



Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia
Dispatches
8 March 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 periodic 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).

RUSI(NS) Annual General Meeting

Members:

The 96th Annual General Meeting of RUSI(NS) has been scheduled for Thursday, March 14th, 2024 from 1900-2000 hrs (7:00 pm - 8:00 pm) via Zoom. Joining instructions have been emailed to members 14 February. An email reminder with an attached agenda will be disseminated in the week preceding the meeting. In accordance with the RUSI(NS) Articles of Association, Article 11 Amendments, please note and find attached to the joining email proposed amendments to be considered at the RUSI(NS) Annual General Meeting 2024.

Hope to see you on the 14th of March.

Stay Safe
Blair Bannerman
Secretary RUSI(NS)

Membership Renewal Reminder

See end of *Dispatches*.

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. Please note that without volunteers for these positions, the activities may be put on hold.

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.

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:

Amended: 20 March, Wednesday – RUSI(NS) Distinguished Speaker RAdm Luciano Carosielli, Commander Cyber Force, the Cyber Force and digital/information management/J6. 1300-1500 Atlantic time. Via Zoom. Registration is required. There is no fee to attend this event. To register, email RUSINovaScotia@gmail.com by close-of-business Sunday, 17 March. As the subject line for your registration email, put: RUSI(NS) Distinguished Speaker 20 March 2024 Registration. In addition to your name, please provide your organization (unit, agency/directorate, association or company). Participation is limited and later registrants may have to be put on a waiting list. If after registering your availability changes and you are no longer able to attend, please advise RUSI(NS) as soon as possible so your spot can be re-assigned.

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/>

Save the date: 29 May, Wednesday - Distinguished Speaker RAdm Kurtz, Commander Maritime Forces Atlantic. 1300-1500. Royal Artillery Park Officers' Mess.

Other Events:

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>

19 March, Tuesday - Georgetown University Wargaming Society presentation "Wargaming at the Peruvian Naval War College." 7-9 pm ADT. Online. To register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/wargaming-at-the-peruvian-naval-war-college-tickets-831096480947>.

2 April, Tuesday - Georgetown University Wargaming Society presentation "Wargaming in the Brazilian Navy." 7-9 pm ADT. Online. To register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/wargaming-in-the-brazilian-navy-tickets-829534378657>.

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>

21 May, Tuesday - Georgetown University Wargaming Society presentation "Simplifying Large Scale Conflicts." 7-9 pm ADT. Online. To register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/simplifying-large-scale-conflicts-tickets-779522571997>.

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

New: RUSI(NS) Paper “The Royal Canadian Air Force Second Century of Operation - The Change to an Expeditionary Air Force – A Concept” by Murray Lee, 7 March 2024, https://rusi-ns.ca/air_expeditionary_wing/

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

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/>

New: Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies – Australia New South Wales Journal *United Service*, March 2024 Vol. 75 No. 1 <https://www.rusinsw.au/Papers/2024AU.pdf>

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 Logician*
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).

"Ottawa's 1980s system of buying weapons is no match for 21st-century warfare: Canada Undefended"
<https://nationalpost.com/news/canada/defence-procurement-no-match-for-modern-warfare> Good analysis of & recommendations to fix 🇨🇦 CAN's defence procurement system. Issue is much bigger than just @NationalDefence & than inadequate funding



Teledyne FLIR @flir SkyRanger R70 #drones from CAN🇨🇦 to UKR🇺🇦 for surveillance & reconnaissance, also can be used to transport & deliver supplies
<https://www.flyingmag.com/canada-to-donate-800-skyranger-r70-drones-to-ukraine/> Two important functions on battlefield, not all #UAS are one-way attack (Canada to Donate 800 SkyRanger R70 Drones to Ukraine)



"Churchill railway, port redevelopment will open new trade routes for shipping minerals, grain globally: mayor"
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/churchill-railway-port-redevelopment-1.7124129> Important, too, for its defence & security logistical significance. Contributes to CAN🇨🇦 #Arctic/Northern sovereignty



"Military Organizational Change and Emerging Technology: Lessons for Canada🇨🇦"
https://www.cgai.ca/military_organizational_change_and_emerging_technology_lessons_for_canada "...militaries now also face a growing need to focus on pan-domain operations which blurs the lines between conflict and peacetime..."



Global National @GlobalNational Feb 25 posted and RUSI(NS) reposted: Canada is facing 'irrelevance' on world stage, ex-defence chief warns

<https://globalnews.ca/news/10310531/rick-hillier-canada-defence-irrelevance/>



National Defence @NationalDefence 28 Feb posted: We're pleased to develop a community resilience, preparedness, and response system with the Miawpukek First Nation in Newfoundland; our first Canadian Safety and Security Program project with an Indigenous lead partner. <https://science.gc.ca/site/science/en/canadian-safety-and-security-program>

(Canadian Safety and Security Program)

RUSI(NS) quoted: CAN Safety & Security Program <https://science.gc.ca/site/science/en/canadian-safety-and-security-program> "federally-funded, supports federal, provincial, territorial, municipal & Indigenous governments in development of innovative science & technology advancements that contribute to safety & security of Canadians"



Murray Brewster @Murray_Brewster 28 Feb posted and RUSI(NS) reposted: Modernizing NORAD and delays in long-promised purchases push cost of Liberal government's defence plan up by \$50B, PBO says (Cost of Liberal government's defence plan has jumped by \$50B, PBO says

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/liberal-defence-spending-pbo-1.7128115>)

Mid-Career Army Officer @MidOfficer 28 Feb reposted and RUSI(NS) reposted: \$12B is inflation on delayed procurements. There is no point in increasing 🇨🇦 defence 💰 without fixing procurement. Want an easy start? Move minor capital project threshold from \$10M to \$100M to reduce red tape, and raise DND authority to spend without PSPC from \$5M to \$100M.



Serendipitous: Widespread reforms to transform delivery of kit to UK's armed forces

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/widespread-reforms-to-transform-delivery-of-kit-to-uks-armed-forces>

Editorial: What is Canada's plan for defence spending? It's time Ottawa provided a clear answer

https://www.thestar.com/opinion/editorials/what-is-canadas-plan-for-defence-spending-its-time-ottawa-provided-a-clear-answer/article_5074e444-d592-11ee-ac68-4f82e8d014b7.html

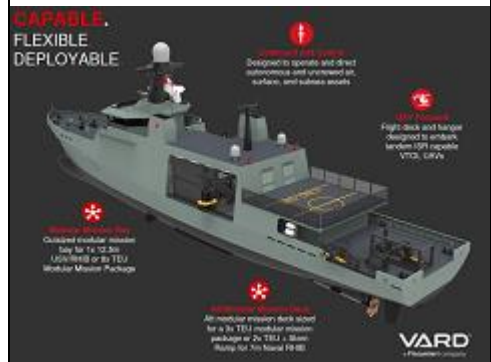
“Canada’s vague talk on defence spending may have placated NATO allies at one point. But not now. It’s time for honest talk from political leaders on a road map to meeting the NATO spending target.”

CDN Defence Academy/L'Académie cdn de la défense @CDACanadaACD 29 Feb posted and RUSI(NS) reposted: This paper, the first in a four part series on #innovation, explores how and why militaries stifle new ideas and consider the pattern of outright rejection of novelty and punishment of unorthodox thinking in war @BZweibelson (Why Do Militaries Stifle New Ideas?) <https://ciasp.scholasticahq.com/article/92958-why-do-militaries-stifle-new-ideas>)



navaltoday @navaltoday Feb 28 posted: Serco gets to work on Canadian Navy’s next-gen offshore patrol vessel <https://www.navaltoday.com/2024/02/28/serco-gets-to-work-on-canadian-navys-next-gen-offshore-patrol-vessel/> #naval #navy #canada

(Serco gets to work on Canadian Navy’s next-gen offshore patrol vessel) RUSI(NS) quoted: Details of Team Vigilance proposal for @RoyalCanNavy Kingston-class ship replacement (may be typed corvette not offshore patrol vessel) at <https://www.teamvigilance.com/>. CAN🇨🇦 needs 2nd tier/rate ships to carry out many roles/missions when major combatant (destroyer, frigate) too much



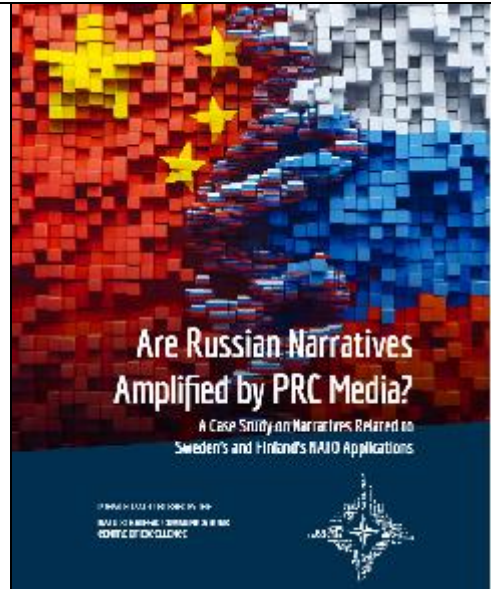
Murray Brewster @Murray_Brewster 7 Mar posted and RUSI(NS) reposted: State of combat readiness in the Canadian military grows worse, internal DND report. #cdnpoli #CAF


<https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/nato-canadian-armed-forces-europe-1.7135390>

"Readiness is all about measuring the ability of your armed forces to do what it is they're expected to do." *Editor:* Ships not sailing and aircraft not flying grabs people's attention, but what really can count is the people in the back rooms (ship designers, aircraft maintainers, procurement specialists) and material in the back warehouses (spares, ammo). Government needs to focus on the foundation.



STRATCOMCOE @STRATCOMCOE 7 Mar posted and RUSI(NS) reposted: **!?** Is Chinese state media amplifying Russian narratives? Our research reveals eye-opening similarities in media tactics of two countries, as well as patterns in spreading disinformation on Ukraine, conspiracy theories about the USA, and more. Read more <https://stratcomcoe.org/publications/are-russian-narratives-amplified-by-prc-media-a-case-study-on-narratives-related-to-swedens-and-finlands-nato-applications/298> (Are Russian Narratives Amplified by PRC Media? A Case Study on Narratives Related to Sweden's and Finland's NATO Applications)



David Pugliese @davidpugliese Mar 1 posted: Boeing has announced that it has received, via the U.S. Navy, a \$3.4 billion (U.S.) contract to begin manufacturing 14 P-8A Poseidon aircraft for the Royal Canadian Air Force and three additional P-8s for the German Navy. RUSI(NS) reposted: Canadian  Multi-Mission Aircraft project <http://dgpaapp.forces.gc.ca/en/defence-capabilities-blueprint/project-details.asp?id=975> to equip @RCAF_ARC with long-range Command, Control, Comms & Computers (C4) & Intelligence, Surveillance & Reconnaissance (ISR) & Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) a/c with extended capabilities to replace CP-140 Aurora



"Canada takes delivery of new King Air 350ER-based surveillance aircraft" <https://www.flightglobal.com/fixed-wing/canada-takes-delivery-of-new-king-air-350er-based-surveillance-aircraft/157263.article> @RCAF_ARC type CE-145C name Vigilance. Via Manned Airborne Intelligence, Surveillance & Reconnaissance MAISR project <https://www.tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca/app-acq/amd-dp/air/snac-nfps/renseignement-airborne-eng.html>



“Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia” on Facebook

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Canadian Coast Guard Awards Contract for Icebreaker Life Extension

<https://www.marinelink.com/news/canadian-coast-guard-awards-contract-511698>

"...the importance of its expertise in maintaining the Canadian Coast Guard fleet..."



Developing and retaining a Canadian capability to maintain ships, not just build them, is an important part of the National Shipbuilding Strategy and an important strategic capability. Useful, too, for 'battle damage repair' if/when it comes to that.

How world shipping has transformed in the two years since Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine

<https://splash247.com/how-world-shipping-has-transformed-in-the-two-years-since-russias-full-scale-invasion-of-ukraine/>

"“This is the 21st century Great Power game called geoeconomics and the global maritime trading system is caught right in the middle of it...”



Classification societies and flag states are parts of the legal regime at sea that need to be understood by naval planning and operations staffs, and those at sea. What effects might the Russia-Ukraine war be having on Canadian shipping?

Editor - note term: geonomincs.

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A question was posed to Transport Canada: Have there been public articles about how Canadian shipping and maritime institutions (our part of classification societies) might have been transformed? A response came back that there doesn't appear to be any recent public articles but there is this paper on class societies from 2020: "On a flood tide: Classification societies and Canada’s marine industry in 2020"

(<https://www.dieselduck.info/library/01%20articles/2011-Class%20Society%20-%20JJ%20Smith.pdf>).

"Their (classification societies) dual roles - of assessing and commenting on the condition of newly built and in-service commercial vessels for the purposes of insurance coverage, and of offering advice to the shipowner - are unique.”

Editor: Classification societies and insurance have an inordinate effect on shipping and therefore economic aspects of conflict.

Unpacking Merchant Shipping

<https://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2024/february/unpacking-merchant-shipping>

"A working knowledge of energy transportation networks is essential for comprehending the economic drivers underpinning the U.S. Navy's mission."



Really, such knowledge, and knowledge of shipping generally, is essential to comprehending the missions of any navy. Do Canadians appreciate the importance of trade at sea to this country's prosperity and security?

Trying to Evade the Terms of the Strategic Partnership Agreement?

<https://www.navalreview.ca/2022/06/trying-to-evade-the-terms-of-the-strategic-partnership-agreement/>

"So, we (Irving Shipbuilding) have a proposal to modify our facility and we're working on that with Canada. In all likelihood we'll go with the ship lift capability, which is actually overall a good value proposition for Canada because it will also be available for repair because our graving dock, where we currently do maintenance on the Halifax-class frigates, does not have the capacity for a CSC ship."



Drydocks and synchrolifts are national strategic assets, and not cheap ones at that (see: "Navy's new \$3.4 billion dry dock in Hawaii is most expensive project in service's history" <https://www.stripes.com/branches/navy/2024-02-16/navy-new-dry-dock-hawaii-13030318.html>). They are essential not only for building ships but for maintaining and repairing them, especially ships that have suffered 'battle damage.' Canada's National Shipbuilding Strategy apparently does not address drydocks but should.

Australianised military off-the-shelf: Australia's naval ship design ethos and the Anzac Class frigates

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0308597X24000010>

Lessons for Canada.

(Paraphrased) Broad and interlinking factors that underpinned success of the Anzac Ship Project and which may prove useful when considering military off-the-shelf projects:

1. Clarity of purpose: a very clear picture of the mission that Defence wanted the vessels to fulfill, and accompanying political and industrial goals.



2. Careful balancing of the differing requirements of multiple audiences with very different agendas about what constitutes success; retaining this balance requires careful management at a political as well as a Defence level.

3. Timeliness. The longer a project drags out, the greater the likelihood that it would lose the clarity of purpose and support.

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Editor: This monograph was brought to the attention of Canadian shipbuilders, government and the RCN.

Up to Four Subsea Cables Have Been Damaged Off Yemen

<https://maritime-executive.com/article/up-to-four-subsea-cables-have-been-damaged-in-the-red-sea>



"16 small fiber-optic lines under the Red Sea handle about 17 percent of all international data traffic, including trunk lines connecting Europe with India and East Asia."

Protection of seabottom infrastructure (communications cables, energy pipelines and cables) is increasingly being recognized as a significant security concern. (Though, really, it has been since before the Great War.) Does Canada have the doctrine, training, plans and equipment to undertake such protection? Sometimes called underseas or subseas warfare. This is a whole-of-government, whole-of-society issue, requiring the private and public sectors, civil and military agencies to work together (e.g., pipelines come under Natural Resources Canada; see: <https://natural-resources.canada.ca/our-natural-resources/energy-sources-distribution/fossil-fuels/pipelines/pipeline-safety-regimes-canada/16440>). Does the Royal Canadian Navy have access to the ships and people to undertake seabottom operations for the defence and security of Canada?

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Editor; someone brought this 2021 article forward in response to this situation:

Sea Control and Command of the Sea Remain Essential

<https://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2021/november/sea-control-and-command-sea-remain-essential>

"Undersea cables have been employed for more than a century, and the ability to use them—or to sever them when necessary—relies on sea control."

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From a RUSI(NS) member: This is not at all surprising, although one has to wonder for just how long the Arab states will put up with the Houthis if it affects trade. That said, this exposes yet another target within the Maritimes regime that most in that world understand, yet and to a large degree, most in the general public don't understand until it affects them directly.

HD HHI to develop submarines for the export market with Babcock

<https://www.navalnews.com/naval-news/2024/02/hd-hhi-to-develop-submarines-for-the-export-market-with-babcock/>



"South Korea's HD Hyundai Heavy Industries (HHI) has agreed to jointly pursue the development of submarines designed for the export market with British company Babcock."

Hmm, is this setting conditions for HD HHI and Babcock to pitch the export submarine to Canada?

From a Babcock contact: The announcement from HD HHI is focussed on our Babcock Mission Systems business and primarily, our offering for the Torpedo Handling & Launch System (THLS). This is a product with which Babcock has significant experience and capability in across multiple platforms. So as HD HHI develop their platform to meet new export opportunities, Babcock will be happy to support the further development and integration of its proprietary THLS solutions. We will happily look to provide the same level of service and co-operation to other submarine OEM looking to take advantage of our proven offering.

With respect to taking a broader look at the Canadian Patrol Submarine Project <CPSP), we in Babcock Canada are taking an agnostic approach at present and are supporting multiple platform OEM as they consider development of a uniquely Canadian through-life support solution. Our aspiration being that no matter the platform Canada decides best fits its operational needs, Babcock are positioned to support development and delivery of an optimal sustainment solution.

Why Britain needs a larger navy

<https://www.geostrategy.org.uk/research/why-britain-needs-a-larger-navy/>

An excellent read about naval and maritime affairs.

Would be good to be able to read something similar about Canada and the Royal Canadian Navy. Not necessarily a call for a larger navy, but a primer/explanation of why Canada needs a navy (and other marine departments) and what it would do in support of Canada's defence and security. Canada is much more dependant than many realize on the sea, freedom of navigation of trade by sea and the resources we draw from the sea.



UK-owned ship attacked by Houthis sinks off Yemen coast

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-68457445>

The Houthis have been attacking shipping in the Red Sea with a variety of weapons including anti-ship ballistic missiles. This puts into a good light the decision to include an anti-ballistic missile capability in the Canadian Surface Combatant project ship design.



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Richard Dunley @redunley 3 mar posted: This ship was Belize flagged, trading from UAE to Bulgaria, chartered by a Saudi company, managed by a Lebanese company, and owned by a company with UK links but registered in the Marshall Islands. Try unpicking that one when things don't work out right!

Defence insiders sound alarms on state of Canadian military

<https://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/defence-insiders-sound-alarms-on-state-of-canadian-military-1.6788009>

"Citing everything from troop shortages to dwindling ammunition stocks to aging equipment and technology, a growing number of current and former defence officials are raising alarms about the state of the Canadian military."



This is a well-researched and well-written piece, notable for its use of graphs based on government information and, significantly, for the former military senior officers prepared to be publicly quoted. Criticism from such people, with a few exceptions, has not been the norm in Canada.

Can the rationales for the target figures in serviceability, etc., be explained? What do they mean for what Canada can and cannot do when the targets are not achieved? Have the consequences been explained to the Canadian public?

This is not the time in world affairs to be unprepared. Canada is unprepared.

James Bezan (Canadian Opposition defence critic) posted 8 Feb 24 on X: "ANOTHER CONSERVATIVE MOTION PASSES!! After much consternation by the Liberal-NDP coalition, Defence Committee agreed to send our soon to be disposed **CRV7 rockets** to Ukraine. @BillBlair and @melaniejoly, when can Ukraine expect you to do so? #StandWithUkraine



<https://twitter.com/jamesbezan/status/1755601639778787600>"

Whilst the decision to transfer CRV7 rockets to Ukraine is laudable, there is a bigger matter that could do with government consideration. What are DND policies for retaining equipment, including ammunition, for mobilization or donation purposes, and what are DND policies for disposal? There were questions at the beginning of the Russian-Ukraine War, recognizing the importance of artillery in major conflict, about the availability of Canadian Army M114 howitzers. It was later learned that apparently they have all been scrapped. Similar questions have arisen about Canadian army armoured personnel carriers.

Yes, storage of defence material is expensive and calls for careful management (there was a story of a Royal Canadian Navy Chief Petty Officers finding 6" gun barrels in stores decades after the Navy paid off its 6" gun cruisers). But retention of older equipment can be an important part of defence readiness. It allows for government options to assist other countries, for rapid equipping of mobilized Reserves, and in cases like ships which take years to build, may be the only assets available to replace lost/damaged equipment for many months, maybe years, into a conflict.

What it takes to reconstitute the Navy and win the new Cold War

<https://www.navytimes.com/opinion/2024/02/09/what-it-takes-to-reconstitute-the-navy-and-win-the-new-cold-war/>



"To reconstitute the weakened fleet he inherited, (US Secretary of the Navy) Middendorf recognized he would need to focus on the basics, starting with recruiting and retaining enough sailors and officers to man the ships."

"In addition to strengthening naval personnel, Middendorf and his team embarked on a major modernization program, bringing forward next-generation naval systems and warships..."

There's a relationship between the two: capable (usually meaning new) equipment attracts and retains people. They see in the new equipment the support of government and 'the system.' They feel pride, and confidence in being able to do their jobs successfully. People join, they do things that matter, they stay.

How Would the UK's Healthcare System Cope with War?

<https://www.rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/commentary/how-would-uks-healthcare-system-cope-war>



"Two decades of discretionary out-of-area operations have made European militaries and societies (editor: add Canadian) complacent about the potential demands of large-scale warfighting on military and civilian medical care."

The Canadian situation has its differences, some more problematic (great distance from likely conflict areas back to Canada) and some maybe less (smaller army therefore less casualties).

But there can be lessons to be learned and shared between countries and between organizations (transport, medical, public information, etc.). Civil-military planning, gaming and exercising of mass casualties is a good topic, from its importance and too from its applicability to both conflict and non-conflict situations.

Note the link to the article about surging medical facilities:

Running on empty: whatever happened to the Nightingales?

<https://www.building.co.uk/focus/running-on-empty-whatever-happened-to-the-nightingales/5109970.article>

Does Canada have the plans and capabilities to surge our medical infrastructure? Do we have the people to staff them, and have sourced the material (logistics!) to outfit them?

UK looking to allow drones to evacuate casualties

<https://ukdefencejournal.org.uk/uk-looking-to-allow-drones-to-evacuate-casualties/>

Universal Heavy-lift UAV Carriage System "will have a carriage capacity of 150-200kg."



Whether for logistics or casualty evacuation, such drones have proven and are proving their utility. Canada should develop such a capability.

The Need for Political Urgency in Ensuring Naval Success

<https://centerformaritimestrategy.org/publications/the-need-for-political-urgency-in-ensuring-naval-success/>

<Paraphrased> Three key factors that need to be addressed to stall the decline of <pick your navy>:

1. emaciation of shipbuilding capacity;
2. growing asymmetric threats such as drones and unmanned craft; and
3. surrendering leadership role in the world because of short news cycles.



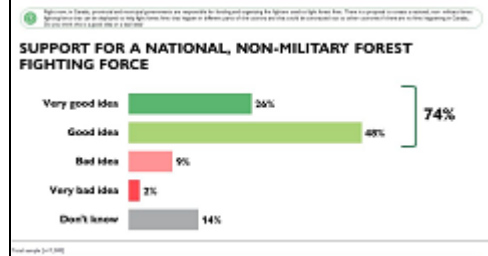
Though this commentary was written with the US in mind, it could apply to other navies and western states including Canada. Canada may not be seeking or be seeking to retain national influence to the extent of the US, but to ensure global peace (or, at least, minimum conflict) and prosperity (ours first, others to the greatest extent possible), our country needs the resources for us to be considered by other states and for us to have the power to undertake action (preferably in company, if necessary, alone).

For our political leaders: "In sum, we must choose as a nation to have a coherent policy now and then properly resource it otherwise the loss of life and national influence will be extreme and irreversible."

3 in 4 Canadians think a national forest fire fighting force is a good idea.

<https://abacusdata.ca/forest-fire-fighting-force-abacus-data-richard-cannings/>

"This specialized unit would be deployed across Canada to assist in combating forest fires and could be offered as a resource to other countries during periods without domestic fires."



Whilst the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) may be appropriate to assist such a national, non-military, forest fire fighting force with, say, transport from base to operating areas, it would be good to keep the CAF and fire fighting force separate. Training, planning and employment would be greatly different. Their ethos ('service') might be similar, but their cultures would be different. Besides, considering the challenges across the globe these days, and the potential for a outbreak of conflict that would draw in Canada, it is best at this time to allow the CAF to focus on their primary roles, deterrence and war fighting.

David Pugliese @davidpugliese 6 Mar posted: AOPS issues -Royal Canadian Navy's new Arctic ships have a severe flooding problem, say sailors
<https://ottawacitizen.com/news/national/defence-watch/royal-canadian-navys-new-arctic-ships-have-a-severe-flooding-problem-say-sailors> via @ottawacitizen
Brian Santarpia @BrianSantarpia 7 Mar replied (thread: <https://twitter.com/BrianSantarpia/status/1765603698523439258>): It's not usually worth it to respond to articles like this as it seems to just invite more nasty and uniformed responses but perhaps I can offer a little bit of balance and context so here goes:



Other Sources

#artificial intelligence

The Perilous Coming Age of AI Warfare

<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/ukraine/perilous-coming-age-ai-warfare>

#artillery

A thread about 155mm howitzer projectiles

<https://twitter.com/MidOfficer/status/1761977260184109475>

Note link to: Munitions Supply Program

<https://www.tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca/app-acq/amd-dp/munitions-eng.html>

#Canadian Armed Forces

When the going gets tough on the world stage, Canada gets going

<https://thehub.ca/2024-03-02/harrison-lowman-when-the-going-gets-tough-on-the-world-stage-canada-gets-going/>

Throwing money at recruitment won't fix the CAF's personnel problems

<https://www.hilltimes.com/story/2024/03/06/throwing-money-at-recruitment-wont-fix-the-cafs-personnel-problems/413627/>

#Canadian Coast Guard

Seaspan Shipyards completes 'Prototype Block' for Canadian Coast Guard's future Polar Icebreaker

<https://www.seaspan.com/press-release/seaspan-shipyards-completes-prototype-block-for-canadian-coast-guards-future-polar-icebreaker/>

ABB Partners With Seaspan Shipyards On New Canadian Coast Guard Polar Icebreaker

<https://gcaptain.com/abb-partners-with-seaspan-shipyards-on-new-canadian-coast-guard-polar-icebreaker/>

Navigating Arctic Challenges: Canada's Cutting-Edge Polar Icebreakers Set to Redefine Maritime Exploration

<https://vanguardcanada.com/navigating-arctic-challenges-canadas-cutting-edge-polar-icebreakers-set-to-redefine-maritime-exploration/>

#China

Is the United States overestimating China's power?

<https://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2024/03/united-states-overestimating-chinas-power/394662/>

#defence policy

Formulating a New Canadian Defence Policy

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/formulating-new-canadian-defence-policy-lee-j-hammond/>

An older article that didn't get included in *Dispatches* back then; seem still to be relevant.

Canada is short sighted in underfunding the military

Opinion, becoming increasingly common:

https://www.thespec.com/opinion/contributors/canada-is-short-sighted-in-underfunding-the-military/article_a55c3aec-5a30-5066-b42c-2d16bea257f1.html

Planned Capital Spending under Canada's Defence Policy: 2024 Update

<https://www.pbo-dpb.ca/en/publications/RP-2324-025-C--planned-capital-spending-under-canada-defence-policy-2024-update--depenses-capital-prevues-titre-politique-defense-canada-mise-jour-2024>

“From an economic standpoint, it (substantial acceleration in capital spending from the 2023-2024 to 2027-2028 fiscal years) could present challenges for the domestic defence industry, in particular its capacity to ramp up production and sustain it for several years.”

#drones

Why the Army needs a drone branch: Embracing lessons from Ukraine

<https://breakingdefense.com/2024/02/why-the-army-needs-a-drone-branch-embracing-lessons-from-ukraine/>

You may not agree with the author’s specific recommendations, but you should agree with overall integrated approach to the development of drones and doctrine, legalities, etc., for their use.

UK looking to allow drones to evacuate casualties

<https://ukdefencejournal.org.uk/uk-looking-to-allow-drones-to-evacuate-casualties/>

Outgunned in the Drone Fight: The U.S. Military Is Failing to Adopt the Next Machine Gun

<https://warontherocks.com/2024/03/outgunned-in-the-drone-fight-the-u-s-military-is-failing-to-adopt-the-next-machine-gun/>

#legal

Is UNCLOS Ready for the Era of Seafaring Autonomous Vessels?

https://www.journalofterritorialandmaritimestudies.net/files/ugd/36708f_2ea2ea22ebaf49308d0033f544213836.pdf

#drone history

Ministry of Defence 🇬🇧 @DefenceHQ 22 Feb posted:
For over 100 years, drones have had a long and storied history in the UK’s Armed forces 🇬🇧. From the UK built Queen Bee 🐝 to the agile platforms in service with our troops today. Read more about the UK’s cross-service drone strategy:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/defence-drone-strategy-the-uks-approach-to-defence-uncrewed-systems>

(Defence Drone Strategy - the UK’s approach to Defence Uncrewed Systems)



Useful #drones

🇺🇦 Ukrainian Front @front_ukrainian 23 Feb posted (video at https://twitter.com/front_ukrainian/status/1761054689641033946):

⚡ Delivery of ammunition to the Ukrainian military from the 🇺🇦 47th Separate Mechanized Brigade using a ground drone



Attack ground #drone

Visegrad 24 @visegrad24 1 Mar posted (video: <https://twitter.com/visegrad24/status/1763611460050031000>): Ukrainian land-based suicide drone strikes a Russian position. Future warfare is here

Mick Ryan, AM @WarintheFuture 2 Mar posted (thread: <https://twitter.com/WarintheFuture/status/1763964605263462875>): I recently shared this post from @visegrad24 but wanted to expand a little more on the implications of such ground-based uncrewed systems for contemporary and future land warfare. 1/25 🇺🇦 🇷🇺



#Indo-Pacific

Avoiding war in the Indo-Pacific

<https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/avoiding-war-in-the-indo-pacific/>

Note: Escalation Risks in the Indo-Pacific: A review for practitioners

<https://www.aspi.org.au/report/escalation-risks-indo-pacific-review-practitioners>

#industrial warfare

How AUKUS Plans to Outpace China with Defense Tech Investments

FYI, may be called industrial or economic warfare: <https://nationalinterest.org/feature/how-aukus-plans-outpace-china-defense-tech-investments-209629>

Whichever, future conflicts may (will) be won by present preparations. What are Canada defence industry preparations?

#information operations

Military worried fake wolves exercise, pandemic propaganda efforts undercut public trust: documents

<https://ottawacitizen.com/news/national/defence-watch/military-worried-fake-wolves-exercise-pandemic-propaganda-efforts-undercut-public-trust-documents>

The man who tricked Nazi Germany: lessons from the past on how to beat disinformation

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2024/mar/02/the-man-who-tricked-nazi-germany-lessons-from-the-past-on-how-to-beat-disinformation>

"You can't shove 'the truth' down people's throats if they don't want to hear it, but you can inspire them to have the motivation to care about facts in the first place."

#Russia

Brute force: Russia 'doubled down' on often-crude disinformation in 2023, says report

<https://breakingdefense.com/2024/02/brute-force-russia-doubled-down-on-often-crude-disinformation-in-2023-says-report/>

#intelligence

Canada Needs Real Foreign Intelligence

<https://foreignpolicy.com/2024/03/06/canada-foreign-intelligence-espionage-two-michaels/>

#land warfare

Preparing to Win the First Fight of the Next War

<https://mwi.westpoint.edu/preparing-to-win-the-first-fight-of-the-next-war/>

"Adapting to this unfamiliar environment and incorporating the steady flow of observations from Ukraine ... has manifested in four ways: the transparent battlefield, greater use of mass precision strikes, greater synchronization required above the brigade level, and the battle of the narrative."

With an eye on Ukraine, Army revamps training to reflect modern war

<https://www.defenseone.com/threats/2024/03/eye-ukraine-army-revamps-training-reflect-modern-war/394705/>

#legal

UK House of Lords Inquiry: Is the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea Still Fit for Purpose?

https://www.journalofterritorialandmaritimestudies.net/_files/ugd/36708f_a31161562bb84e4f8ad116c56d2cd0d1.pdf

#drones

Autonomous weapon systems (AWS) Legal Review Series – A Functional Approach

<https://lieber.westpoint.edu/aws-functional-approach/>

#logistics

Navy Lookout @NavyLookout 25 Feb posted:
@hmsdiamond embarking replacement Sea Viper
missiles in #Gibraltar this morning ahead of returning to
the Red Sea soon. Gibraltar once again demonstrating its
value as a forward support base. Via @key2med

In the absence of forward support bases like Gib, Canada
needs a mobile missile reloading capability.



#naval warfare

Ukraine and the Houthis Are Revolutionizing Naval Warfare

<https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2024-03-03/ukraine-and-houthi-drones-and-missiles-are-changing-naval-war>

Lessons noted by ADM Stavridis USN (ret'd).

Three ideas for countering China in the gray zone

<https://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2024/03/how-can-deterrence-seize-initiative-three-approaches-countering-china-gray-zone/394748/>

Short-of-war operations.

#reading

The Works of Colin Gray

<https://mwi.westpoint.edu/war-books-the-works-of-colin-gray/>

A (The?) leading strategy academic.

#Royal Canadian Air Force

P8-A Poseidon, "A Good Day for the RCAF", Not Really

<http://jgmjgm516.blogspot.com/2024/02/p8-poseidon-good-day-for-rcaf-not-really.html>

#RCAF centennial

Canada Has A New Silver Loonie & It Features Four Symbolic Canadian Aircraft

<https://www.msn.com/en-ca/money/topstories/canada-has-a-new-silver-loonie-it-features-four-symbolic-canadian-aircraft-photos/ar-BB1iUAxY>



RCAF Procurement – Not!

Gregory Knowles @2805662 23 Feb posted: Australian, Canadian, UKian, & USian Air Force personnel inspect a ShinMaywa US-2 amphibian during Exercise Cope North 24. Evidently, all four countries are about to immediately buy into the US-2 program for the RAAF, RCAF, RAF, & USAF 😊 📷 LAC Kurt Lewis



RCAF staff have confirmed that this is incorrect reporting.

It is understood from MGen Ménard's recent talk to RUSI(NS) that the RCAF has about 57% of major capital expenditure. It would be interesting to see a chart of that for the years ahead.

#Royal Canadian Navy

Seaspan Vancouver Shipyards makes progress on JSS2 with delivery of 17m long bulbous bow <https://www.seaspan.com/stories/seaspan-vancouver-shipyards-makes-progress-on-jss2-with-delivery-of-17m-long-bulbous-bow/>

David Pugliese @davidpugliese 6 Mar posted: AOPS issues -Royal Canadian Navy's new Arctic ships have a severe flooding problem, say sailors <https://ottawacitizen.com/news/national/defence-watch/royal-canadian-navys-new-arctic-ships-have-a-severe-flooding-problem-say-sailors> via @ottawacitizen
Brian Santarpia @BrianSantarpia 7 Mar replied (thread: <https://twitter.com/BrianSantarpia/status/1765603698523439258>): It's not usually worth it to respond to articles like this as it seems to just invite more nasty and uniformed responses but perhaps I can offer a little bit of balance and context so here goes:



#Russia-Ukraine War

Ukraine war turns 2: Lessons learned and what comes next

<https://breakingdefense.com/2024/02/ukraine-war-turns-2-lessons-learned-and-what-comes-next/>

'Not losing' is not enough: it's time for Europe to finally get serious about a Ukrainian victory <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2024/feb/22/europe-ukrainian-victory-alexei-navalny-vladimir-putin>

Russia's Brutal War Calculus

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2024/02/24/world/europe/russia-war-calculus.html>

The Spy War: How the C.I.A. Secretly Helps Ukraine Fight Putin

<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/02/25/world/europe/the-spy-war-how-the-cia-secretly-helps-ukraine-fight-putin.html>

So, has Ukraine only lost 31,000 since the start of the war?

<https://www.dupuyinstitute.org/blog/2024/02/26/so-has-ukraine-only-lost-31000-since-the-start-of-the-war/>

Minister Blair attends Conference in Support of Ukraine in Paris, France and concludes visit to Europe

<https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/news/2024/02/minister-blair-attends-conference-in-support-of-ukraine-in-paris-france-and-concludes-visit-to-europe.html>

"Since February 2022, Canada has committed over \$13.3 billion in funding to support Ukraine." More info at link.

Western Support Critical to Ukraine's Fight

<https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/western-support-critical-ukraines-fight>

The Kremlin's Occupation Playbook: Coerced Russification and Ethnic Cleansing in Occupied Ukraine

<https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/kremlins-occupation-playbook-coerced-russification-and-ethnic-cleansing-occupied>

The Russian Winter-Spring 2024 Offensive Operation on the Kharkiv-Luhansk Axis

<https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-winter-spring-2024-offensive-operation-kharkiv-luhansk-axis>

An Alternative Way to Face the Ukrainian War

https://www.journalofterritorialandmaritimestudies.net/files/ugd/36708f_0d625b260ddb4b6d9b701c7a74e36762.pdf

#drones

The sea drone that's lifting Ukraine morale as it hunts Russian ships

<https://www.c4isrnet.com/unmanned/2024/03/06/the-sea-drone-thats-lifting-ukraine-morale-as-it-hunts-russian-ships/>

#information operations

Reflection on two years of war and disinformation

<https://euvsdisinfo.eu/reflection-on-two-years-of-war-and-disinformation/>

#shipbuilding

Skills shortage threatens expansion

<https://navalinstitute.com.au/skills-shortage-threatens-expansion/>

Fortunately, it appears that Canadian shipbuilders recognized the necessity of a strong workforce, and supported developing it.

#strategy

Taiwan's Theory of the Fight

<https://warontherocks.com/2024/02/taiwans-theory-of-the-fight/>

Last *Dispatches* this article was posted to #Indo Pacific, but it is also a #strategy article.

The return of ancient challenges

<https://www.militarystrategymagazine.com/article/the-return-of-ancient-challenges/>

So true: "As in ancient history, the future may see prolonged low-level conflicts that cannot be resolved through negotiations or through a decisive application of force. It will demand recurrent offensives to mitigate rather than eliminate the threat."

I don't think, though, I can completely agree with the monograph's premise: "Violence is a moment, often relatively brief, in political interactions; it has a well-demarcated space where it occurs (the frontline); and it is meant to achieve finite political effects (usually associated with territorial defense or expansion)."

Politics, Statecraft and the art of War

<https://www.militarystrategymagazine.com/article/politics-statecraft-and-the-art-of-war/>

Intelligence and Strategy: Relationship in Transformation

<https://www.militarystrategymagazine.com/article/intelligence-and-strategy-relationship-in-transformation/>

#wargaming

UK MoD Influence Wargaming Handbook

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/influence-wargaming-handbook>

Eagle Against the Dragon: Wargaming at the Army War College

<https://warroom.armywarcollege.edu/articles/eagle-vs-dragon/>



DM/CDS Message: DND/CAF Departmental Plan 2024–25 and Spending Reductions

March 4, 2024

Yesterday, the Government of Canada announced its plan to reduce spending and find long-term savings that will ensure key priorities for Canadians are well-supported in the years ahead. As the largest organization in the federal government, Defence has an important role to play in helping to realize this goal.

We are committed to finding ways to make our operations more efficient, and making sure that our dollars are concentrated on achieving our top defence priorities. Some reductions will not have an impact, or immediate impact, on the day-to-day work of the Defence Team.

But in other areas, there will be impacts. Many of you may already be aware, through business planning exercises, of the streamlining and consolidation of training, reductions to travel budgets, reallocation of work, or re-absorption of certain functions into the Defence Team, as professional services costs are reduced.

Over the past several months, your organizations have done the initial rigorous work to complete our part of the government-wide spending review announced in [Budget 2023](#). This exercise has driven us to ensure the Defence budget is prudently invested in programs and services that Canadians rely on while ensuring resources are focused where they are needed the most.

The Departmental Plan, tabled yesterday in the House of Commons, shows planned spending reductions of \$810 million for 2024–25, growing to \$908 million per year in 2026–27 and ongoing fiscal years. We will achieve savings from activities that have a history of underspending their approved funding, and from initiatives to be delivered in future years.

Now, there are more priority-setting exercises to come so that we can provide the Minister of National Defence with additional, more focused spending reduction proposals for fall 2024, to fully meet the target of \$908 million per year. We thank all of you for your support as it is only together as an entire Defence Team that we will continue to achieve our mandates and mission readiness.

Again, our guiding principle throughout this is to minimize the impacts, and to direct Defence spending toward top defence and government priorities, which include increasing military capabilities, achieving our vital recruiting objectives, supporting our people and their families, and building a more modern, viable combat-ready force.

Members of the Defence Team can find out more in the following documents:

- [National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces 2024-25 Departmental Plan](#) (See under “Refocusing government spending” for an overview of the spending reductions and savings measures)
- [Department of National Defence 2024-25 Main Estimates](#)

We will keep you informed of updates as they occur and know that we can count on your continued support in the months ahead.

Bill Matthews
Deputy Minister

General Wayne Eyre
Chief of the Defence Staff

CAF Mess Dress Retiree Insignia

A new Retiree Insignia for wear on mess dress has been approved by the CAF dress committee but has not been released yet. It should be available through the CANEX 'in due course.'

USAF Air University *Aether A Journal of Strategic Airpower & Spacepower* Vol. 2 No. 4
Winter 2023

<https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/AetherJournal/>

contents:

Israel’s Begin Doctrine: Preventive Strike Tradition and Iran’s Nuclear Pursuits

Ten Propositions Regarding Nuclear Weapons and Deterrence

Russo-American Strategic Nuclear Arms Control: New START or a New Start?

Airpower: A Game Changer in an India-China Limited Conflict

A Commercial Space Security Dilemma?: The Dynamics of Commercial Competition in Space

Moral Injury to the State: US Security Policy and the Return to Great Power Competition

Integrated Emotional Manipulation: Implications of Contemporary Emotion Regulation Science


Armoured Combat Support Vehicle

Canadian Armed Forces @CanadianForces 5 May posted: Get your road trip playlists ready! Delivery of the @CanadianArmy’s new Armoured Combat Support Vehicle Troop/Cargo variant has started. #WellEquipped



Smart Design

Think Defence @thinkdefence 15 Jan posted: Any truck payload that exceeds the cost of the truck should be easily demountable

Trent Telenko @TrentTelenko 15 Jan quoted:  This is a hard & often missed military procurement truth



Towing tanks (when you don't have a farm tractor...)

Russian Federation has developed a device for remote coupling during the evacuation of equipment (more: <https://twitter.com/AndreiBtv/status/1765460372457193715>). Israeli system "RUF" - Rescue Under Fire on Merkava Mk.4 (tank evacuation on the battlefield without the crew leaving the vehicle) (more: <https://twitter.com/AndreiBtv/status/1765460379667226665>).



US Army University Press *Military Review* March-April 2024

<https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Journals/Military-Review/English-Edition-Archives/March-April-2024/>

contents:

Strengthening the Army Profession through the Harding Project

A "Light but Aggressive Command": The 1945 Campaign in the Southern Philippines

Enabling Division Operations across the Conflict Continuum: What an SFAB Can Do for You

Lewis and Stokes: What Lawrence of Arabia and His Sergeants Teach Us about the Modern Combat Advisor

The First Forty-Eight Hours

Feeding the Troops: Searching for a Way Forward in China 1944–1945

Defender-Europe 2022: A Combined Arms Battalion's Long-Range Movement across Europe

V Corps: A Case Study in Deterrence for Split-Based Headquarters with Regionally Aligned Forces

Lessons Learned by the 75th Ranger Regiment during Twenty Years of Tactical Combat Casualty Care

Blood Types and Titters: Saving Lives on the Battlefield with Blood Far Forward

Biological Electronics: A Transformational Technology for National Security

How to Win Arguments on the Internet

Deliberate Practice and the Acquisition of Military Expertise

Caltrop!

WarTranslated (Dmitri) @wartranslated 2 Mar posted (video: <https://twitter.com/wartranslated/status/1763875209541501338>): Use by Ukrainians of spikes dropped from drones to damage russian vehicles and hurt logistics. Judging by the commentary, this tactic is effective and easy to deploy.

What was old is new again. Mounted knights would recognize this. Innovative use of #drones.



Flail #drone

Euromaidan Press @EuromaidanPress 1 Mar posted (video: <https://twitter.com/EuromaidanPress/status/1763519859344765012>): Another Ukrainian experimental remotely-controlled mine-clearing vehicle. Such vehicles are crucial for military breakthroughs and for clearing mines across vast contaminated territories in Ukraine. 📺 via <https://t.me/ruuawarnews/1432>



Mine-clearing

Ministry of Defence 🇬🇧 @DefenceHQ 27 Feb posted (video: <https://twitter.com/DefenceHQ/status/1762485300201222480>): 🇬🇧 Meet the Minewolf, the new type of armoured mine and route clearance vehicle we're sending to Ukraine, used to effectively clear land mines across a large area. 🇺🇦 #StandWithUkraine 🇺🇦



Compensation for Employers of Reservists Program

<https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/canada-reserve-force/supporting-reservists/compensation-employers-reservists-program.html>



"The Compensation for Employers of Reservists Program (CERP) provides financial support to civilian employers—and self-employed reservists—to help offset operational costs when a reservist-employee is away from the workplace due to military commitments."

Security Affairs Committee Synopsis 1 March

O Canada

Canada has signed a agreement with Ukraine for over 3b CAD in aid of various sorts over a ten year period and has pledged at least moral support on top of that agreement and provision of over 7.6b CAD in previous commitments. This is excellent news and it was well received overseas.

This was marred shortly after when the Prime Minister was in a news conference with the Polish Prime Minister, Donald Tusk, when he accidentally stated that Canada will standby Ukraine until the end and then apparently stated that "Russia must win this war." He immediately corrected himself but not before the clip was captured and used on Russia Today, also known as RT. His gaff, however innocent, was used on the Russian propaganda channels thus creating conditions for a Putin propaganda victory, an "own goal." The other aspect is that although PM Tusk did not directly criticize Canada's efforts to increase defence spending, he did say "Sooner or later every NATO country will have to meet defence spending targets." It was a pleasant way of saying "get on with it." Canada is the only major NATO country without a plan to achieve the 2% minimum target. Our reliability and integrity as a country is under scrutiny across the globe. As a major trading nation, this is not good news and it will impact our standing.

Our long range over-the-horizon radar installation is scheduled to be built sometime within the next few years. The old North Warning System is ancient and is unable to do the task based on modern technology whether against air breathing bomber, cruise missiles, ballistic missiles,

balloons, etc. In a recent RUSI(NS) presentation there was considerable discussion about whether Canada might purchase the E-7 Wedgetail to enhance our ability in our Arctic areas as well as being a major asset when being used with the new fighter fleet. The Wedgetail is based on the very familiar Boeing 737 airframe that is similar to the recently contracted P-8 Poseidon. The Australians have purchased a total of six so far and have an option for a seventh aircraft. The Wedgetail has also been selected by Turkiye, the United Kingdom, the Republic of Korea and the United States Air Force, all of which are allies of Canada. This is compatible with a future Canadian aircraft and it could fill current gaps caused by obsolescent systems until new equipment is available. It makes sense and greatly enhances Canada's ability to defend itself within an alliance structure. This aircraft is replacing the E-3A platform based on the venerable Boeing 707 airframe, an air early warning and control (AWAC) aircraft which has been used since the 1970s. NATO had a fleet of E-3 based in Germany where Canada provided aircrew for these aircraft.

Australia

Australia is studying its requirements for defence overall and ensuring its three services are able to conduct operations on its own if necessary but at the same time trying to achieve the best options for the way ahead. They have proposed the largest Australian navy since the Second World War along with an army able to conduct amphibious operations coupled with an air force able to support both the other services. It is not without controversy as one will see in the links to articles below. At least there is some thought being given to serious threats. Canada needs to pay attention to this process, flawed though it is as one will see, but at least there is thought. The link is shown first followed by our correspondent's note on the subject.

<https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/the-sad-state-of-royal-navy-submarine-capability-and-the-implications-for-australia/>

Attached is a damning article on the reliance of Australia on the UK for the acquisition of nuclear submarines.

<https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/ssn-aucus-is-at-the-back-of-the-queue/>

The UK shipyards have very long build times for submarines. This will put the RAN at risk for delayed deliveries of their planned boats.

[https://armyrecognition.com/defense_news_february_2024_global_security_army_industry/elbit_systems_to_supply_\\$600mn-worth_systems_for_australian_army_s_as21_redback_ifv.html](https://armyrecognition.com/defense_news_february_2024_global_security_army_industry/elbit_systems_to_supply_$600mn-worth_systems_for_australian_army_s_as21_redback_ifv.html)

Aus Army stuff for a change. This new IFV will be welcomed by the infantry and it will be transportable by sea and landed over a beach.

<https://www.navalnews.com/naval-news/2024/02/austal-wins-contract-for-additional-patrol-boats-the-royal-australian-navy/#prettyPhot>

Two more patrol boats contracted for RAN.

<https://www.navalnews.com/naval-news/2024/02/australian-personnel-already-training-with-new-smart-sea-mines/>

RAN is buying smart sea mines.

<https://thewest.com.au/business/manufacturing/shipbuilder-austal-eyes-1200-new-jobs-on-back-of-long-term-contract-certainty-weve-never-had--c-13698676>

Australia Shipyard is ramping up for the RAN shipbuilding.

<https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/how-to-plug-the-royal-australian-navys-looming-surface-capability-gap/>

The forwarded document clearly exposes the transitional problem that the RAN will face in its surface fleet. If a solution is seen by the Australian government to be necessary, the work must be undertaken very soon.

United States

The US has allocated 11b USD to remove and replace Chinese container cranes found at many US container ports. The fear is the programs used may be used to provide information to China including cargo details, especially those containers for the US forces around the world, and the possibility of being Trojan horses for other Chinese programs for espionage.

The US and UK continue to conduct operations against the Houthis in Yemen, however, the Houthis have proven resilient and have managed to actually sink a ship. This is likely to continue for the foreseeable future.

The US has amassed five carrier strike groups in the Pacific. Again, a message is being sent.

There is an ongoing issue with Boeing and the USAF over the new E-7 Wedgetail contract and it appears the aircraft will have a significantly higher price tag. The link is below as is our correspondent's comments:

<https://aviationweek.com/defense-space/aircraft-propulsion/sharp-increase-e-7a-costs-hindering-negotiations-usaf-says>

This could be a problem for Canada if the E-7A is in our plans.

Moldova

Moldovan air space has been used by Russia to try to circumvent Ukrainian air defences by going around the main areas of concentration of Ukrainian air defence assets. These have been largely anticipated and discovered allowing the Ukrainians to react appropriately. It does display Russia's disregard for another nation's sovereignty. Russia has continued to support the Moldovan breakaway area of Transnistria. The Transnistrian assembly was thought to be considering asking Russia for formal recognition of the mini-state, however, at present there is insufficient support for such a move. They have formally asked for Russian protection of the breakaway region. Moscow has not responded at this time. There are nearly 1500 Russian soldiers currently garrisoning Transnistria and 6k+ of local forces.

Belarus

Russia appears to be moving vehicles and equipment into Belarus, according to Belarus partisans. A train carrying approximately 60 vehicles was spotted near the town of Zhabinka only 40 kms from the Ukrainian border. The vehicles were a mixture of MP-2 and MT-LB which usually indicates an infantry unit of a battalion minus. The article by Yahoo news did not indicate whether there were other train loads of equipment. Russia used Belarus territory at the start of the war. Any attempt by Russia to use Belarus territory would need significantly more troops and equipment to be a viable attack force but it may simply be replacement equipment for the Belarus military or part of a security force. Self-proclaimed President Lukashenko has asked the Belarus military for operations but in past his own forces have been less than enthusiastic in joining Russia's attack.

Israel-Hamas War

The war seems to be continuing at a lower level of violence while talks are ongoing. Israel is continuing plans for further actions including a comprehensive attack on Rafah. This being said, Israel's forces are continuing to discover new tunnels used by Hamas which allows Hamas operatives to fire rockets even from areas previously cleared. Israel is continuing to destroy or exploit tunnels by various means including flooding with fresh water. Hostage talks are ongoing in Qatar but Hamas will not release all the hostages but have agreed to release approximately thirty women and children in exchange for 300+ Hamas prisoners, most of whom were found guilty of terrorist actions in previous incidents. This is a festering sore without a logical conclusion. Israel will not tolerate a hostile Palestinian state as a neighbour. Before the current conflict there was general acceptance of the two state solution; this attitude is dead within the Israeli public. Further conflict is inevitable and there appears to be no viable solution in the near term.

Russia-Ukraine War

If Russia were to win over Ukraine in the near term any hope of peace and security in Europe will end. Western countries are ignoring the gorilla in the room. Ukraine cannot be left to fend for itself, it not only needs ammunition and equipment, it needs actual support. The liberal democracies are currently playing with fire by not sending every measure of support they can, including perhaps organized volunteer formations of volunteer troops to augment Ukrainian forces as well as larger number of tanks, armour vehicles, logistics vehicles, artillery, helicopters, fighters and transports. Denmark set the example by sending all of its artillery, and all members should consider doing the same in some fashion along with gearing up for war production. Russia has to be stopped.

The war continues with Russia being on the offensive across the entire front, although Ukraine has picked their targets for counter attacks. The bottom line is that Russia is continuing to pound Ukraine and has made steady if small headway in most areas especially around recently taken Avdiikva. Russia continues to use mass attacks over and over again despite severe losses to make these gains. It makes ample use of artillery and glide bombs as well as the heavy and

ongoing attacks. It is simply brutal for all concerned but one has to wonder about the overall end state for Russia.

They are not producing sufficient aircraft, estimated to be currently around twenty first line combat aircraft per year, tanks are now being produced at a rate of 100 per month, missile production is ongoing but generally they have to save up for major attacks, drone production is steadily increasing but sophistication is low in many cases, ammunition production continues at a high rate plus they now seem to get significant amounts from North Korea including ballistic missiles. There are manpower problems that involve recruiting the necessary numbers plus finding time to properly train newly mobilized or conscripted troops. It certainly explains the rather blunt tactics of their attacks. Most attacks now contain a significant number of older tanks and vehicles including T-55 and T-62 tanks, and older armoured personnel carriers including small numbers of BTR-50.

The issue is Russian demographics, the imbalance between men and women, is now more than ten million women than men. Keep in mind that according to earlier reporting in the Moscow Times more than six million Russians lived outside the country before the war. Threats of conscription and mobilization also meant that many men simply left the country when that occurred. This leaves very old, the very young and those with significant health issues including Down's Syndrome, cancer, drug and mental health problems coupled with a high mortality rate from drinking. Russia no longer has the manpower resources of the Soviet Union that won the Great Patriotic War. It is vulnerable.

Russia has another vulnerability and that is its economy which generally has done better than anticipated, allegedly growing by 3% as it converted to a wartime economy. This week saw a ban imposed on the export of gasoline due to the heavy damage inflicted on the industry by Ukrainian drone attacks, cutting production around 12% nationally. A major steel facility was also attacked effectively near Moscow this week, damaging key components of the plant. The steel plant's owner, Yury Antipov, and his wife were also arrested on fraud charges for the illegal purchase of the steel plant during the early days of the Yeltsin government. As a result, all his holdings have been nationalized by the state. His real crime was to transfer funds and assets to "unfriendly countries." He was worth 700m USD. His trial has been kept under wraps. One suspects that some sort of accident is inevitable. Putin's ongoing attacks on the oligarchs continues unabated. Such actions are meant to keep them in line one suspects.

The performance of Russian weapons systems have caused great concern for Russia's usual clients. Quite simply, the weapons systems of all types continue to fail at their primary function. The images of even the newest tanks sending their turrets skyward is understandably disconcerting. Although Russian equipment is cheap and it was plentiful, it is also less than attractive to militaries that want to survive at least. Russia's air defence systems have also been unable to stop Ukraine's strategic attacks on key infrastructure as far away as Moscow as there has been a steady supply of video on strategic targets often filmed by pro-Ukrainian Russians. Again a vaunted multi-layered system has consistently failed to perform, including video showing Ukrainian cruise missiles flying over an S-400 and S-300 missile batteries without harm. It was not a good look.

With last week's death of Alexei Navalny while under arrest at a maximum security prison under questionable circumstances, it also seemed to some to be the end of opposition to Putin. First, despite strong efforts to conceal the disproportionate deaths of non-ethnic Russians, it is now in the open and Russian security forces have been sent to quell dissent across the country with limited success. Navalny's funeral in Moscow is likely to be a flash point for at least some. It is becoming apparent to police and security personnel that they compose a sizeable chunk of available manpower that could end up at the front. Putin's main supporters are finding the time difficult as pensions and pay no longer cover daily necessities due to higher taxes, reduced pensions and inflation. While there is no longer an obvious organized opposition in the country, Putin's actual popularity is much reduced. At some point there may be an incident that starts a movement to remove the dictator. There is opposition. Russia has a long history of repression but also violent outbursts of anger against the ruling authority, one seems to sense this in Russia once again. It isn't in the open but it is there, biding its time, waiting for a catalyst. The opposition is not dead.

Russia lost somewhere around 12 or 13 aircraft in the past two weeks including eight SU-34 fighter bombers, two SU-35 fighters, one A-50 AWAC, possibly one SU-25 ground attack aircraft and one KA-52 attack helicopter to Ukrainian air defence units.

Ukrainian units have withdrawn successfully from Avdiikva with discipline despite horrendous circumstances, although they have not been able to stop the current offensive. Still, an army able to withdraw successfully from a seemingly helpless situation speaks well for the future. Ukraine will receive its first F-16 fighters this June and possibly Swedish Grypen and French Mirage 2000 aircraft will also be made available. This will likely give Ukraine the ability to gain air superiority for specific operations and they will have access to greater numbers of replacements than Russia. In the longer term, Ukraine's capability in the air will have a major impact on the war. On the downside, longer range missiles and other similar assets have not been provided as yet but are under consideration.

Lastly, Russian President Putin signed a decree re-organizing the Russian military districts. There are five major districts: Eastern, Central, South, Moscow and Leningrad. The Western Military District and the Northern Fleet Joint Area have been disbanded. The reasoning is to counter NATO's expansion into Sweden and Finland and the north as well as continuing to meet NATO in western Europe. Essentially it is a return to past organizations. The effect on the Northern Fleet and the new proposed Arctic Fleet are unknown at this time. Russia is continuing to reorganize - one wonders if Scipio Africanus will again be proven correct "Order, counter-order, disorder." Time will tell.

China

China's economy continues to do poorly with the middle class essentially losing everything or taking measures to leave China with as much of their assets as possible. It has shown up in the Mexico-US border where thousands of Chinese citizens try to gain asylum in the US and other neighbouring countries in search of a better life. Those who only had investments in their own property or properties being built lost their family wealth. China had spent many years developing the middle class. It was the basic covenant with the Party that the Party would

create conditions for wealth and the general public remained away from the working of the Party. This is failing along with the dreams of wealth through real estate and other financial institutions, but property developers and bank failures are part of the overall downfall of the Chinese economy. Those who were unable to leave essentially lost everything. The Party had to do something, either resolve the crisis and continue to develop the economy or take a more draconian approach and re-institute rigorous security measures to protect the Party and crackdown on society. The Party lacks the imagination and ability to deal with a free market economy and the cracks are showing. One can expect further increase in security measures in the next few years. China is returning to a darker past.

One aspect that also caused this crackdown is the CEO of key industries who developed a sense of independence and felt able to argue with the Party. Jack Ma and Pony Ma discovered the hard way that the Party is still supreme and would do whatever it had to retain overall control. Independent thinkers who are relatively independent of the Party became a threat, therefore the Party acted to quell any possibility of these individuals from being too independent. Often this meant imprisonment and the requirement to pay massive fines and essentially sign the company over to the Party, thus negating the ability of the former business mogul from any further ability to influence the situation.

China under the Communist Chinese Party is increasing its level of surveillance and taking actions against even minor infractions, using the social welfare system with its huge net of police and other security personnel, cameras, sensors, and informants to create a comprehensive system straight out of George Orwell's 1984, even changing the language as circumstances change. It is not a system that allows for too much success unless it is the success of the Party. Although China continues to fund the armed forces well, the real budget effort is the security apparatus which actually gets the larger amount. They are ever present and always active. Currently they are also responsible for the financial outlook of the economy. In Canada that would be like CSIS or the RCMP taking over the economy except they do not have the coercive power that Chinese security forces have at present.

A good example has been made available this past week by several Chinese-American Vloggers on YouTube. It was an examination of the CEO of Evergrande the large property management/developer which has recently been liquidated. He is Xu Jiajin who founded the massive company from scratch and became one of the wealthiest people in China. He became this way because of shrewd business dealings but by also allegedly providing young women from his Evergrande dance troupe for sexual favours to high ranking members of the Party and wealthy clients. Many of the "dancers" became relatively wealthy but all good things come to an end especially when your business scheme and model collapse. National security was more than interested about who were involved and who participated.

Security also raided seven US-based firms offices in China based on national security issues. Several people have been arrested and most have been forced to close down and or been subject to intense scrutiny of the administration of these companies. Although Chinese representatives states they want foreign investment, their actions prove otherwise, thus creating a wave of withdrawals from the Chinese economy. China is not a friendly place to invest or even be safe as a foreign business person.

China continues its harassment of its neighbours in the South China Sea, in particular the Philippines but others as well. China has been careful not to go too far and to select an adversarial neighbour. The Philippines is supported by the US and other allied countries so they have actually been forceful but not going out of the way to actually sink ships as an example.

China is not doing well.

Security Affairs Committee Synopsis 8 March

O Canada

Canada was one of the arsenals of democracy during the Second World War. Post war, as the Soviet threat increased, we were instrumental in rebuilding the armed forces of many of our European allies. We produced everything including some of our own designs: aircraft, ships, tanks, trucks, artillery and ammunition. We developed new technologies in radar, sonar, rockets and missiles. Somehow, we lost all of this in favour of depending on the United States for our defence including production. We are apparently considering restarting ammunition production of artillery rounds. It would require the expenditure of 400m CAD to do this and it will take two years to put in place. Considering the amount of money otherwise wasted, this is a pittance and would have a major impact for our allies by providing a relatively safe location for ammunition production. We have ship and boat yards that are capable of expansion and may be able to assist in the production of various smaller vessels including USV such as our target vessels called "Hammerhead." (*Editor: drones originated as aerial targets.*) We certainly have the ability to ramp up in many areas and we should as soon as possible.

We now face an unrepentant Russia, one more in line with the nineteenth century rather than the 21st. Russia has attacked another country and it is alleged to be conducting destabilization operations in the Middle East and Africa. It has exploited client countries for their resources, such as the extraction of gold, which has allowed Russia to help its crippled economy. They have bluntly stated what they intend to do and it does not stop at Ukraine. We are already seeing information operations against Moldova, Poland and Germany as well as ramped up exercises and operations of its fleet and air force. They mean what they say and we are being overly naïve if we think otherwise. Russia is not the only authoritarian regime in trouble and looking for an outside "problem/enemy" to help focus their increasingly restless population. We are sticking our head in the sand by not getting ready; better to be ready and not have to use it rather than using hope. Canada needs to wake up. Recent polling confirms that Canadians are now realizing the problem, the government needs to act.

Australia

Our Australian correspondent has been active as per normal. The articles below show an Australia that seems to have a much former grip on reality in its foreign, defence and security policies. They are looking at the world with a realistic point of view and are establishing the necessary instruments to ensure their safety in relation

<https://gcaptain.com/australia-philippines-sign-maritime-accord-as-china-rises/>

This is significant. One would expect joint naval patrols and exercises in the Philippine operating areas.

<https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/australias-future-fleet-frigates-and-tomahawks-or-tugboats-and-pyrotechnics/>

The article starts a discussion on the need for high quality intelligence facilities and people in the Australian defence forces and other government agencies. This will be a challenge.

<https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/asio-we-love-it-when-the-a-teams-plan-doesnt-come-together/>

This is a further article concerning Australia intelligence services.

<https://www.news.com.au/finance/business/mining/world-turmoil-leaves-australia-in-free-fall-as-mineral-prices-drop/news-story/74f9221bd7d45a4c6a3b1bc5aba77630>

A different news story. Minerals are a key component to Australia society and economy. Their monetary value and impact upon the economy are essential to the function of the society. Any serious disruption to its flow from the mines to the markets would severely impact their society.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/australia-welcomes-southeast-asia-leaders-with-fresh-maritime-security-funding-2024-03-03/>

Australia money is being invested in maritime security.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/3/4/australia-gives-41mn-to-asean-countries-for-free-open-south-china-sea>

Another Australian investment un regional security.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/3/4/australia-gives-41mn-to-asean-countries-for-free-open-south-china-sea>

There is money for support of political goals.

<https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/is-australia-japan-defence-cooperation-about-to-be-throttled-up/>

The development of a strong security relationship between Japan and Australia remains a work in progress, apparently slow careful process. History has to be a factor.

<https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/security-cooperation-steps-up-with-japanese-f-35-access-to-australia/>

Time cures relationships.

<https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/china-shows-how-western-governments-should-stockpile-minerals/>

What is Ottawa doing? Stockpiling or snoozing?

<https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/why-asean-australia-summits-matter/>

The last paragraph in this article says it all. Our politicians and civil servants should be taking note.

United States

The US is still involved in operations around the world. They continue to support the liberal democratic world. Allies are rearming but the process is slow. Western allies can criticize, but the US is doing much more than its fair share and there is an increasingly strong movement within the US to question why. We ignore this at our peril.

Moldova

The Russian disinformation campaign is ramping up as Moldova has two new elections, one a referendum on joining the EU and the second the presidential election. Russia has had some success in other local elections to date. Moldova has taken action to minimize Russian television in Moldova but Russia's reach and influence still is far reaching including control of Transnistria, the breakaway region controlled by Russian supporters.

Moldova is entering into a bi-lateral defence and economic pact with France. This will allow France to assist in training, assessments of Moldovan defence needs and intelligence sharing as well as providing new weapons including modern air defence systems. The new pact will be signed in Paris in the near future. It should also be noted that President Macron is pushing for a European solution including creation of a European army to face Russia especially in light of increasing US isolationism. He also is looking to form a coalition of willing partners to help support Ukraine. There is concern that support has been waning - Macron seems to understand the very real threat to Europe by Russia. Moldova seems to be the next target based on Russian efforts.

Moldova is also suspending the Conventional Arms Limitation Treaty. The Treaty, signed by 16 NATO and six Warsaw Pact countries, originally set limitations on tanks, armoured fighting vehicles, artillery, combat aircraft and attack helicopters. Suspension will allow Moldova to re-organize and equip its armed forces to better meet NATO standards and to transition to Western equipment.

Belarus

Belarus is walking an increasingly narrow path in between the West including Ukraine and the Russian regime of Vladimir Putin. It appears that Belarus soldiers are being trained by former Wagner soldiers, and Belarus is ramping up their special forces. Belarus has about 100k security forces. The reliability of these forces is in some doubt but coercion works. An attack by Belarus into Ukraine's north would be unfortunate for everyone. Still, despite Russian vehicles being seen entering Belarus, there are indications that Russian forces are also leaving Belarus at Belarus' insistence. The regime is not sure it will survive if it openly supports Russia. Belarus pro-Ukraine partisans continue their operations whenever possible so regime change is not out of the question.

Israel-Hamas War

The war is ongoing with Israel conducting small local operations against specific targets. Hamas is still firing a reduced number of rockets at Israel from the northern part of Gaza. Both sides have provided 'new' ceasefire proposals but it is hampered by Israel's non-participation in the Cairo talks. Both accuse the other side of not responding to their proposals but it is suggested that neither side has backed away from points that are unacceptable to the other side. This will not change in the near term.

As mentioned in previous notes, the world is asking Israel to accept the survival of Hamas in real terms. Israel has no intention of Hamas having any place in any future development in the Middle East. After four wars and 7 October 2024, Israel is not going to be amenable to the survival of Hamas.

Canada has embarrassed itself by announcing restarting funding to UNRWA. An organization that allowed a fortress to be built under their noses, anti-Semitic education to be developed and wide spread reallocation of badly needed resources into the hands of Hamas. UNRWA is part of the problem, not part of the solution.

Iran

Iran had an election last weekend. The candidates were selected for their support of the regime and therefore the election would not provide a change in national policies but would continue the power of the theocracy. Iranians have no actual ability to support change in Iran. Their only tool was to simply not vote and thus show that the regime does have the support of the population. The turnout was the lowest to date, just under 41% of those eligible voted. The number of disallowed ballots was also high. Iran has a problem that is not going away and is getting more problematic.

Iran has continued to support Russia's action by providing weapons and engineering design support for Russian drone development efforts. Russia will be providing a number of SU-35 in return.

Russia-Ukraine War

The war continues with Russia taking severe losses for little movement on the ground. British sources state that there are up to six Russians killed for every Ukrainian fatality. Even Russia cannot continue to absorb such a level of casualties on a long term basis. Russian demographics will not support it. There are already ten million more women than men in the Russian population. Russia is not the Soviet Union.

The Russian economy has been transformed into a war economy and this change has apparently created growth but at the same time Russia continues to go into debt as it is improving its weapons production. Tanks are now apparently being built at a rate of 100 per month. Although some are rebuilds and modernization of older models a sizeable number are

T-90M. Aircraft are being built as well, but most are modernizations of existing models or are old aircraft in storage being brought back into service. An excellent example is the provision of a 'new' A-50 to help replace the loss of three A-50 since the start of the war, two shot down recently over or near the Azov Sea, the other lost to partisans in an attack on a Russian-manned field. Total aircraft production however remains around 20 to 25 in total, hampered in part by Western sanctions.

The other aspect is Ukraine's strategic attacks on key infrastructure, especially oil infrastructure. Eight oil industry targets have been attacked in recent months as far away as Yekaterinburg in central Russia. These targets have been selected to cause maximum damage to production such as cracking towers which require access to Western equipment to repair. One can expect Ukraine to continue to attack these targets.

The Black Sea fleet continues to have losses - this week saw the destruction of a Russian patrol vessel, the *Sergei Kotov*, one of the newest vessels in the fleet used as an escort and guard vessel at the Kerch bridge. The vessel was destroyed by up to five Ukrainian unmanned surface vessels. Although the vessel seemed to be firing, it was incapable of protecting itself from these attacks. It had previously been damaged in an earlier attack and had been repaired. The vessel was sunk near the Kerch bridge. A direct attack on the bridge is likely in the near future. Russia is still very dependent on the bridge for a significant portion of logistic support for the war. Its loss will have a significant effect on the war. Russia has been forced to build a totally new rail system in the occupied areas, all of which can be hit with existing ammunition types available to Ukraine.

Ukraine's allies have been slow to provide support and Ukraine is losing ground steadily. Avdiikva was recently lost but it did shorten the defence lines and although the withdrawal was somewhat late, it was done well avoiding losses that could have been much greater. Some wounded personnel were left to be cared for by the Russians, however, apparently they were shot after their capture. It is being investigated as a war crime. Ukraine is likely to continue to lose ground without substantial support and increased access to better and greater numbers of modern weapons. This being said, Ukrainian forces have been successful and able to regain some of the ground around Avdiikva in the east. Early days as yet, but there are sources now suggesting that Russian forces have lost their momentum despite their numbers. Without support, Ukraine is in no position to exploit this change in circumstances though it can do local offensive operations in the near to medium term. The Putin regime continues to threaten a nuclear response including by 'leaking' of Russian nuclear doctrine - they are getting value for its threats and they are likely to continue as Western leadership wring their hands as opposed to taking action. Russia will not stop with the current regime. Regime change in Russia is necessary and to leave it in place is just delaying an inevitable conflict.

NATO now has 32 countries as Hungary signed the ascension of Sweden to NATO. If one looks at the Baltic area, Russia is now relegated to St Petersburg and Kaliningrad. NATO naval forces are now overwhelming and NATO is unlikely to be intimidated by current naval Russian forces in the Baltics. Russia has very little opportunity to conduct naval operations anywhere as all five fleets/squadrons are essentially trapped. One should also note that NATO air forces are far more numerous and capable than Russian air units. Russia has one area of

actual advantage and that is their nuclear weapons. It is the only advantage and it can only be used once and it is likely that they are actually more effective as a threat.

This week as part of a Times Radio interview, former chief of the UK Defence Force Lord Dannett discussed the lack of urgent action by the allies to give Ukraine all the weapons and ammunition it needs. He also stated that during the peak of the Cold War, the UK spent 5% of its GDP on defence. He also reminded the audience that the UK spent 46% of the GDP in 1941, emphasizing that a 'hot war' is much more expensive in so many ways than one that is contained, and he suggested that allies have to understand that a Ukrainian loss would increase the possibility of a hot war many times over. He is correct, and all NATO and allied countries have to be absolutely clear of what a Ukrainian loss would entail for their own countries and populations.

China

The Communist Chinese Party (CCP) is conducting two sessions for the Peoples' Congress. It is the rubber stamp "parliament" that basically votes en mass for actions previously decided by the Politburo. This year they did not have their usual press conference which had been a symbol of China's openness. This year Xi overrode his Premier, Li Qiang, who normally responsible for this presentation on the economy. Most onlookers suggest that the economic forecast was an illusion which called for a 5% growth rate. The collapse of the property development industry coupled with rising debt of lower level governments and citizens have put most hope for growth as unrealistic. Foreign investment is also dropping showing the worst levels since 1993. Banking issues, industry shut downs and the decline of key industries with a high unemployment rate (up to 35% of unemployed/underemployed), especially amongst the young, have shattered consumer confidence and damaged the ability of citizens to buy consumer goods that would help to strengthen the economy. This will not occur this year and it is unlikely that the CCP will be able to reverse the overall downward trend.

The defence budget has been increased by 7.2% at nearly 232b USD. Comments on Taiwan reunification were made for forceful reunification thus seeming to show greater assertion. The increased defence budget also means China is likely to be more forceful with its direct relations with neighbours. It is second only to the US.

China continues to increase its pressure on the Philippines by placing greater numbers of fishing boats, Maritime Militia and Coast Guard vessels around internationally-recognized Philippine territory. This week saw a Chinese Coast Guard vessel ram a Philippine equivalent and use water cannon on the vessel causing injuries to four Philippine Coast Guardsmen. China has also placed a boom across as atoll surrounding Mischief Reef, preventing Philippine resupply efforts to outposts. It is expected that China will continue these actions. Australia and the Philippines will be conducting joint patrols in the South China Sea. Taiwan also has seen a steady increase in Chinese activity in the air and at sea.

China continues to occupy East Turkistan and Tibet which were subject to invasion in 1950. It also continues to create new regulations to further restrict democratic forces in Hong Kong and Macau. We also see the Chinese regime conduct operations other than war against all of its

neighbours, Taiwan and the Philippines as well as India. China is an authoritarian and imperialistic country. Without a forceful response they will continue to conduct this type of operation. The bottom line is that no liberal democracy should be "surrendered" to the Chinese regime. The CCP will lie and make promises and agreements and then ditch these agreements when they feel the timing is right.

Public Update: Land-Based Testing Facility (Hartlen Pont)

Please be advised that new information on the LBTF project is now available at www.tridentnewspaper.com/lbtf. This information includes:

1. an update on the status of current site preparation work;
2. a construction timeline update, noting that construction will now take place between winter 2025 and late fall 2027 (timeline subject to change);
3. the latest preliminary rendering of the facility; and
4. an updated [Frequently Asked Questions page](#).

You can view the full update by visiting www.tridentnewspaper.com/lbtf.

At this time, there is minimal information to be delivered beyond the construction updates provided in this latest website update. With that said, the project team recognizes that members of the public have questions regarding various aspects of this project including the Radio Frequency emissions and licensing processes and the future operation of the facility. When further information becomes available on these topics, updates will be provided.

Project inquiries

If you have any questions as this project progresses, please don't hesitate to contact CFBHalifaxPublicAffairs@forces.gc.ca and we will do our very best to provide responses in a timely manner in coordination with the LBTF project team. Should the information you're seeking be unavailable at this stage in the project, we will keep your questions on file to be answered as details become available.

While we continue our efforts to provide project information to the community, members of the public are also welcome and encouraged to promote the Trident website and these emails through their formal or informal networks. Links are as follows.

English: www.tridentnewspaper.com/LBTF

French: www.tridentnewspaper.com/fr/LBTF

Thank you for your continued interest in this project.
Public Affairs | Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Halifax
CFBHalifaxPublicAffairs@forces.gc.ca

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

NATO Defense Spending

Great visualization.



Seabed Warfare

ian bremmer @ianbremmer 5 Mar posted: us officials: undersea cables cut in red sea (affecting 25% of data traffic btw asia and europe)

There's a lot more to mapping the sea bottom than just silt and wrecks.

