false (usually fund-chasing) and dangerous.

#wargaming

Methodological Machinery of Wargaming: A Path toward Discovering Wargaming's Epistemological Foundations

<https://academic.oup.com/isr/article/26/1/viae002/7595765>

Other

Military Strategy Magazine Volume 9, Issue 2

<https://www.militarystrategymagazine.com/>

contents:

Detering War without Threatening War: Rehabilitating the West's Risk-averse Approach to Deterrence

Erich Ludendorff: Failed Strategist or War Visionary? Rereading Ludendorff in Light of the War in Ukraine

How France's Lack of a Strategy in West Africa Indirectly Led to the Coups D'états

Principles and Pitfalls for the Budding Strategist

Making Sound Strategy: Back to the Basics of Ends, Ways, and Means

Rule Guided Behavior and Violence – A Cultural Evolutionary Strategy to Foster Peaceful Cultural Entities

History of Military Medicine

Interesting articles: <https://histoiresante.blogspot.com/2024/01/histoire-de-la-medecine-militaire.html>

From our doctor: These are really interesting. The research and treatment of tropical diseases was originally developed by Military Medical Research: French, English, German, Italian, etc. All those colonies in the tropics. I enjoyed that article.

The **British Army Review** 186 – Spring 2024 – Our slice of the Alliance

<https://chacr.org.uk/2024/02/05/nato-our-slice-of-the-alliance/>

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Newly released publications |

CDA Institute On Track Volume 31 “The Future Of Domestic Operations: Rethinking The Role Of The CAF In Emergency Response”

<https://cdainstitute.ca/the-future-of-domestic-operations-rethinking-the-role-of-the-caf-in-emergency-response/>

contents:

The Future of Domestic Operations: Rethinking the Role of the CAF in Emergency Response | Introduction

The Canadian Armed Forces in Canada’s Domestic Emergency Management Systems: Masking Gaps in Civil Society . Improving Operational Effectiveness Across Canada’s EM Ecosystem
Disrupting a Culture to Improve Canada’s Resilience

Beyond Catching Up: A Radical Shift in Disaster Response

Centre for Historical Analysis and Conflict Research ("British Army’s think tank ") Digest #28 February 1, 2024

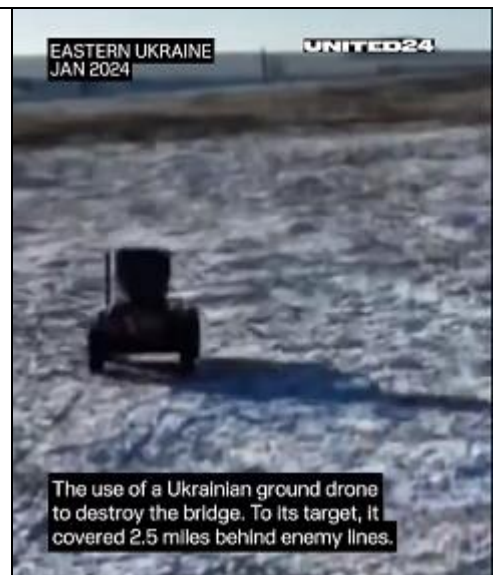
<https://chacr.org.uk/2024/02/01/chacr-digest-28/#>

Drones

Defense of Ukraine @DefenceU 31 Jan posted (video: <https://twitter.com/DefenceU/status/1752757637996019995>):

Ukrainian drones are attacking from the air, sea, and on land. 📺: @United24media

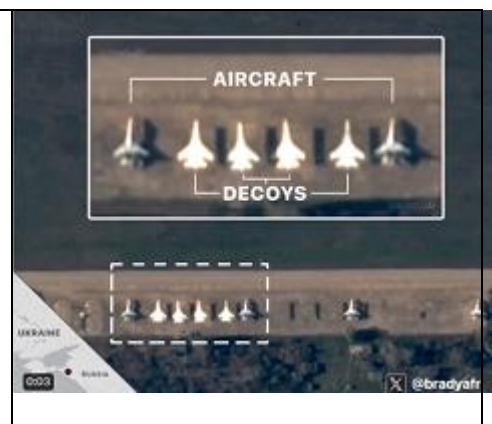
You see some object less high than a person trundling towards you – run!



Decoys

Brady Africk @bradyafr 28 Jan posted (video: <https://twitter.com/bradyafr/status/1751707971489526177>): Another set of Russian decoy aircraft were created at Krymsk air base last year. Just like those at Russia's Yeysk, Mozdok, and Engels-2 air bases, these decoys don't cast shadows or change locations.

Paint job stands out, too.



More Decoys

Ukraine's Air Defense Decoys Keep Getting Better

<https://www.twz.com/land/ukraines-air-defense-decoys-keep-getting-better>

OSINTtechnical on X 31 Jan: "Ukrainian forces continue to field incredibly realistic decoys, seen here, a fully mechanically functional fake AN/MPQ-64 Sentinel radar system.



WarTranslated (Dmitri) @wartranslated 31 Jan posted: Ukrainian decoy IRIS-T system with AN/MPQ-64 Sentinel radar system, obviously of very high quality. It is suspected that one of these decoys was destroyed by a Russian strike in Kharkiv Oblast. The system was placed right in the middle of a known air defence base which may confirm it was a decoy.



Cool, an audio decoy

Think Defence @thinkdefence 6 Feb posted: Defence Concepts Engineering (DCE) X Series UGV with Vitavox speaker system. This was tested to create decoy audio signatures and sensor support for armoured vehicles. Neat I thought

<https://dconcepts.co.uk/products/x-series>

(DCE's X Series is a range of high capability, affordable, tracked all-terrain unmanned ground vehicles)

Drones for IO activities.



Imagery

Capt(N) @Capt_Navy 28 Jan postd:
#War #RedSea French Navy show the
aftermath of a Ansar Allah missile
strike on the British tanker Marlin
Luanda. Epic photo!

Great shots for warfare lectures.



Security Affairs Committee Synopsis 2 February

O Canada

The Nova Scotia Inquiry final report into the Lionel Desmond shootings in Big Upper Tracadie, Nova Scotia, were announced 31 January. Cpl Desmond did two tours in Afghanistan and suffered from PTSD. He was caught in the usual problem of moving from the federal system to a provincial system that really doesn't have the ability to deal with a complex problem caused by the result of being involved in combat. Prior to Medicare, the federal government maintained a large relatively well equipped system of hospitals and clinics specially established to deal with mentally or physically injured soldiers. With the arrival of a national the Medicare program and over time, this system was closed. It was also premised on the idea that Canada would not be involved in any more wars and therefore the new universal system would be available to all. The provinces are given a sum of money to deal with soldiers who used to have a separate system. There are massive gaps in retirement until one gets appropriate care. The Department of Veterans Affairs has no idea how many actual veterans there are but they acknowledge around 600k; many folks have fallen by the wayside. The federal government is the organization that is responsible for service members and RCMP personnel who have been injured physically or mentally on behalf of the federal government yet they have essentially washed their hands of this responsibility. No soldier should leave the service without access to medical care immediately after release and there should be follow up to those who served in operational zones such as Bosnia, Haiti, Croatia, El Salvador, Cambodia, the Middle East and many other conflict areas. This continues to be a disgrace and it is actually surprising that this type of issue like Cpl Desmond doesn't happen more often.

The foreign interference inquiry started 29 January 2024 under Quebec Justice Marie Josee Hogue. Madame Justice is not experienced in security and intelligence. These first hearings will hear from 10 expert witnesses such as the head of CSIS. Her initial efforts were somewhat problematic in that she is giving standing to the Government but not to Opposition parties. The current government is allegedly the beneficiary of Chinese interference and therefore are part of the problem as they took no action when these allegations were brought up. It should be

noted that Canadian security and intelligence organizations have reported these issues to several governments going back as far as the Mulroney government. Three of the people with standing have known pro-Beijing stances in world affairs thus causing many organizations impacted by Chinese interference to not participate. There is also the effort by the government to bring the Indian interference into play despite the much larger effort by the Chinese. One wonders if this inquiry will be effective and allow for a proper hearing. Given Justice Hogue's initial direction, I suspect not but it did delay things and take the heat off the government.

CBC's Rosie Barton interviewed the outgoing Prime Minister's Advisor on Security and Intelligence, Jody Thomas, the weekend in January. It was interesting and showed the need for an actual security expert and an intelligence expert and perhaps a National Security advisor as well as opposed to professional bureaucrats such as former Deputy Minister of Defence Jody Thomas or the incoming replacement Nathalie Drouin. Both have given good service in their areas of expertise and experience, however, neither was especially experienced in the actual nature of the task although both would have had some experience with both security and intelligence. Despite this comment, it also requires politicians who listen and understand the situation and the implications of security and intelligence issues as well or one might be better off talking to the walls. Certainly the situation in the world seems to have not been clear to the current government nor the dangers to Canadian sovereignty. One wonders where this might end.

Canadian European allies, especially those in the east of the continent, are rearming as fast as they can. Many have restarted armament industries to produce new logistics vehicles, artillery, tanks, drones, aircraft, ships, submarines and of course ammunition of all types as quickly as possible short of war itself. Russia has made it quite clear that success in Ukraine is not the end and has also made threats towards the Arctic. Canada snoozes. There is no checking of industry, the supplementary holding list, revising and updating lists of key facilities and enterprises needing protection, pushing for the speeding up of recruiting, ensuring higher levels of maintenance of existing equipment, how much of recently retired equipment is serviceable and could be used if necessary or how long it might take to bring it up to an operational standard. One wonders what is going on inside the government.

Speaking of procurement, every government seems to buy fewer and fewer pieces of equipment for the military. For example, there are the anti-submarine helicopters. The original Sea King buy was for 43 aircraft built by United Aircraft of Montreal - we still had 27 at the end of their service. The new Cyclones are decades late and are still not completely operational and only 28 were purchased and we have lost one. Keep in mind the Royal Canadian Naval Air Service had several other helicopter types as well so over 60 helicopters for utility and transport in the 1960s, and that is just one of many gradual declines in equipment numbers. The Royal Canadian Air Force had three types of fighter aircraft plus electronic warfare aircraft including the CF-104 Starfighter (nuclear delivery and recce), the CF-101 Voodoo (interceptor), the CF-5 Freedom fighter (ground attack and advanced training) and the CF-100 Canuck (electronic warfare). In total more than 350 combat aircraft, not counting the RCAF's long range anti-submarine component. We originally replaced all these fleets with 138 CF-188 based on the F/A-18A and B models. We have lost many, some to crashes, some to wear and tear, but we purchased 25 ex-Australian aircraft to bring the

operational number up to 96, apparently in the latest figure available. Now we are about to start receiving 88 F-35 Lightning aircraft. Keep in mind it was assessed that Canada needed 66 aircraft just to do air defence, so how are we now able to do all the other jobs required by a fighter aircraft and Canadian defence policy? Numbers count and having just enough is not enough and just-in-time delivery is too late. War stocks and redundancies are vital and we have nothing and, as we are seeing in Ukraine, numbers count.

United States

The US is now facing a large number of interlocking international problems and conflict areas sponsored in many cases by Russia and its allies. It has not been helped as many Western democracies have allowed their fleets to dwindle, such as Canada's naval fleet now down to maybe six effective fighting ships on a good day. Several countries simply do not wish to cooperate with the US as well because of the US support of Israel, fearing a backlash from their own citizens. The US persists in doing the right thing and trying to maintain the Red Sea route for global commerce. At some point, the US may be forced to withdraw due to potential political issues at home. Cooperation now will allow for an alternate force to be available. Time will tell if this becomes a problem that will endanger world trade more significantly. The US needs support of allies now or it may be the allies on their own in the future.

Australia

Our Australian correspondent sends links to key articles of interest of this area of the world. It is clear that Australia and not Canada is considered the bigger dog in the "five eyes" community. The issues that the Australians face are similar to our own issues in Canada but Australia is effective and Canada wanders about aimlessly by comparison. Still, enjoy the articles from down under.

<https://asiatimes.com/2024/01/aucus-racing-to-get-nuclear-subs-up-to-speed/>

Reality is setting in. The project is huge and very complicated.

<https://venturaapdr.partica.online/apdr/apdr-dec-jan-2024/news/australia-announces-shipbuilding-deal-with-austal>

Good news for this part of Australia and the RAN. Coastal defence is a navy task that has been practiced for years.

<https://venturaapdr.partica.online/apdr/apdr-dec-jan-2024/features/the-future-of-the-rnzn-how-can-it-recover-lost-capabilities>

The RNZN is in worse shape than the RCN.

<https://venturaapdr.partica.online/apdr/apdr-dec-jan-2024/regulars/disconnect-between-defence-policy-amp-budget>

The article reveals some real concerns about the viability of the ADF plans for the future. The ADF has a shortage of people and new recruits like the CAF. The Australian federal government has a better understanding of defence than the Canadian government, however, there are still real challenges to be overcome in the implementation of capability plans.

<https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/why-australia-should-work-with-india-on-a-maritime-strategic-fleet/>

An interesting article and proposal for Australia to access the Indian merchant fleet in times of crisis. Clearly, there is thinking about preparedness in the Indo-Pacific area.

<https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/its-time-to-talk-navy-workforce/>

The RAN and RCN are in similar situations. The threat of war is increasing in Asia, as is evidenced in the article. No country with a Pacific waterfront will be exempt. Canadians need to be aware of this.

<https://asiapacificdefencereporter.com/new-undersea-project-to-help-ran-surveillance/>

More Australian effort in defence of their AOR.

Moldova

Canada's Foreign Minister, Melanie Jolie, visited both Moldova and Poland from 29 January to 2 February 2024 for discussions on the Russia-Ukraine War and Russian interference, especially in Moldova. Minister Jolie met with high level officials including Maia Sandu and PM Recean and their Foreign Minister. The purpose, according to an official web site, is: Minister Joly will reaffirm Canada's support for Moldova's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and for their fight to combat Russian efforts to undermine their democracy through the weaponization of disinformation. Canada is providing 2m CAD to European efforts to thwart Russian disinformation and to enhance Moldovan security. Canada will look at further sanctions as well. Minister Jolie will also met with her Polish counterpart to discuss further mutual actions in regard to Ukraine support.

Belarus

The Belarus authorities are continuing their sweep of dissidents throughout Belarus. This recent period saw 159 citizens swept up. Belarus has arrested more than 35k citizens since 2020 election demonstrations. Using video and other means authorities are able to identify individuals who participated in anti-regime actions, thus over time are able to arrest individuals arbitrarily long after the events. It is the randomness of these arrests which provide the effective terror required to keep the regime in power. Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya attended Davos Economic Forum to discuss the current situation.

President Putin and self-proclaimed President Lukashenko met to create conditions and opportunities for greater union of the two countries. As part of the conversation they expressed the desire to include more countries in such a union, especially former Soviet republics. This being said, Lukashenko has been very careful about too much union with Russia thus avoiding active participation in the Russia-Ukraine war. One has to admire his skill so far, but his time to prevent a closer union may be increasingly limited.

Russia-Ukraine War

The war continues with heavy losses on both sides. More than 380k Russians have been killed, along with approximately 80k Ukrainians, and one can double or triple those figures for

wounded. A budget request for Russian soldier estates was for over 300k. Equipment losses for both sides is equally devastating with Russia losing three to four times more than Ukraine. The difference is Russia can afford these losses and make up using older equipment from storage. Russia has now incorporated a considerable portion of Russian industry to war footing, thus tank production is over 100 new tanks per month plus tanks taken from storage which means in the case of tanks at least they are able to sustain current losses. They have similarly been able to maintain missile production for attack and air defence. Ukraine is currently trying to figure out whether the allies are going to fulfill their promises and in the case of the US whether any further funding will come at all. In the long term, this will be highly detrimental to Ukraine.

A prisoner exchange occurred with 207 Ukrainians and 195 prisoners being exchanged in total. None of the exchanged were from the list of prisoners thought to have been on board a Russian transport flying into Belgorod last week. The Belgorod morgue allegedly only has five bodies which may correspond to the crew. It is generally accepted that the aircraft was shot down on approach to Belgorod and that no warning was given to Ukraine about prisoners prior to the incident. Putin said in a media interview that the higher Ukrainian number of prisoners is because Russia has thousands of Ukrainian prisoners while Ukraine only has a few dozen. One suspects this might be a bit of disinformation; what a surprise.

Russia is in the middle of an offensive along most of the front, and they have achieved small and continuous gains as a result although at a heavy cost in vehicles and troops. As an infantry officer, it appalled me to watch dismounted infantry in the assault with limited or no fire support with whole platoons worth of troops being eliminated with one or two rounds of cluster munitions. This being said, Russia has also stepped up its drone production, Ukrainian analysis indicates Russia is aiming at entrenched positions vice vehicles which is the Ukrainian target of choice. Larger drones continue to be civilian targets for Russia with 330 missiles and 600+ drones being fired at Ukrainian civilian targets since the start of the year. Ukraine has fired far fewer but at military or key industries in Russia such as recent long range attacks against oil terminals near St Petersburg. It is an interesting difference.

Russia has seen the movement of thousands of young men out of the country especially from the LGBTQ+ community that is essentially outlawed in Russia. They are considered extremists. Russia is expected to announce further mobilization after the presidential election Ukraine is also on the verge of a new mobilization due to losses, also expected to be approved by the Rada within the next two months. Ukraine is also seeing a move of young men leaving Ukraine before this is approved. Moldova has seen a steady stream of men entering the country, usually on false documents. Up to 11k in recent months. Both sides have manpower problems which are likely to continue for the foreseeable future. A long war would favour Russia.

The real issue for the West is whether we will just give enough for Ukraine to maintain the status quo or will Western allies finally give the equipment, training and long range ammunition to win and most importantly, make the win decisive and ensuring all authoritarian regimes that negative actions on their part will result in extremely negative results from the liberal democracies? Half-hearted approaches will not work and so it is vital that Ukraine

receive every possible assistance to ensure this victory. The alternative is that it will be our soldiers fighting the Russians instead.

China

The Communist Chinese Party (CCP) invaded Tibet and East Turkistan in 1950. Both these countries were independent until that time just as Taiwan is independent now but free. The CCP is an imperialist authoritarian organization that has occupied these countries since that time and has murdered by their own accounts nearly 100m of their own people mainly due to incompetence. On 4 June 1989, pro-democracy students were attacked on Tiananmen Square in Beijing and a large but unknown number of students and onlookers were killed by the Peoples' Liberation Army, the Army of the Party not the country. In 1997, the British handed Hong Kong over to the Peoples' Republic of China on the agreement that there would be no changes in Hong Kong for 50 years. The CCP has not honoured that agreement and have advanced draconian legislation known as security laws to stamp out the pro-democracy movement in Hong Kong. Although, demonstrations are few and far between now and there is a "peaceful and stable" environment, the result is that the CCP has essentially killed the goose that laid the golden egg as more foreign businesses and local business move to safer areas, principally Singapore. Hong Kong is no longer the economic hub it was but is now just simply another Chinese city. Hong Kong's loss as an economic hub will be the sad legacy of the CCP. Their desire to control will be their downfall. The role of the government was to ensure economic prosperity for the people and they in turn would give loyalty to the Party. The economic downturn as a result of CCP incompetence may finally be the straw that breaks the back. Taiwan will never voluntarily submit to the CCP specially after watching Hong Kong's slow death under the CCP.

Evergrande, the largest property development firm, has been placed under bankruptcy protection but judge has ordered its liquidation as a company. The sale of its assets are expected to recover pennies on the dollar, and most homeowners who invested are likely to get nothing. It is a significant loss to the economy. It is likely just the start of a cascade of bankruptcies within the property management and banking communities, both conventional and shadow banks. Other property developers are expected to also be liquidated in the following weeks with the ongoing effects on the banks themselves depending on their exposure to the property sector. Chinese authorities have been warned for some time that economic reform and the need for transparency would be necessary for economic health. This has been ignored in favour of retaining and acquiring more control over the economy. A major economic down turn would place considerable stress on the population particularly when bankruptcies are increasing and unemployment of the young is equally bad. There is no formal opposition to the CCP but the current economic climate may give rise to faction leaders within the politburo of the CCP. There may be internal factions within the CCP structure to lead to a factional opposition within the inner layers of the CCP itself. It makes one wonder whether President Xi will survive as leader in his third term - there are cracks

China has returned to harassing Taiwan by arbitrarily redrawing the mid-line in the Taiwan Straits even as they carried out overflights of the strait. The Chinese Coast Gard also stated that the South China Sea (SCS) belongs to China even as the Philippines and Vietnam agree to

cooperate in the SCS this week. The Philippines was finally able to resupply the *Sierra Madre*, a landing ship tank run onto Mischief Reef to ensure the Philippine claim to its Exclusive Economic Zone. China simply stated that it allowed the resupply - one suspects the local Chinese Coast Guard commander had a very bad day.

Iran

Iran controls a number of proxies in the Middle East including Hamas, Hezbollah, the Houthis, and elements in Syria and Iraq. Most of these have been activated in some manner and have conducted operations in the area. One of these operations actually killed and wounded US service personnel with three members of the Georgia National Guard being killed. The US President, Joe Biden, has vowed retaliation in the area including Iran no longer being off limits. It should be an interesting time.

Iran is playing with fire in regard to Israel. An article recently on the Israeli Defence Forces was concerned that Iran's actions through its proxies may have reawakened the Israeli concept of the Masada complex. Masada refers to the Jewish fortress that fell to the Romans in the Jewish Wars. The garrison chose to commit suicide rather than be taken. Israeli armour corps graduates swear that Masada shall not fall again in an impressive ceremony at Masada itself at night by torch light. It is a moving ceremony and it should scare everyone who understands the issue. Israel is the ancestral home of the Jewish people dispersed after the Roman Jewish Wars around 70 CE. Israel is armed, it has ballistic missiles that work and submarines capable of launching nuclear weapons and there has been ignited something primal. It will not go well for anyone.

Security Affairs Committee Synopsis 9 February

O Canada

Canadians are used to the idea that we live in a fire proof house* despite this not having been true for decades. We now have a very real threat to our sovereignty in the north and have had air, ballistic missile and cruise missile threats as well as actual incursions by ships of adversaries such as Russia and China. We also have an internal security threat such as we have seen developed with both an independent Khalistan movement and a pro-Palestine movement that routinely shows an anti-Semitic streak of a large size. Communist Chinese Party (CCP) influence on our election is finally being looked at by a national inquiry. It is severely restricted, one might say crippled, by the decisions of Justice Hogue, who seeks take out politics from a very political problem. Most importantly cabinet documents may not be prevented from being scrutinized by the use of Cabinet Confidentiality. Canada is under threat and Canadian media and government seem to be purposely ignoring this problem.

As we have stated before, Canada has yet to properly examine and publish what are our national interests as a country. The preposterous idea of being a post-national country needs to be buried as soon as possible and that we once again be proud of our history which in general has been a positive influence in the world, not perfect but a lot less negative than currently portrayed at present. Understanding what are our key issues allow us to create

national policies on security, foreign affairs and defence amongst others. At present, decisions seem to be more reactionary rather than well thought out and planned programs. The basic back bone of our national policies is missing. This hard work needs to be done as soon as possible if we are to ensuring Canadians understand, the safety of the past is no longer there. Our "insurance policies" need to be upgraded in a cooperative venture with our allies. As a country, we have work to do.

Now some positive news for a change courtesy of our Ottawa correspondent (actually he provides a lot more than just this). Canada is in the process of acquiring more than 140 aircraft for the RCAF including 88 F-35 Lightning, 16 P-8 Poseidon, nine Huskey air to air refueler/transport, 11 MQ-9B Remotely Piloted Air Vehicles, 16 CC-295 Kingfisher SAR aircraft as well as vast improvements in the North Warning System. This is a good start but the navy and army are left far behind. The army is tasked with providing a brigade structure for our contribution to NATO's Baltic flank in Latvia. It will eventually be approximately 2200 Canadian soldiers but is something the army appears to be having difficulties providing. It is a mere fraction of our original NATO contribution. We used to call this type of operation, "Hong Kong troops" after the historical fight in the former British colony which ended on Christmas Day 1941. The Canadian commander, Brigadier John Lawson, died with pistols in both hands fighting as his headquarters were over run. The British Commander, MGen Maltby, bravely surrendered and blamed colonial troops for the fall - he had the advantage of surviving and thus being able to write the "history."

Canada used to have a ten thousand man air and land contribution in Germany. Later in the 1970s this was down sized under Pierre Trudeau to 5400 troops in southern German. Canada regained its status as a real partner in the 1980s when it provided to Allied Command Europe's Land rapid reaction force a full battle group of 1200 soldiers and the Canadian Air Sea Transportable (CAST) Brigade Group based on 5 BGC from Valcartier, as well as air and aviation resources both destined for northern locations. This was consolidated after 1986 to a division-sized contribution to Central Europe where both 4 and 5 Brigades created the basis for 1 Canadian Division, whilst the air wing in Europe was retained.

The navy consisted of 23 destroyers and frigates, three operational support vessels, three submarines, a diving support ship and auxiliaries. These were old by the 1980s and needed replacement. The newest ships, the Iroquois-class destroyers, were modified for air defence and retained; the older steamers were supposed to be replaced by eighteen Halifax-class frigates but the third acquisition of six was never contracted. The three operational support vessels were also old; a replacement program for three vessels was requested but the price tag for three ships to be built in Canadian yards became too expensive and the program was cancelled and then re-established for two Joint Support Ship project vessels. Four Upholder-class submarines were acquired for the Navy in the late 1990s but these vessels had been in storage too long and required extensive modernization and "Canadianization." This caused massive delays and the outcome was never satisfactory but it did allow Canada to remain in an essential information program, that of the submarine community. Canada also acquired 12 Kingston-class patrol vessels in the 1990s. The problem now is that all of these vessels are old or already gone. Some programs such as the Harry DeWolf-class Arctic and Offshore Patrol Vessels are now well underway but are much delayed. The first JSS project vessel is nearing

completion but is still not ready, and no Canadian Surface Combatant project ship has even had metal cut, unlike the British or Australian navies. Britain will receive its first ships this year. Canada is very far behind. Submarine and Kingston-class replacement programs are now started. The problem is that most all of these programs announced are far off and the price continues to climb and therefore they become a political football. Given the world situation, we are in very poor shape.

Canadian youth of today are no worse than any other generation, many are eager to join but try to find a recruiting centre. Where are the recruiting teams out in public, where is the vast campaign program to help those interested in joining? They are invisible. The recruiting system itself is built for failure with single points of failure and ineffective interactive programs to get people in quickly and easily. Too much time is spent on getting people in the right occupation mainly by a barrage of tests which is not useful at this time. Getting people in the door is the essential part, at one point the Canadian Armed Forces took in between 14 and 20 thousand a year, now we struggle to bring in seven or eight thousand. Open the doors, get rid of unnecessary impediments and train people, get rid of choke points, select the service but worry about the selected occupation later, even some who don't do well on the tests do well in a disciplined environment. I would include myself in that as an example. Starting as a private, sailor or aviator, one doesn't stay one and yes they may change their mind in regard to an occupation or even continued service but they are generally a better citizen one way or another. We have to recruit, train and move like we need to, in order to meet the coming challenge. Canada is asleep to the situation, we have to wake up and prepare.

This week saw the Prime Minister's Office found to have invited Mr Hunka, the soldier who was part of the Nazi 14th SS Division fighting in the Soviet Union to a reception for the Ukrainian President. The Speaker of the House was forced to resign when he sponsored Mr Hunka's attendance in Parliament. Now the Prime Minister's own office appears to have done the same thing during the same time period. One wonders what will happen as a result and who will take the fall

The Foreign Interference Inquiry is taking place under increasing criticism of Justice Hogue's political naivety in her decisions by giving the Government standing while not doing so to the official opposition. This is especially important when the current government was allegedly the chief benefactor to Chinese interference. It seems unlikely that there will be an unambiguous answer to the question of foreign interference.

The former RCMP Intelligence Officer Cameron Ortis has been sentenced to 14 years for his actions and betrayal of our country. One might think this is a bit low for the potential damage and lives he put at stake.

United States

The US has yet to pass a new bill that provides coverage and support to Israel and Ukraine as well as border security. The Speaker of the House, Mike Johnson, has said the negotiated bill passed in the Senate is dead on arrival in the House of Representatives. It is concerning for all the democratic world.

The US and UK continue to pound Houthis targets in Yemen and the US has hit a large number of targets in both Iraq and Syria in response to a Iranian proxy hitting a US base in Jordan, killing three Georgia National Guardsmen and wounding over 30 more. The US has vowed to continue these strikes at a time and place of US choosing. This is not over. Carrier aircraft were used by the US in Yemen but B-1B bombers were used in Iraq and Syria. This program is continuing. The US, UK and others continue to escort merchant ships proceeding through the Red Sea.

Moldova

Opposition parties have stepped up claims that Moldova is losing more by ignoring or turning their back on the Commonwealth of Independent States, a Russian-run organization composed of former Soviet Republics. At the same time, Moldova's economy is doing better with EU assistance, allowing them to cut the national interest rate to 4.25 %. Moldova's increasing links to the West have greatly improved its outlook but this has not stopped pro-Russian parties from trying to state otherwise.

Belarus

The self-proclaimed President of Belarus has signed a decree allowing the military to fire on civilians this week. Belarus has a large partisan movement creating difficulties for Russian troops stationed on Belarus territory. Given his "popularity" one can understand why he might want to have the public understand the level of terror he is willing to apply.

Belarus is attempting to find other markets and allies to make up for the cold-shoulder from its European neighbours. Belarus is spending considerable effort in China, Africa and Central Asia with some success but one has to wonder whether this will be a success in the longer term. Belarus is landlocked and its economy is poor and linked to Russia. It has been sanctioned by Western countries.

Hungary

The government of Victor Orban continues to be obstructive to both the EU and NATO. The EU have finally passed legislation providing more than 50b Euros to Ukraine this year. Orban's own Party "Fidesz" (Alliance of Young Democrats) has been boycotting the Hungarian parliament thus blocking Sweden's ascension to NATO. Prime Minister Orban considers his party's policies to represent illiberal Christian Democrats especially in regard to immigration. He has generally eroded individual rights and press freedom overall which has caused concern across Europe because of the gradual move away from democratic norms. In 2019, Hungary fell from free to partly free because it has systematically been destroying the basic institutions of democracy during Orban's tenure. This is unlikely to change in the near term. It has caused Hungary to lose out on extra funding from the EU. He is generally considered to be the most pro-Putin of European leaders.

Israel-Hamas War

The war is continuing on day 124, as of 7 February 2024. Hamas has made an offer to the US through intermediaries, offering a phased approach to a longer term ceasefire. Israel has

refused these conditions and stated that it will continue the war until Hamas is destroyed. Israel has also stated that UNRWA will have to be dismantled because of its ongoing role in supporting Hamas operations. Other Iranian proxy forces including Hezbollah and the Houthis in the Middle East have been somewhat active. These actions are likely to continue for the foreseeable future.

Russia-Ukraine War

The war continues on day 714 of the second phase of the war started on 24 February 2022. The actual war has been fought since 2014. It is now a race against time and who can get resources to the front as quickly as possible. At the moment it is Russia with vast quantities of resources in particular ammunition being supplied by North Korea, Iran and China. China is very careful not to overstep but only very recently has China offered visible support to Russia's efforts. Ukraine is stymied mainly in how long it takes the liberal democracies to gear up their armament industries which has been slow. The biggest issue is the apparent political play within the US Congress which not only puts Ukraine at stake but also could become an existential problem for the liberal democracies if the Axis of Evil is successful in getting the right material in sufficient quantities to the forward positions. Even now, Ukraine has been forced to reduce the amount of artillery fire to under two thousand rounds per day. Russian gunners are now able to mass large numbers of artillery pieces as a result. It is not good as quantity has its own quality when it comes to artillery fire.

Russia has continued to fire a large number of drones, ballistic missiles and cruise missiles into Ukraine, almost all against civilian targets, causing a steady stream of civilian casualties and damage to civilian infrastructure. Ukraine has returned fire but has chosen to conduct a more strategic campaign against military targets such as Belbek Airfield in Crimea, oil production and export facilities in St Petersburg, or recently a missile production facility called Votkinsk in the city of Izhevsk in western Russia. Russia's ability to produce oil has been reduced by 10% and the attack on the missile plant will have an effect on the production of the Topol M and Iskander missiles. Bomb damage assessment has not been completed or made available to the public on the latest attack.

Most recently, Russia has been using mainly infantry attacks near Avdiivka with some success including closing Ukraine's main supply route for Ukrainian forces. As Ukraine loses artillery support they are increasingly using drones to compensate with considerable success against vehicles, but Russia is also ramping up its own production of drones which should outpace Ukraine's ability. As a result Ukraine will be forced to trade space for time and hope that saner minds will understand that a Ukrainian defeat will mean Western democracies will be increasingly at risk to aggression from the Axis of Evil. It then becomes an absolute necessity to deal with the problem. Ukraine can shatter Russian and therefore Axis of Evil moves but stopping Ukraine from defending itself means sooner or later the Western democracies will have to fight. Time and effort is necessary. As the old commercial said about maintenance but could be used now: "You can pay now or pay a lot more later."

The loss of an A-50 early warning aircraft is perhaps of greater importance than initially anticipated. Only 15 were built and only about eight are still serviceable at the time this last

one was shot down. Normal maintenance, training requirements, crew replacements and wear and tear may have cut the ready available fleet down to as low as three aircraft. Another A-50 has been sent and is operating within Russian borders but this is a loss of range for their on-board systems. Overall it is a greater loss to Russia if it has further ambitions of land grabs. Russia seems to be incapable of replacing many of its aircraft types due to their reliance on Western-made parts. This has affected the production of all types of combat and combat support aircraft to relatively small numbers. This will have an effect on Russia's ability to threaten Europe overall.

China

China's economy has taken a very distinct decline caused by high unemployment, a lack of domestic demand, failures in the property development sectors, loss of investor confidence mainly caused by CCP interference in the economy allegedly for security issues, changes to global demand and changes to the global supply chain system. Chinese stock markets have lost more than 7t USD in market value since 2021. This is no sign of changing in the near future. Most importantly, governments at all levels have borrowed extensively and the national debt is now estimated at being over 300% of GDP. Even Chinese money is flowing out rapidly in hopes of avoiding US sanctions and CCP regulations. Singapore and Vietnam have both been the recipients of this outflow from China. It is now generally accepted that Singapore has surpassed Hong Kong as the key banking area for banking in South East Asia. The CCP have essentially turned HK into just another Chinese city and have killed the "goose laying the golden eggs."

The CCP is directly responsible for this down turn and as the single point of failure, Xi is the increasingly the focus of blame for this decline. It is his ongoing effort to retain the CCP as the prime controller of all things Chinese, and therefore private equity firms constitute a major competitor to the CCP. Due to CCP efforts the economy has chosen to tighten regulations that directly affect Chinese private enterprises and foreign firms. It is an ongoing recipe for disaster.

Xi has been actively purging both the military and the Party and placing his own people in key positions such as most recently the Ministers of Defence, Navy and Strategic Rocket Forces. It is suggested that the levels below are officers appointed by previous factions who may not be as loyal. Corruption is widespread throughout the Peoples' Liberation Army (PLA), most recently new missile silos were found to be defective and unable to open in all cases. New carrier aircraft also are another source of concern as aircraft recovery systems on the new aircraft carrier fleet tend to overstress the aircraft and apparently in some cases effectively destroy the aircraft simply when landing. While China makes a great show around Taiwan and the Philippines, it is increasingly clear they are not really ready for significant long term force projection operations. It is therefore likely that China may threaten but may not have the wherewithal to conquer Taiwan by 2027. Although Taiwan is smaller, it has massive numbers of reservists and China does not have the troop strength to deal with these numbers.

On a funnier note, last week the PLA made incursions into areas of Ladakh considered to be Indian territory. Appropriate Indian forces were sent in the form of shepherds and sheep...the

Chinese lost as the shepherds said this is their tribal lands and the PLA bravely retreated. Well done the 1st Indian Sheep Regiment (okay, a poor joke). China has continued harassment of the Philippines and Taiwan, ramping up naval and coast guard operations in those areas. Neither the Philippines nor Taiwan, either with US support, appears to be backing down.

**Editor:* for historical context of the author's comment about 'fire-proof house':

The heavy sacrifices to which we agreed for the re-establishment of peace in Europe led us to reflect on what the future might hold in store.

May I be permitted to add that in this association of mutual insurance against fire the risks assumed by the different states are not equal? We live in a fire-proof house, far from inflammable materials. A vast ocean separates us from Europe.

Senator Raoul Dandurand

Address to the League of Nations, 2 October 1924.'

Membership Renewal

Dear RUSI(NS) Members,

We trust this message finds you well. As we move forward into 2024, it's time to renew our commitment and continue our valuable contribution to the Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia. Before we detail the membership fee structure and payment methods, it's crucial for all members to note an important update regarding the renewal process.

Online Membership Renewal Form - Mandatory for All Members: This year, we are streamlining our membership renewal process. It is mandatory for all members, without exception, to complete the online Membership Renewal Form available on our website. This step ensures that our records are accurate and up-to-date, allowing us to serve you better and keep you informed about upcoming events and initiatives. To complete your Membership Renewal Form, please visit: <https://rusi-ns.ca/membership/>

After completing the online form, you can proceed with the membership fee payment. Here are the details for your 2024 membership renewal:

1. Membership Fee for 2024: We continue to maintain the membership fee at a modest amount of \$25.00 CAD. Recognizing the diverse preferences of our members, we offer multiple payment methods:

a) Credit Card Payment: Choose this option on the membership renewal webform to pay by credit card. A small processing fee of \$1.25 will be added. You will be redirected to our secure payment portal to finalize your transaction.

b) Electronic Money Transfer (EMT): For EMT payments, kindly send \$25.00 to RUSINovascotia@gmail.com. This process is seamless and does not require a password. Post-transfer, ensure to enter your transaction reference number on the membership renewal webform.

c) Cheque: If paying by cheque is your preference, please mail it to the address below after filling out the membership renewal webform:

RUSI(NS)
c/o BOR CFB Halifax
PO Box 99000 Station Forces
Halifax, NS
B3K 5X5
Attn: Treasurer

2. Special Notes:

Life Members: No renewal fee is required. However, you will receive an email shortly to confirm your current contact details.

New Members (Joined after July 31, 2023): Your 2024 membership fee is waived, but you must complete the online renewal form. Select "Electronic Money Transfer" on the form and note "first year member" in the comments.

3. Financial Assistance: We understand that some members may face financial challenges. If you need support with the membership fee, please contact us confidentially at RUSINovaScotia@gmail.com.

4. Donations: Your generosity fuels our initiatives. To make a donation, please visit <https://rusi-ns.ca/donations/>.

5. Important Note on Communication and Receipts:

Our executive team and the entire membership renewal team are dedicated professionals serving full-time in their respective agencies. Due to our commitment to various pressing responsibilities, there might be a slight delay in our email correspondence. We appreciate your understanding and patience in this matter.

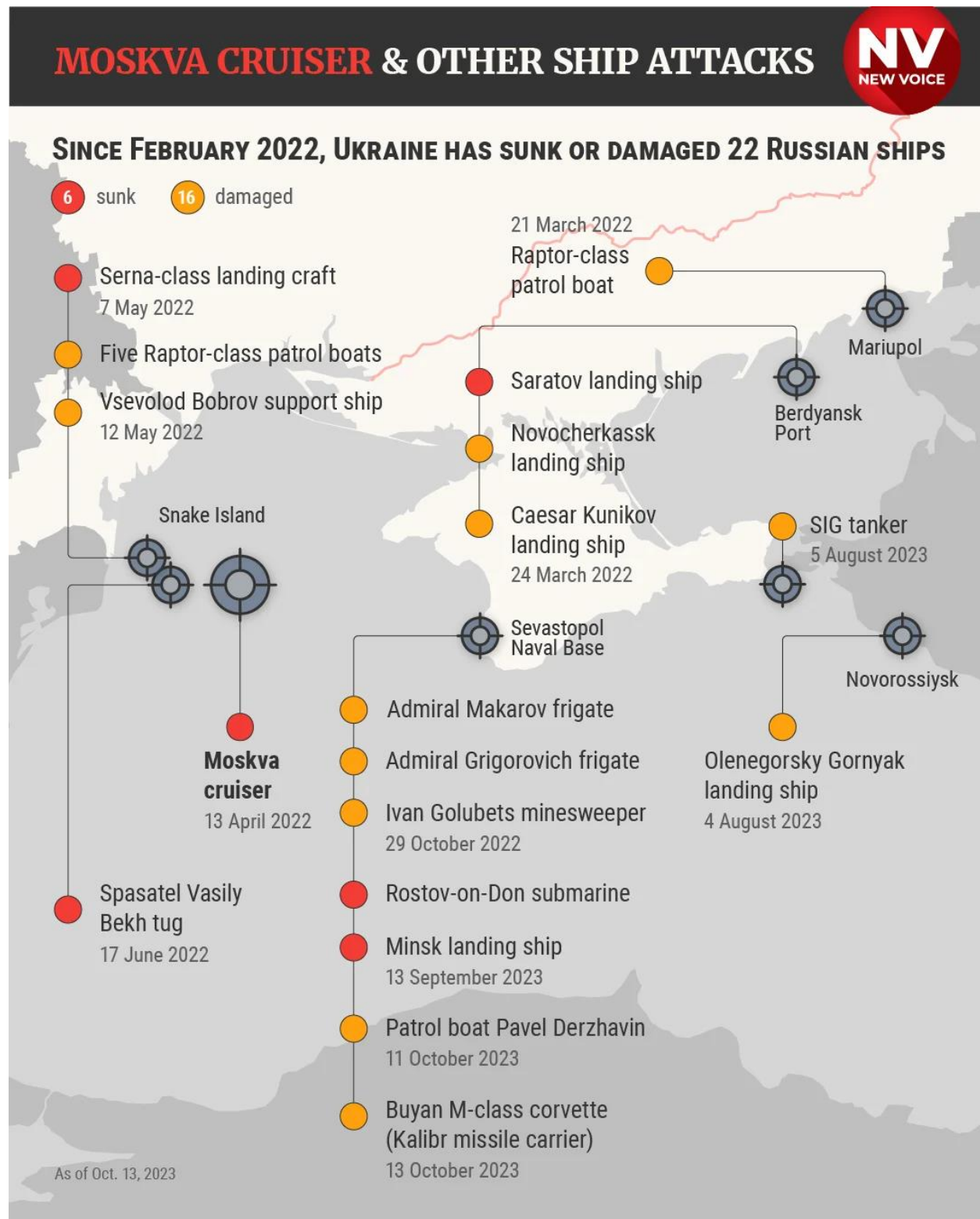
Furthermore, receipts for membership fees will be issued upon request. If you require a receipt, please make sure to email us specifying your need.

For any assistance with the renewal form or payment methods, feel free to reach out to our Treasurer, Deepak Prasad, at RUSINovaScotia@gmail.com.

Thank you for your continued support and active participation. Your engagement is vital to our mission of fostering informed discussions and research on national security and defense.

Warm Regards,
Inspector Blair Bannerman
Secretary
Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia

Another way to depict combat losses



From: Ukraine's Navy commander: Previous methods of attack on Russian Black Sea Fleet may no longer work

<https://news.yahoo.com/ukraine-navy-commander-previous-methods-121500825.html>

Freedom of Navigation

Posted to RUSI(NS) on Facebook:

How much do the restraints on freedom of navigation in the Red Sea, on the safe movement of trade by sea, affect Canada? OSINTer Stef Watkins @steffanwatkins took a look 1 February at MarineTraffic.com and prepared a depiction. Because there are so many merchant ships, he pared down the list to just ships that had broadcast their location in the past day, which were Canadian, and weren't in waters near Canada or the USA. Most of the ships overseas seem to be yachts and there weren't any showing up near Yemen.

Make from this what you will. Still, no matter how much the incidents in the Red Sea seem far from Canada, our security and prosperity are affected. Canada benefits from global maritime trade. We should be prepared to contribute, at least regionally if not globally, to the defence of that.

