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RUSI VI

*To promote national defence and security issues
through discussion and engagement*

**Newsletter of the Royal United Services Institute
of Vancouver Island**

The Royal United Services Institute of Vancouver Island is a member of the Conference of Defence Associations. The CDA is the oldest and most influential advocacy group in Canada's defence community, consisting of associations from all parts of the country.

The CDA expresses its ideas and opinions with a view to influencing government security and defence policy. It is a non-partisan, independent, and non-profit organization.



September 2023

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President's Message

A bit more history on the founding of RUSI-VI. In our last Newsletter we introduced you to RUSI-VI's first President, Lieutenant-General Sir Percy Lake KCB, KCMG elected at our first meeting on 1 December, 1927. Of course, Sir Percy was only one of over 200 serving and retired military officers who founded the then United Services Institution of Vancouver Island (USI-VI). The senior Executive Board positions consisted of an Honorary President- the Honourable R. Randolph Bruce, Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia; Vice-President Col Cy Peck VC, DSO & Bar; three Honorary Vice-Presidents BGen J.M. Ross CMG, DSO and District Officer Commanding Military District No. 11; Commander F.W. Nelles RCN (SNO- Esquimalt); and Honorary Col W.C. Nichol. A further sixteen Executive Board working members were elected with representatives of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Active Militia and Imperial officers. In addition to adopting a constitution at that first meeting, it was also resolved that the Institution's first formal dinner would be on Thursday 23 December at the Empress Hotel. The topic was *The Retreat From Mons, 1914* with Col W.W. Foster DSO as speaker.

While you ponder the above, our first Vice-President, Col Cy Peck, provides some thoughts about winning the Victoria Cross, given to a Victoria Gyro Club luncheon in 1929:

"There were probably many who deserved the VC but did not get it because their acts of bravery and heroism did not come under recognition. Those of us who received the award feel, therefore, that we but typify the gallantry of his Majesty's forces." Some people are of the belief that a man who held the VC was some sort of demigod. "It is not always possible for VCs to tolerate this attitude. Let me assure you that we are not different from anyone else. In fact, I think I can say that no man who won the VC knew at the time that he was going to get it. He saw a job, knew that it was up to him to do it, and he did it. That's all. It was up to other people to estimate the value of the work done. "

Scott H. Osborne
President
Royal United Services Institute of Vancouver Island

Upcoming Speakers and topics:

- **13 September, 2023.** BGen (Ret'd) Gregory C.P. Matte, PhD: *Fighter Jet Procurement for the F-35* (exact title TBC).
- **11 October, 2023.** Angus Scully: *In Our Youth: The Lives, Adventures, and Sacrifices of Early Canadian Flyers*. Books will be available for sale, details to follow.
- **8 November, 2023.** Mark Zuehlke: *Ortona: Canada's Epic World War Two Battle*. Books will be available for sale, details to follow. To be complimented with a possible weapons display from the C Scot R Museum, TBC.

Editor's Comment:

A little more attention to Canadian topics via consideration of countries in similar positions to ours. New Zealand's sleeping giant is Australia – Our giant is the US. I have included an article from RUSI Victoria (Australia that is) which considers the recent Head of State visit of NZ to China from their perspective. Do we look at visits of our PM to China and others in a different way? The final paragraph is telling:

“But a state visit should remain a goal. Diplomacy is the art of influencing others. Although challenging to manage publicly, state visits help stabilise relations and build the foundation for the tough conversations required down the track.”

Then there is Defence Readiness:

A reporter recently asked RUSI (Nova Scotia) how have Canadian commitments to Ukraine affected Canada's defence readiness. That's a question best answered by a question or many. Here are their thoughts on this.

“That's a huge subject. How does one measure defence readiness? Number of people, tanks, ships and aircraft? Training and exercising? Logistics? There can be (has been) everything from simple dashboards to book-length questionnaires to attempt to measure readiness. A lot of the answers are not visible to the general public (security) and probably, many politicians don't know how to get the answers (answers they should have, as they too should be asking the question). Really, only the general and flag officers have/should have the answers, resulting from staff analyses. It is reasonable to expect that the true answers will only be given to politicians in classified sessions, but it is not unreasonable that the public, media and politicians ask the senior officers how they determine the answers in the first place. Some are apparent: aircraft sortie rates, ship sea time, artillery ammunition stocks. There are many more ways to assess readiness.

Those of us on the outside can only guess. One can guess, what with the very public shortfalls of numbers of people in the Forces, and the not-so-public and therefore suspect amount of funding going to parts and consumables, that defence readiness is not good. Ukraine is exacerbating a situation that has been building for many more years than before that current war started (whether one defines start as 2022 or 2014 or earlier).”

Finally with the move of MND Anand from Defence to Treasury, we must ask was this due to the Minister looking at the CAF and telling it like it is, which was apparently too much for the government? The pressures that national crises, such as Forest Fires, Housing and Medical Services, (to name a few) are having on the government, recall that they are vote getters – is that what is causing them to react. What of International affairs? This seems not an issue for the greater body of Canadians. We see that in the recent survey on Canadian's impression on the Canadian Military – our first article.

How do Canadians view the military? Most see it as 'old and antiquated,' poll finds

By [David Baxter](#) Global News

Posted August 4, 2023 1:00 am Updated August 4, 2023 6:17 am

More than half of Canadians (56 per cent) see the **Canadian Armed Forces** (CAF) as “old and antiquated,” according to a recent Ipsos poll conducted exclusively for Global News.

The findings are in line with polling the defence department conducted between Dec. 19, 2022 and Jan. 15, 2023. That phone and internet survey found only one in five Canadians saw the CAF as a modern institution, with 29 per cent saying it's outdated.

Ipsos CEO Darrell Bricker says most respondents to its poll, conducted in June, said there is a way to shift this perspective: put more money into the armed forces.

“The solution to that, Canadians tell us, is probably giving them more money. And if they could just find their way through the, what Canadians see as incompetence and political interference ... Canadians feel that they could get there. But at the moment, definitely not there,” Bricker told Global News.

Seventy-five per cent of those polled by Ipsos said Canada should increase defence spending to ensure Canada can protect its own territory and sovereignty.

The poll found there were a number of reasons spurring Canadians' worries about military readiness.

Most Canadians said their concerns about defending Canada are directly related to Russia's invasion of Ukraine (71 per cent) and China's recent actions in the Taiwan Strait (69 per cent). [in East China Sea](#)

Retired major-general Denis Thompson says all branches of the Canadian Forces are in need of modernized equipment, such as frigates for the Navy and incoming F-35 fighter jets for the Air Force.

Ottawa has committed to \$8 billion in new military spending over the next five years in the 2022–23 federal budget, along with a defence policy update.

Thompson says any spending needs to be seen as an investment.

“Deterrence is much cheaper than going to war. And I think that's the point that has to be made to a lot of Canadians, is that while we can rest on our laurels and perhaps lean on the United States, they're not going to put up with it for much longer,” Thompson told Global News.

Ipsos found that a larger number of young people, 36 per cent of 18- to 34-year-olds, say Canada should leave defence up to the United States, compared with 12 per cent of those 55 and older.

The majority of that younger cohort (66 per cent) would rather see money being spent on other domestic issues, whereas 41 per cent of those 55 and older felt that way.

However, the Americans are pushing for more Canadian defence investment with continued calls for Canada to meet its NATO commitment of putting two per cent of GDP into defence spending, and further NORAD investment. *'At the kids*

Bricker, Thompson and the defence department study all find that the average Canadian is disconnected from the day-to-day operations of the CAF, but the war in Ukraine is increasing public awareness.

However, amid issues impacting Canadians' daily lives, like the high cost of living, potential threats from nations like Russia can fall by the wayside in the minds of regular Canadians.

"Health care, better roads, have better education. These are things that are top of mind for most Canadians. And defence only comes to the fore when there's a crisis. And Ukraine is a crisis. But it's a long way from Canada," Thompson said.

Safeguarding the North

One area where Canadians feel the military should play a larger role is in the Arctic, Ipsos found. Melting polar ice is making way for new shipping routes and is a new source of East-West geopolitical tensions.

Key findings on northern defence include 83 per cent in favour of the military monitoring all ship traffic through the Northwest Passage – which passes through Canadian waters.

Meanwhile, 73 per cent of Canadians surveyed want to see more military bases in the Arctic, and 51 per cent are on board with Canada buying nuclear submarines to defend the region.

"The thing that probably is driving their biggest level of concern is our northern neighbour, which is Russia, and what's going on in Ukraine right now. And some of those old Cold War feelings towards Russia and the North are probably coming back up," Bricker said.

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between June 19 and 20, 2023, on behalf of Global News. For this survey, a sample of 1,000 Canadians aged 18+ was interviewed. Quotas and weighting were employed to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the Canadian population according to census parameters. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll is accurate to within ± 3.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all Canadians aged 18+ been polled. The credibility interval will be wider among subsets of the population. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to, coverage error and measurement error.

The Next Big Space Business: Satellite Pictures of Other Satellites



Radio telescopes and a satellite on the background of the starry sky. Space exploration GETTY IMAGES

As space debris proliferates and new weapons appear, a new market is rising to document it all.

BY PATRICK TUCKER

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY EDITOR, DEFENSE ONE AUGUST 11, 2023

Satellite images, long used by militaries to track developments on Earth, are increasingly being used to keep tabs on the proliferating objects in space.

Maxar Technologies has been filling U.S. government orders for images of objects in space for “several years,” said Kumar Navulur, the company’s director of strategic business development. The subjects include not just objects in highly populated low Earth orbits but in medium Earth orbits, geostationary orbits, and even beyond. And since August, when Maxar received a license from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the company seeks to sell space imagery to satellite and launch companies looking to keep track of their orbiting assets.

Navulur said imagery can help solve problems of space-traffic management—for example, “As more satellites are being launched with so much debris, how do you maneuver around that and make sure that you can get [new satellites] to that orbit?”

Navulur said that while terrestrial cameras can take images of stationary objects, satellite cameras offer several advantages. “The timeliness would be the number one feature”, he said. They can currently deliver images within 72 hours and are looking to get that down to minutes.

Another is that having multiple image satellites in orbit allows Maxar to photograph an object from multiple vantage points and better track it as it moves.

“The way we do this is we have modeling-and-simulation software,” said Navulur “Modeling and simulation will say that ‘Here's a conjunction that's going to happen tomorrow or three days from now or a week from now’.”

U.S. military officials have been sounding the alarm on strangely behaving satellites ever since the 2014 launch of a Russian satellite that moved in a novel way and came very close to two Intelsat satellites. Russia has since launched satellites that can attack other satellites. And on the eve of its expanded invasion of Ukraine in 2022, Russia staged a coordinated (ground) attack against Ukraine’s satellite communications.

Space Force officials have described “space situational awareness” as a key need, a market that could reach \$1.78 billion by 2028.

But since the satellites taking pictures of objects in space are the same satellites that the world relies on for images of the Earth, expect a lot more launches to better cover both the ground and the sky.

NATO’s Interests in a Stable Indo-Pacific



Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese at the NATO summit in Lithuania.

By Allan du Toit*

Australian Naval Institute <https://navalinstitute.com.au/natos-interest-in-a-stable-pacific>

Recent strident assertions by former Australian prime minister Paul Keating that NATO has no place in Asia and should limit itself to Europe and the Atlantic and not try to expand into the Asia–Pacific are misjudged and should not be allowed to pass unchallenged (The Australian Strategic Policy Institute. The Strategist.)

With global commerce and security interests more interconnected than ever, NATO, the world’s premier political-military alliance, and one of the most successful collective security enterprises in history, understands that developments in the Indo-Pacific region are highly relevant to global cooperative security.

Regional and collective defence commitments will always be paramount for NATO but cannot be its defining perspective in an increasingly globalised, interconnected and uncertain world. NATO’s interests do not stop at the Tropic of Cancer in the Atlantic. Contrary to the views of Keating, NATO has a vital interest in a stable Indo-Pacific region, including unhindered lines of communication on, under and above the region’s oceans and seas. This was reaffirmed at the recent NATO summit in Vilnius, Lithuania, where the alliance’s 31 member states agreed that what happens in the Indo-Pacific matters for Europe and therefore for NATO. And, conversely, what happens in Europe matters for Indo-Pacific nations.

Over the past decade, the centre of world power has been shifting from Europe to the Indo-Pacific region. Taking this into account, NATO, which includes three Pacific Rim members—the US, Canada and France—is considering the substance and direction of its regional interests and bilateral cooperative security relationships with its four Asia–Pacific partners. Similarly, these partners—Australia, Japan, New Zealand and South Korea—are considering the best way in which they might each interact and cooperate with NATO, cognisant of their unique geographic and strategic environments. This doesn’t translate into expanding NATO membership and collective defence into the Indo-Pacific. It does, however, need to manifest itself in clear and precise bilateral partnership objectives, opportunities and engagement.

The global maritime trading system, in particular, is one that no one owns but all benefit from. The impact of trade, containerisation and just-in-time supply chains means that good order at sea in the Indian Ocean and the Pacific, including the South China Sea, is just as important to NATO members as the security of trade and shipping in the Atlantic and Mediterranean is to Indo-Pacific nations, including China. It is a system that can only work effectively if there is a strong and determined cooperative and collaborative rules-based international effort to keep the global commons functioning. It is an area where the geostrategic interests of NATO and its Indo-Pacific partners increasingly intersect.

Importantly, the rise in wealth and defence expenditure in the Indo-Pacific is occurring in midst of numerous simmering and unresolved maritime territorial claims, disputes and nuclear crises in the region, including China’s threats over Taiwan and its territorial claims and belligerence in the South China Sea. NATO is not immune from such developments and will not have the luxury to choose the future strategic challenges it will face.

The NATO summit in Vilnius highlighted the growing consensus among NATO members and Asian democracies that China’s increasing power and territorial ambitions pose a significant challenge to global security. The summit’s communiqué criticised China’s ‘coercive policies’ and attempts to ‘subvert the rules-based international order’. While NATO’s focus has traditionally been on Russia, the communiqué’s emphasis on China indicates a significant sharpening of focus. The statement

also highlighted China's attempts to control key sectors, infrastructure and supply chains, and to create strategic dependencies. It did, however, emphasise the importance of constructive engagement with China.

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese stated—rightly, in my view—that democracy, not geography, should define a nation's interests. At the NATO summit, he argued that the struggle between democracy and autocracy is being fought in the Indo-Pacific, with China as a key antagonist. He claimed that China is modernising its military without transparency or assurance about its strategic intent. Speaking to NATO leaders, Albanese said Australia was under pressure from China, but the government's response was principled and level-headed. He added that Australia would cooperate with China where possible, but would also disagree where necessary and always act in its national interest.

UK Defence Secretary Ben Wallace, meanwhile, has warned that the West must develop a more coherent political strategy towards China's expansionist activities in the South China Sea or face a conflict within a decade. In a recent interview with the *Sunday Times*, Wallace said that China's aim of constructing new islands and stationing military equipment in the region could lead to a 'total breakdown of politics in the Pacific'.

While we live in a multipolar world, it is clear that the Indo-Pacific is becoming the stage of intensifying strategic competition—not only military or economic competition, but competing visions for the global order. Above all, the relationship between the United States, the leading member of NATO and a significant Pacific power in its own right, and a rising, prosperous and increasingly confident, assertive and coercive China will, more than any other, determine the outlook for international security and prosperity. Strategic competition between the US and China is a reality, but both should actively seek stability, not conflict, and that should be encouraged by NATO and its partners in the region.

***Allan du Toit** is a retired flag officer in the Royal Australian Navy who served as Australia's military representative to NATO from 2013 to 2016.

Damage to HMCS Winnipeg Limits Warship's Operations

David Pugliese Ottawa Citizen Published Aug 09, 2023

One of the Royal Canadian Navy's frigates has damage to its propeller and structural cracks and corrosion, limiting the operation of the ship.

National Defence confirmed the details this newspaper received from navy personnel about the damage to HMCS Winnipeg, but denied suggestions from those sailors that the Halifax-class frigate might be decommissioned in the near future because of the ongoing issues.

National Defence spokesperson Dan Le Bouthillier confirmed that "structural cracks and corrosion issues were identified which are related to the age of the ship."

But he said those problems would be dealt with next year, when HMCS Winnipeg is docked for a more extensive repair period.

Le Bouthillier also confirmed the problem with the frigate's propeller, which occurred last fall during a mission to the Indo-Pacific. A piece of the edge of one of the propeller's five blades broke off.

"To avoid excessive vibration and possible damage, a speed restriction was placed on the ship until full repairs can be conducted during the ship's next comprehensive docking period," Le Bouthillier said.

He noted that HMCS Winnipeg was continuing to support crew training.

The frigate's propeller was damaged in October 2022. Halifax-class Frigates, such as HMCS Winnipeg, have two propellers.

HMCS Winnipeg will be docked for a year starting in January for extended maintenance, known as a docking work period.

As part of the leadup to that docking, Le Bouthillier said, routine structural surveys of the warship were done and structural cracks and corrosion issues were found. "The most immediate issues were repaired, and, following a rigorous risk assessment, it was determined that the ship could safely continue its current sailing schedule with some restrictions on operating in high sea states," he added. Maximum speed can also be used in case of emergencies.

The Royal Canadian Navy did not answer this newspaper's questions about whether discussions had recently taken place about decommissioning HMCS Winnipeg because of the structural problems. But navy spokesperson Sabrina Nash did say there were "no plans to decommission His Majesty's Canadian Ship Winnipeg in 2024."

Maintenance done on the ship during the docking work period, and other similar work periods that take place every five years, will "ensure the frigates remain effective and continue to serve as a bridge to the future fleet, allowing the Navy to deliver on its core mission until the arrival of the Canadian Surface Combatants," she added.

The Canadian Surface Combatant or CSC project will see the construction of 15 new warships to replace the Halifax-class frigates.

But the CSC project – the largest single expenditure in Canadian history – has been plagued with delays and cost overruns. Concerns have been raised about the lack of accountability and oversight of the program as well as the secrecy surrounding the initiative.

The project was originally approved with a \$26 billion price tag but Parliamentary Budget Officer Yves Giroux estimated last year that cost for the ships is now \$84.5 billion. "Every time we look at this (project) the costs go up," Giroux said at the time. A new cost estimate is expected to be released in the fall by National Defence.

Even as costs continue to rise, National Defence is steadfast that it will not be altering course on the project. CSC was started by the previous Conservative government but by the summer of 2015 it was talking about limiting increasing project costs by reducing the number of ships to be built.

But the incoming Liberal government dismissed that notion and instead committed to all 15 warships. In February 2021, the Department of National Defence revealed that the delivery of the

first surface combatant ship would be delayed until 2030 or 2031. The first ship was originally supposed to be delivered in the early 2020s but that was later changed to 2025, according to DND documents.

David Pugliese is an award-winning journalist covering Canadian Forces and military issues in Canada.



US 'Ready to fight in space if we have to', Says Military Official

Threat posed by 'provocative' Russia and China has left US no choice but to prepare for orbital skirmishes.

Ian Sample Science editor - The Guardian Sun 28 May 2023 08.52 EDT

<https://www.theguardian.com/science/2023/may/28/us-ready-to-fight-in-space-military-official>

The US is ready for conflict in outer space, according to a senior military official, after developing anti-satellite technologies to counter the threats posed by "provocative" countries such as Russia and China.

Brig Gen Jesse Morehouse at US Space Command, the arm of the military responsible for space operations, said Russian aggression and China's vision to become the dominant space power by mid-century, had left the US with "no choice" but to prepare for orbital skirmishes.

"The United States of America is ready to fight tonight in space if we have to," Morehouse told reporters in a briefing at the US embassy in London. "If someone was to threaten the United States of America, or any of our interests, including those of our allies and partners with whom we have treaties of mutual defence support, we are ready to fight tonight."

Satellites underpin great swathes of modern life, from banking systems to weather forecasting, and are crucial for military operations through intelligence gathering, communications, navigation and guidance. But an overreliance on satellites means that an attack on a country's orbital assets could have far-reaching consequences.

Four countries, namely China, the US, India and Russia, have tested anti-satellite capabilities by destroying their own satellites with missiles from the ground. But such demonstrations, which the US unilaterally banned last year, create vast clouds of debris that put other satellites at risk for decades.

When Russia shot down one of its own satellites in 2021, the explosion showered its orbit with more than 1,500 trackable fragments. “When you create that debris cloud and it lingers on orbit for decades, it’s almost like detonating a nuclear weapon in your own back yard,” Morehouse said. “You pay the price too.”

Faced with a new space race, Morehouse said on Thursday the US would continue to develop anti-satellite technologies “not because we want to fight tonight, but because that’s the best way to deter conflict from happening”, adding it would do so “without engaging in irresponsible tests”.

Russia and China are working on spacecraft capable of anti-satellite operations. In 2020, the US accused Russia of launching a projectile from one of two satellites that were trailing a US spy satellite.

Meanwhile, China has launched a satellite with a robotic arm capable of grabbing other satellites and has developed a way to place explosives in the thruster nozzles of adversary’s satellites. The explosives are designed to go undetected for long periods and when detonated resemble an innocent engine malfunction.

Beyond weapons that grab, crash into or shoot down their targets are other approaches that jam satellite broadcasts, or damage the hardware with lasers, chemical sprays or high-power microwaves.

“We have a variety of capabilities we can bring to bear and we’ll continue to develop capabilities that allow us to maintain a credible deterrence posture,” Morehouse said. “Can you develop a capability that can be used to counter satellites, that works very well, and validate that it works without having to create a debris cloud on orbit every time you do so? Absolutely.”

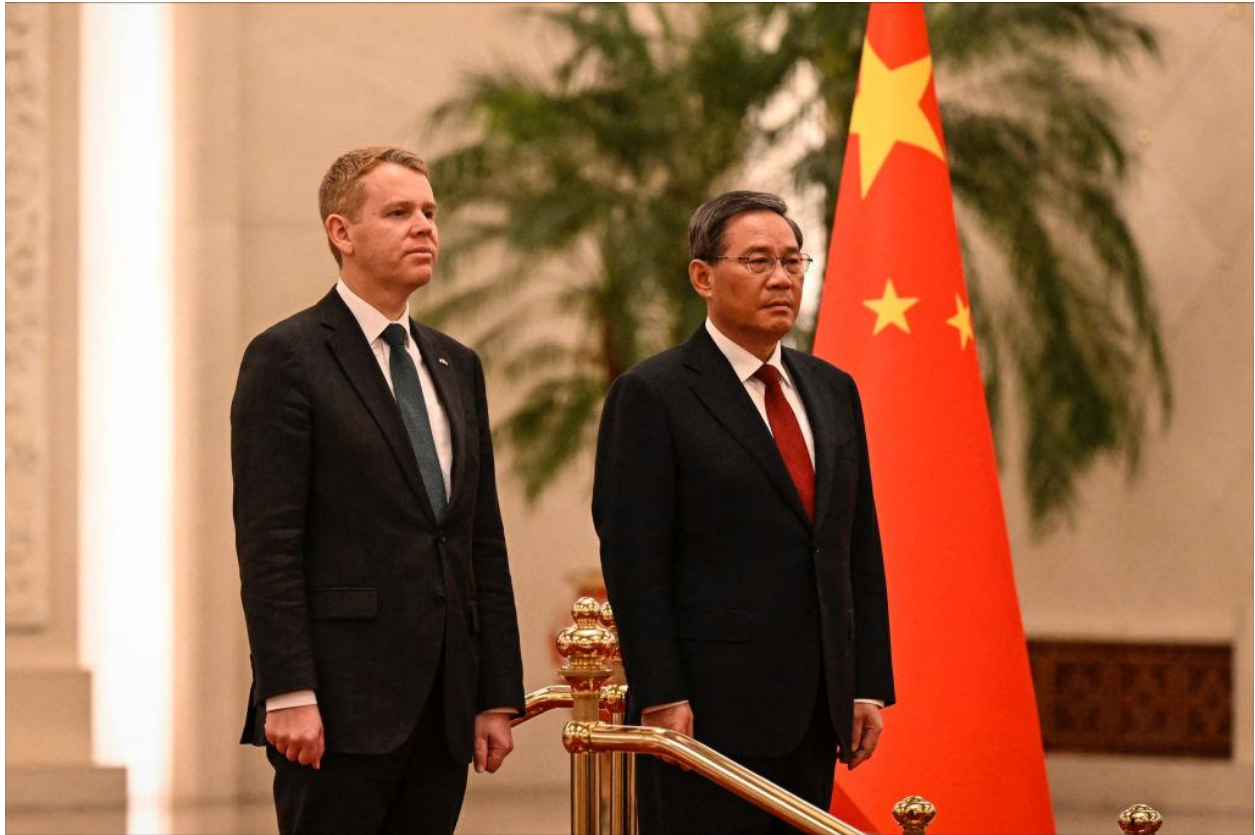
Since its invasion of Ukraine, Russia has threatened to target western commercial satellites it considers to be involved in the war. Shortly after the invasion began, Elon Musk agreed to supply Starlink constellation satellites to Ukraine, which rapidly became crucial to the country’s military. But in February, Starlink said it would prevent the satellites from being used to control Ukrainian drones, saying it never intended the technology to be used for “offensive purposes”.

Morehouse said one of the lessons from the conflict was how resilient Starlink proved to be. The communications network comprises thousands of small satellites in low Earth orbit which are easily replaced and updated to counter the threats they face. “It makes no sense for Russia to even try to shoot one down because there’s thousands of them and they don’t have thousands of anti-satellite missiles,” he said.

“Clearly the Ukrainians have no organic military space capabilities to attack in any way shape or form,” he added. “But ... they’ve been very aggressive in trying to negate those commercial services, which I think is going to be a normal part of warfare in the future. Satellite communications are becoming more and more common across many militaries, and so countering them is something that many nations are interested in.”

The Lessons of New Zealand's China diplomacy

13 Jul 2023 **Jason Young** www.aspistrategist.org.au › the-lessons-of-new



It wasn't that long ago that Australian and New Zealand prime ministers were falling over themselves to run trade missions to the People's Republic of China. Both governments lobbied hard for and secured early free-trade agreements, and both strongly promoted goods and services trade and all manner of bilateral agreements with the PRC.

It was an age of activity that viewed today looks frenzied.

Those efforts helped tether the trans-Tasman economy to the PRC. The resulting dependency has come under intense scrutiny as human rights, geopolitical, geoeconomic and diplomatic challenges have grown, and as the Chinese economy has slowed.

Australasian relations with the PRC have evolved in response. The heart of the recalibration is a rebalancing of the risk–opportunity calculus and a more careful consideration of each country's national interest.

This shift has occurred quietly in New Zealand, largely due to the absence of the dramatic events that characterised Australia–China relations and a keen recognition of New Zealand's trade dependency, but nonetheless that evolution is strikingly similar to the Australian experience.

This shouldn't surprise anyone familiar with trans-Tasman relations.

At first glance, Prime Minister Chris Hipkins's state visit to the PRC in June—in the company of 29 business representatives—appears to fit the earlier Australasian model of engagement with China. It focused on economic engagement, assuaged concerns over a growing list of challenges and

differences in the relationship, and deliberately provided the Chinese government with a public relations win at home and abroad.

This was the first PM-led business delegation to China since April 2016, and the first PM visit since April 2019. It followed a 'robust' meeting in Beijing in May between Foreign Minister Nanaia Mahuta and her Chinese counterpart Qin Gang during which concerns about the human rights situation in Xinjiang, the erosion of rights and freedoms in Hong Kong, developments in the South China Sea, increasing tensions in the Taiwan Strait and the importance of engaging through regional institutions in the Pacific, especially on security matters, were all raised.

With these positions outlined and differences aired at a high level, the PM's June visit went ahead with a focus on trade and economic opportunities and on managing the theatrics of PRC diplomacy. If achieving these limited goals was the purpose of the visit, then it was a resounding success, but no doubt tough conversations were also had behind the scenes.

What then of the prospects for Anthony Albanese's mooted plans for his own China visit later this year? Here are some takeaways from the New Zealand experience.

First, robust discussions about differences are part and parcel of diplomacy with the PRC today, and while they are unlikely to get any easier, they need not prevent high-level diplomacy. Dropping longstanding positions and concerns is not a prerequisite to a high-level visit.

The very week that Hipkins was in Beijing, Immigration Minister Andrew Little released a ministerial communiqué with Australia, Canada, the UK and the US on countering foreign interference, cybersecurity, engagement with the technology industry and national resilience. While country agnostic, these are areas that New Zealand has signalled as concerns in its relations with the PRC and on which it is actively working with partners.

Beijing could have reacted to this, or previous joint statements New Zealand has made, and chosen to derail the visit, but it didn't. Just as New Zealand has interests to pursue through high-level engagement, so too does Beijing. Faced with a sluggish economic rebound from the dynamic zero-Covid restrictions and troubled relations with the US, the EU, Japan and Korea, Chinese leaders need to demonstrate that they can still promote Chinese interests through diplomacy.

Second, PRC media frame high-level visits as the state sees fit, making it important to get the government messaging right.

In the New Zealand case, PRC media still follow a high-level assertion from 2014 that the New Zealand–China relationship is a model of relations between countries with different social and economic systems. The media use this framing to promote New Zealand business confidence and to critique New Zealand's closest partners, especially the US and Australia, putting New Zealand in a difficult position.

In contrast, New Zealand's public message was that China is an important partner and New Zealand is open for business. This glossed over the complexities of the relationship in favour of mercantile interests. The upside of the message was that it received a positive response in Beijing. The downside was that it avoided the challenges in the relationship and sent an unrealistic signal to New Zealand businesses.

Third, any high-level visit to the PRC forces liberal democracies to embrace contradictions and swallow the odd dead rat.

New Zealand is experiencing a prolonged balance-of-payments deficit driven by rising external inflation. The government has clearly signalled diversification and de-risking as priorities, but they will take time. Most products New Zealand exports are subject to protectionism internationally but still attract high returns in China. The government therefore needs to manage relations with China carefully to protect these interests.

Unsurprisingly, then, when asked by the New Zealand media prior to the visit whether Xi Jinping was a dictator, Hipkins chose diplomacy—responding that he was not. The PM could have chosen a better way of answering the question, while remaining diplomatic, but nevertheless, the emphasis on diplomacy was telling.

Fourth, the theatre of an official state visit, especially one framed as a trade mission, is an effective way of stabilising relations. A symbolic high-level meeting ticks many boxes for New Zealand's Chinese counterparts, but at the same time it doesn't need to be much more than that.

The new agreements from Hipkins's visit were mostly continuations of existing areas of cooperation. There were no new trade goals or New Zealand references to Chinese policies like the Global Development Initiative or the Global Security Initiative.

Instead, the visit was about actively managing expectations, pursuing shared interests and seeking to maintain stable relations—all this done under challenging circumstances and while defending long-held positions. That is particularly important this year as New Zealand's long-awaited first national security strategy and other defence, foreign policy and security assessments are set to be publicly announced.

The issues for Australia are notably more difficult. The relationship is more consequential for the PRC and therefore harder to manage. Australia has already faced sharper actions in the form of detention of Australian citizens, aggressive diplomacy and ongoing punitive economic sanctions. The resolution of those issues could rightly be viewed as a prerequisite to any state visit.

But a state visit should remain a goal. Diplomacy is the art of influencing others. Although challenging to manage publicly, state visits help stabilise relations and build the foundation for the tough conversations required down the track.

How to End a War: Some Historical Lessons for Ukraine

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Russia has failed to achieve its stated purpose of taking political control of Ukraine, but still appears able to sustain the war at its current level. There is no prospect that the West will recognise Russia's *de jure* the annexation of Ukrainian territory. Within the West, however, disagreement may arise on the means, pace or conditions of the restoration of full territorial integrity. If Ukraine's counter-offensive yields meaningful gains, Ukraine and its Western partners might consider a dispensation analogous to the 'Adenauer option'.



History is replete with wars between states that turned out to be either considerably shorter or substantially longer than any of the belligerents had expected. In just the last century, there was the Arab–Israeli Six-Day War in 1967, on the one hand, and the Sino-Japanese War that started as the Marco Polo Bridge Incident in 1937 and lasted eight years, on the other. The latter conflict arguably began even earlier, in 1931, with rogue Japanese forces' act of sabotage, which led to Japan's limited takeover of Manchuria.

The Russian war against Ukraine is not untypical of historical precedent, ancient or recent, and indeed bears some resemblance to the multiple-step Sino-Japanese War – right down to the Kwantung Army's insubordination, which is broadly analogous to the Wagner Group's recent mutiny. The war began with a minimal-force invasion of Crimea, a Ukrainian region that Russia annexed in March 2014, followed by lethal proxy operations in parts of the Donbas, another Ukrainian region. It became a geographically confined war, with more than 14,000 fatalities, including hundreds of Russian soldiers. On 24 February 2022, Russia undertook a full-scale attempt to seize the capital of Ukraine and to invade and occupy the country as a whole. Similar in conception to the largely bloodless Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia in August 1968 and the lethal and initially effective takeover of Kabul on 27 December 1979, this so-called 'special military operation' failed in its political objective of replacing the incumbent Ukrainian government, which the Kremlin expected to fall within four days. It did succeed in rapidly infiltrating a swathe of northern Ukraine up to Kharkiv and a broad expanse of southern Ukraine. At the peak of the invasion in March–April 2022, the Russians occupied close to 140,000 square kilometres, more than one-fifth of the territory of Ukraine, which is the largest wholly European country. At the time of writing, Moscow's troops held some 109,395 square kilometres, including the territory linking Crimea and the Donbas and most of Luhansk *oblast*, as well as the regions occupied before 24 February 2022, namely Crimea and much of Donetsk.

The ongoing war is already long and lethal. By June 2023, tens of thousands of soldiers had been killed in battle on both sides. By comparison, in nine years of war, around 26,000 Soviet personnel died in Afghanistan. Large-scale atrocities have occurred, material damage has been estimated in the hundreds of billions of dollars, and Ukraine's GDP fell by some 29% in 2022. As of June 2023, neither side appeared amenable to a negotiated political settlement.

The nature of the war

The Russian invasion is part of Moscow's openly expressed attempt to change the post-Cold War security order in Europe, which Russian President Vladimir Putin has repeatedly denounced since his 2007 speech at the Munich Security Conference. In December 2021, the Kremlin preceded the invasion by presenting two draft documents, cast as 'security treaties', to the United States and NATO, pointedly excluding NATO's European member states. Under the treaties, NATO would be prevented from fulfilling its defence obligations to countries that had joined the Alliance after the dissolution of the Soviet Union – that is, the ex-Warsaw Pact countries, the Baltic states, Croatia, Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia. New members, and explicitly Ukraine, would be precluded from joining the Alliance. This attempt to close NATO's door was what initially prompted Finland to rethink its decision not to join NATO. Much as the Soviet Union did during the Cold War, Russia is now seeking to break the Euro-Atlantic security and defence system.⁶

Never, however, has the Soviet Union or Russia resisted the enlargement of NATO through war. The Kremlin had strongly voiced its objections to the admission of Greece and especially Türkiye in 1952, and even more strongly opposed that of the Federal Republic of Germany in 1955. But once they had taken place, Moscow moved on. In the 1980s, with the crisis over the deployment of middle-range American missiles in Europe prompted by the Soviet deployment of the intermediate-range SS-20 missile in full spate, the accession of Spain nonetheless drew little attention. Nor did Russia provoke a major crisis when the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland joined in 1999: indeed, that process occurred shortly after the Russia–NATO Founding Act had come into effect in 1997. In 2004, four years into his first presidential term, Putin acquiesced to a 'Big Bang' enlargement, which included the three Baltic republics annexed by the Soviet Union in 1940 as well as Bulgaria, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. The accession of Albania and Croatia in 2009, Montenegro in 2017 and North Macedonia in 2020 drew little response, though a poorly conducted coup attempt was foiled in Montenegro. Even Finland's and Sweden's accession process in 2022 failed to produce a crisis, and Finnish officials and consultants, for their part, closely studied the Soviet/Russian pattern of acceptance in informing Finland's decision to join NATO. In the event, Russia downplayed the development once it was clear it couldn't be stopped by words alone.

Contingencies in which Moscow attempted to change the security order – the Berlin blockade in 1948–49, the Korean War, the Berlin crises during Nikita Khrushchev's tenure, the Cuban Missile Crisis and today the war against Ukraine – were freighted with a high risk of conventional or nuclear war. Yet neither the Soviet Union nor Russia has attempted to invade any member of NATO. Russia did, of course, object to the prospect of Ukraine and Georgia joining NATO in 2008, but we cannot know whether their accession would have led to aggressive action on Russia's part. What we do

know is that NATO left the accession process for those countries in abeyance, and Russia subsequently attacked them.

The war against Ukraine is fundamentally a neo-imperial project of which, according to Putin, the 'unity of the Russians and the Ukrainians' is a precondition. He appears to share Zbigniew Brzezinski's view that 'without Ukraine, Russia ceases to be an empire, but with Ukraine suborned and then subordinated, Russia automatically becomes an empire'. This disposition puts Russia in a category of one in Europe when it comes to territorial imperialism. It qualifies as not merely a debating point but a reality, and it is key to understanding how difficult it is, and will continue to be, for Russia even after Putin to come to terms with 'losing' Ukraine.

The end of European imperialism was often a painful exercise for all concerned. Empires rarely fade away. The colonial empires of Belgium, the Netherlands and Portugal were not liquidated without violent disorder and war. When France, a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council and by then a nuclear power, decided under Charles de Gaulle to stop the war in Algeria and cast adrift a million French settlers, the reactions were fierce. An attempted military coup in April 1961 led to the hurried detonation of a nuclear device in the Sahara and several close-to-successful assassination attempts on de Gaulle. It took two world wars for Germany to end its imperial ambitions. The largely peaceful collapse of the Soviet Union and its empire in 1990–91 was an outlier – and Putin appears to be trying to correct what he sees as a historical mistake in pursuing an imperial course. He looks more like the stubborn Portuguese dictator António de Oliveira Salazar, who extended Portugal's resistance to decolonisation into the 1970s, than de Gaulle.

A war of empire, the Russia–Ukraine conflict is also a colonial war in which the Ukrainians are effectively freedom fighters. Neo-imperial Russia is behaving exactly as a brazen colonial power should be expected to act on the historical evidence – committing war crimes, killing civilians, employing rape as a weapon of war, deporting children, imposing Russian history and language on occupied populations, and politically subjugating them.

The war is one of distinctly twentieth-century vintage in terms of the critical role that ideology plays and the strategic salience of nuclear weapons. To a large extent, these factors cut in opposite directions. Ideology makes compromise inherently more difficult while nuclear danger compels even the most reckless leader to soberly contemplate the consequences of his decisions. US decision-making, in particular, combines the defence and sometimes adamant promotion of democracy and a liberal rules-based international order with the post-Second World War strategy of nuclear-buttressed alliances and superpower primacy. This combination can lead to potentially dangerous outcomes. In March 2022, for example, US President Joe Biden signalled that the US would not transfer offensive weapon systems considered escalatory to Ukraine while saying of Putin 'for God's sake, this man cannot remain in power'. A month later, the US changed tack, releasing previously withheld artillery and armour while staying mum about regime change.

Russia's own ideology is a brew of neo-imperialism, religious nationalism and the rejection of democracy and individual free will that includes disavowals of Satanism and LGBTQ rights, as well

as wholesale antagonism against the collective West. In September 2022, Putin's remarks about Hiroshima and Nagasaki took on a particularly ominous tone. 'The United States', he said, 'is the only country in the world that has twice used nuclear weapons destroying the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and setting a precedent.'

Russian options

Russia failed to achieve its stated purpose of taking political control of Ukraine. A four-day *coup de main* has morphed into a protracted major war. Moscow's forces have suffered the indignities of one of the most incompetent campaigns in modern military history, redolent of Benito Mussolini's calamitous attack on Greece in 1940. At the strategic level, Putin's aggression turned what the Kremlin disparagingly called the 'collective West' into exactly that: a group of close to 50 countries – most of which are democracies – more united in purpose than they had been since the fall of the Soviet Union. Some 1,340 additional kilometres of NATO territory now border Russia. From a Western perspective, Moscow ought to be thinking hard about bringing its war to an end.

Seen from Moscow, matters are not so simple. Firstly, the war at its current level is sustainable. Russia, a country of some 140 million inhabitants, has committed proportionately fewer troops in Ukraine than France did in its wars of empire in Indochina and Algeria, or than Portugal did in attempting to retain its African colonies. Oil and gas revenues have taken a hit but remain sufficient to buoy the economy in general and the military-industrial complex in particular. Russia's imports of critical technologies are certainly hampered, and the West's policies do blunt Russia's ability to inflict greater harm against Ukraine. But it is worth noting that despite years of sanctions, Iran has managed to build up its force-projection capabilities.

On the ground, at the time of writing, Russia had occupied one-sixth of Ukraine's territory and was in a position to threaten Ukraine's access to the Black Sea. According to leaked documents, US intelligence officials have harboured doubts about whether the Ukrainian counter-offensive could change this picture. This may reinforce Russia's perception that time is on its side. Russia has not encountered major difficulties in mobilising 350,000 additional personnel to offset its initial personnel losses. Although the jury is still out on a new wave of call-ups in spring 2023, it does not appear to have provoked massive departures of military-age individuals like those witnessed in 2022, when some 900,000 people left the country.

Politically, Russia also has reasons to continue military operations. There is a serious possibility that the US electoral campaign in 2024 will sharpen domestic American opposition to sustaining current levels of material and financial support to Ukraine. It is also possible, though not probable, that Donald Trump or a Republican figure of similarly insular strategic sensibilities and autocratic sympathies could become president, in which case US military support for Ukraine would almost certainly diminish.

Of course, these societal, military and political factors can be turned on their heads: why wouldn't Russia seek to open discussions while the going is reasonably good, possibly with the cover of Chinese mediation? The practical answer is that, for the Kremlin, territorial gains, political control of Ukraine and the absence of Western defence guarantees for Ukraine constitute a single

indivisible package, the components of which Putin has no urgent motivation to trade off against each other barring unpredictable domestic developments in Russia. A successful Ukrainian counter-offensive that moves the military situation back towards the status quo ante of 24 February 2022 could, however, induce the Kremlin to change its approach.

Ukrainian options

Compared with Russia's, Ukraine's range of options is narrower. From day one, short of giving in immediately to the conquerors, its only viable strategic course was a war of national survival, as a sovereign state, a distinct polity and a free nation. This continues to be the case. Ukraine's stated war aims are consistent with a war of national liberation and defence: territorial integrity, political sovereignty and guaranteed defence. To these it has added post-war objectives that include punishment of war crimes and crimes against humanity, and reparations for rebuilding the country.

These immediate and post-war goals are also those of the collective West. Only eight countries, none in the West, have recognised Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 or of four other Ukrainian regions in September 2022. There is no prospect that the West will recognise *de jure* the annexation of Crimea, Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk or Zaporizhia as part of Russia. Within the West, however, disagreement may arise on the means, pace or conditions of the restoration of full territorial integrity. Ukraine might take grave note that despite the West's refusal to recognise the Soviet annexation of the Baltic states in 1940, their populations remained under Soviet rule for the next 50 years. There is additional, and potentially dangerous, ambiguity about Western security guarantees for Ukraine, notably on the issue of NATO membership.¹⁶ The internal status of Crimea and the Donbas could also be a sticking point.

At present, Ukraine's priority can only be the unyielding prosecution of the war that Russia has imposed on it. That said, its leadership has had and continues to have the wisdom of crafting frameworks for possible discussions and of encouraging foreign attempts at actual or prospective mediation, notably Turkey's in the opening weeks of the war and, more recently, China's and the Vatican's. Other things being equal, it is unlikely that such efforts will bear fruit given the disincentives for Russia to enter into good-faith negotiations. But the Ukrainian counter-offensive, whether a failure or a success, will ensure that things will not remain equal. An aborted or frustrated Ukrainian attempt to recover a swathe of occupied territory will likely reinforce Russia's refusal to engage in meaningful discussions and weaken Western support for Ukraine, especially during the American electoral campaign. In this context, it is worth remembering that only once Kyiv repelled Russia's attempts to seize it did the West decide to provide Ukraine with offensive weapons. And it was only after Ukraine's forces had recovered the areas around Kharkiv and liberated Kherson that Western deliveries of kit were seriously ramped up. If there is no quick end to the war, a long slog will bedevil the region while the West's unity is strained and its support downgraded as millions of additional Ukrainian civilians seek refuge abroad.

A successful Ukrainian counter-offensive, liberating all or part of the annexed regions, would open new opportunities, while also bringing new complexities. In political terms, a return to the military situation before 24 February 2022 would meet a condition set by Ukraine for opening substantive

talks. While it is difficult to imagine Ukraine's purely military reconquest of Crimea, its retaking of territory lost since early 2022 would complicate Russia's logistical situation in Crimea, since its territorial link with the Russian-occupied Donbas would have been cut, and the Kerch bridge, the Perekop Isthmus and Russia's Black Sea Fleet in Sevastopol would be more vulnerable. The post-2014 status quo with respect to Crimea could cease to be sustainable. Russian talk and Western anxieties about nuclear 'red lines' would again arise.

This scenario may emerge sooner rather than later, and with high levels of emotion given the inspirational effect that victory would have on Ukraine, the conflicting sense of triumph and fear of escalation that would arise in the West, and the alarm that the prospect of losing Crimea would produce in Russia. Before these factors materialise, it is worthwhile to ponder follow-on decisions now and build on some lessons from the Cold War that might be bundled as the 'Adenauer option'.

Adenauer's journey

The Berlin blockade of 1948–49 was the first direct confrontation between the Soviet Union and the principal Western powers of the Cold War. The Soviet armed forces cut off all road, rail and water links between West Berlin and the American, British and French occupation zones in the western part of Germany. Western occupation forces in Berlin could only be resupplied by air. The ostensible cause of this forceful act was the introduction of currency reform in the Western-occupied areas including West Berlin, whereby the useless Nazi-era all-German Reichsmark was replaced by the newly minted West-only Deutschmark. If successful, as it quickly was, the monetary transformation would cement the economic and social divide between a turbocharged capitalist West Germany and a stagnating socialist East Germany. Failed reform could have blocked the momentum towards the political unification of the Western occupation zones.

The Soviets, who hadn't used direct force to seal off West Berlin, correctly assumed that the West would be self-deterred from using main force to reopen the ground links to the city and expected the livelihoods of 2m West Berliners to become completely dependent on Soviet goodwill alone. As it happened, the West unexpectedly and effectively mounted an unprecedented airlift. Since it was executed without a shot being fired in anger, the responsibility for, and fear of, escalation to the level of lethal force switched sides, now falling to the Soviets. It turned out the Soviet Union was not ready to risk a Third World War by interdicting the airlift, although it did test Western resolve by harassing Western transport aircraft. Within a year, West Germany had emerged as a constitutional democracy – the Federal Republic of Germany – and a market economy.

This Western success created the basic conditions for what became the Cold War status quo in Europe for the following four decades. However, it still left open two key issues: Germany's territorial integrity and the nature of the West's defence guarantees for the Federal Republic of Germany. These issues are no less at play in the case of Ukraine.

Although Germany had been divided into two separate republics in 1949, its political unity continued to be their common stated objective. West German constitutional law (*Grundgesetz*) was crafted to be provisional, East Germany's first constitution to be compatible with it. Initially,

state flags were identical and Olympic teams were shared. The four occupying powers also embraced adherence to the principle of German unity even though the Allied Control Council ceased meeting from March 1948 onwards. While the degree to which Soviet support for a united, neutral Germany in the early 1950s was instrumental rather than operational remains an unsettled question among historians, the fact is that Josef Stalin put forward detailed reunification proposals, as did Lavrentiy Beria, his heir presumptive, in the months following Stalin's death in March 1953.

German reunification on terms acceptable to the Soviet Union – in particular, that of neutrality – would have precluded Germany from joining NATO, as it had so precluded Austria when it recovered its sovereignty in exchange for constitutionally neutral status in 1955. Given Germany's size, history and location, such a trade-off would have had considerably greater geostrategic consequences than it did in the case of Austria. Accordingly, West Germany's partners deemed it unacceptable. After Beria was executed in December 1953, the Soviet Union ceased to actively promote German unity.

At the time, NATO had no military plans to defend West Germany east of the Rhine for want of sufficient combat formations. Two World Wars were there to remind all and sundry that there wasn't a huge distance between the Rhine and the continent's western coast. Consequently, NATO relied heavily on the early use of a limited US nuclear arsenal of under 300 weapons, none of whose components were based in Europe before 1954. NATO needed defensive depth, and only German rearmament would provide the allies with the personnel necessary to mount a forward and active defence, which a neutral Germany would have precluded. The logical dispensation that emerged for the West, including the Federal Republic of Germany, was to kick reunification into the long grass, to be undertaken later with West Germany as a full Article 5 ally. Consensus didn't come easily. In August 1954, France rejected the European Defence Community, planned in the May 1952 Paris Treaty, which was supposed to merge the 43 planned divisions of its six signatories, including West Germany, into multinational units at battalion level to reassure European populations that German rearmament would not resurrect the Wehrmacht. This European army was earmarked for assignment to NATO's Supreme Allied Commander Europe. The UK also refused to endorse the European Defence Community, deeming it too supranational, and didn't commit to the permanent stationing of the British Army on the Rhine. Within a year, however, these obstacles were lifted: West Germany had joined NATO outright by May 1955 and the British Army was required to remain in Germany under the Modified Brussels Treaty. No German General Staff of Prussian provenance was reconstituted, with NATO's Allied Forces Central Europe in Brunssum serving the corresponding operational function, initially under a French commander.

As a precondition, in October 1954 at the London Conference – which brought together the existing members of the Western European Union (the Benelux countries, France and the United Kingdom), Canada, Italy, West Germany and the United States – the Bonn government undertook 'never to have recourse to force to achieve the reunification of Germany' while Britain, France and the US – the still-occupying powers – declared that 'in the event of any such action' they would 'consider the offending Government as having forfeited its rights to any guarantee and any military assistance provided for in the North Atlantic Treaty'. In effect, Article 5 would not apply in such a case. At the same time, the three occupying powers declared in the same document that 'the

achievement through peaceful means of a fully free and unified Germany remains a fundamental goal'. Reunification was put to the side as an operational prospect but not forgotten.

None of this would have happened had West Germany – and Konrad Adenauer, its long-serving first chancellor – not agreed to difficult terms. It wasn't easy to convince the electorate that reunification would be dropped *sine die* as a practical matter, that 17m Germans would be left to the mercies of a communist regime, and that barely ten years after the Second World War German boys would be drafted into an army designed to fight a high intensity war fought primarily on German territory with nuclear as well as conventional weapons. Persuading the German population of the wisdom of this course and winning the next federal election in 1957 with 270 seats in the Bundestag required statesmanship of the highest order. To have achieved that victory under the slogan '*Keine Experimente*' – 'no experiments' – when he was taking the West German state into the roiling waters of superpower confrontation was a stroke of electoral genius.

At the time, the Soviet Union complained loudly. It put together its own multinational military organisation in May 1955, with communist Poland serving as host to the Warsaw Pact with eight founding members. Nevertheless, diplomatic relations between the Soviet Union and West Germany were established in September 1955 on the occasion of Adenauer's visit to Moscow, when he secured the release of some 10,000 remaining German prisoners of war.

Adenauer redux

There are obvious differences between Adenauer's journey and any likely outcome of Russia's attempt to conquer Ukraine. Unlike post-Second World War Germany, Ukraine isn't the perpetrator of a major war; Russia is. Accordingly, Ukraine's full and unfettered sovereignty cannot be an issue in future discussions, though like other European countries it may elect to extend minority rights beyond multilateral norms. In addition, there's a war going on in Ukraine, whereas post-war Germany and Europe merely lived under the threat of one. Ukraine relinquished its nuclear weapons in the mid-1990s; Russia did not. This asymmetry reinforces the salience of Ukraine's future defence guarantees.

Yet similarities, actual and potential, are also there. Two occupy pride of place.

Firstly, a large swathe of Ukraine lives and dies under Russian occupation. Even if that share were reduced to Crimea, the issue would remain pivotal. Crimea is about the size of Belgium, and, since the eighteenth century, its population has suffered successive waves of ethnic cleansing, notably at the expense of the Tatars. Its location is eminently strategic. During the last 250 years, Europe's powers, as well as the Ottomans, have fought for its control at one time or another. Reunification is a cherished and justified Ukrainian goal. Conversely, not only Putin but much of the Russian population supported the conquest of Crimea: '*Krymnash!*' (Crimea is ours!) is a domestically powerful slogan, like the '*Heim ins Reich!*' of the Third Reich or the '*Algérie française!*' of late-imperial France. While the Soviet Union did abandon East Germany after the fall of the Berlin Wall, doing so required a radical change of political course in Russia itself.

The military liberation of Crimea is not a straightforward enterprise, given the balance of forces between Ukraine and Russia, as well as the historical record of actual or attempted conquests of Crimea over the centuries. More Western military support than is on offer today would be necessary to embark on such an operation. Even though some analysts – myself included – consider that the West has been too prone to engage in self-deterrence during the war and believe it could have liberated its stockpiles earlier and further to positive effect, it would be unwise to expect the West to furnish Ukraine with a higher level of aid than it did when Ukraine’s very existence was at stake in 2022 and 2023.

Secondly, as with Adenauer’s Germany, the defence regime of Ukraine is in suspense. When Kyiv reached agreement with the official nuclear powers to banish nuclear warheads and delivery systems from its territory, security assurances were provided. The Budapest Memorandum of December 1994 signed by Ukraine and the three depository powers of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States) reaffirmed the territorial integrity of Ukraine as an independent state – including, naturally, Crimea, the Donbas and other areas that Russia has since occupied. The unilateral statements of China and France, the two other recognised nuclear powers, did so as well. These assurances counted for nought when Russia undertook to annex Crimea in 2014, and they remain empty.

The Western allies recognise the need to extend robust and credible defence assurances to Ukraine. But there is as yet no common position on their specific form, which would lie between an unequivocal commitment to open full NATO membership to Ukraine and ad hoc measures that would serve as the functional equivalent of NATO’s Article 5. A 20 April 2023 statement in Kyiv by NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg that Ukraine’s ‘rightful place’ is in the Alliance suggested membership, but without a road map, a timetable or an explicit endorsement by the North Atlantic Council. Other plans, including the permanent deployment of a blue-helmet type of force have also been unofficially broached. A working group co-chaired by former NATO secretary-general Anders Fogh Rasmussen and Andriy Yermak, head of the Ukrainian president’s office, has discussed an alternative defence regime.

There have also been suggestions in the US that an ‘Israeli model’ could be applied, whereby arms and military technology would be transferred on a multi-year basis to Ukraine, without an explicit Article 5 commitment. This notion skates over the fact that Israel’s security is underpinned by an unstated but very real nuclear arsenal.

It is unlikely that anything less than a cast-iron mechanism in the form of NATO membership and its Article 5 would be politically acceptable to Ukraine or strategically prudent for Ukraine’s Western partners. History suggests that such a provision would increase crisis stability: neither the Soviet Union nor Russia has ever tested the robustness of Article 5 in practice. In its absence, a less firm regime would merely dare the key players to put it to the test – Russia most acutely but also possibly Ukraine, which might want to determine whether the guarantees were real. Henry Kissinger rightly assesses that Ukraine’s membership in NATO would be ‘a means of restraining it, as well as protecting it’.

Returning to the Adenauer analogy, the terms of a negotiated trade-off could be as follows: as Bonn did in 1954 when it renounced forcible reunification, Ukraine would foreswear the use of force to recover Crimea, while being fast-tracked into NATO, as West Germany was in 1955. Unless NATO sought, inadvisably, to go directly to war with Russia, this could not happen while the conflict raged but would be part of a post-war dispensation. Russia would remain the de facto occupying power in Crimea and tolerate Ukrainian membership in NATO as it did with West Germany's in 1955 and then a reunited Germany's in 1990, possibly with the kinds of 'no nukes' clauses contained in the 'Two Plus Four' Treaty concluded between the four victors in the Second World War and the two then-existing German states.

Getting to that point turns on the fulfilment of several conditions. Firstly, as stated earlier, the military status quo needs to shift meaningfully in Ukraine's favour. As of mid-June 2023, Ukraine's position was not strong enough to box Russia into a post-Berlin-blockade posture. At that moment early in the Cold War, the Soviet Union, buffeted by the death of Stalin and Beria's removal, was compelled to give preference to holding on to its gains (East Germany then being the analogue to Crimea today) rather than risking them in an uncertain quest to gain German neutrality and block NATO enlargement. In the current war, a successful Ukrainian counter-offensive could create the conditions for an 'Adenauer option'. Absent Ukrainian battlefield success, however, Russia has little reason to accept a trade-off.

Secondly, deft and judicious statesmanship is required, especially on the part of Ukraine and Germany. Putin is clearly no post-imperial de Gaulle or Mikhail Gorbachev, but Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy could well prove to be a latter-day Adenauer. If he doesn't, a satisfactory diplomatic outcome is unlikely. Germany, for its part, needs to make clear that it will support extending to Ukraine the same sort of trade-off as the one it promoted and benefitted from in 1955. Thus far, it has not done so, having entertained arguments about the impossibility of a country with contested borders and territory to enter NATO. It is grating to hear this line of argument given the conditions of West Germany's own accession to NATO and in light of the Rome Treaties of 1957, which established what has become the European Union. West Germany itself also had unresolved border issues: it wasn't until after Germany's reunification that it unequivocally renounced the territories lying east of the Oder–Neisse line adopted at the Potsdam Conference as Germany's eastern limit by the leaders of the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States. What applied to the German goose when it joined NATO surely ought to apply to the Ukrainian gander. In the same way that the goal of peaceful German reunification remained ready to be fulfilled, the rightful status of Crimea as part of Ukraine must continue to be affirmed. As a matter of post-war European precedent, however, Ukraine's accession to NATO could certainly proceed before the Crimea issue is settled.

Thirdly, the collective West needs to maintain vigorous support for Ukraine's military effort. This is more likely in the context of a successful counter-offensive.

An Adenauer option would not be an ideal solution. East Germany was locked behind the Iron Curtain and from 1961 until 1989 by the 155 km-long ‘wall of shame’ surrounding West Berlin.³⁴ Its population had to wait almost 30 years to enjoy the fundamental human and political rights of its Western compatriots. Although we cannot know with absolute certainty whether there were better alternatives available in the early 1950s – say, of the Austrian variety – the arguments in favour of that counterfactual are far from compelling. And we do know what did happen: the Cold War in Europe remained cold, Germany was reunited peacefully and consensually, and the Soviet empire collapsed under the weight of its internal contradictions, giving captive nations the opportunity to cast off their shackles.

This article will appear in the forthcoming August–September 2023 issue of *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy*.

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With Canadians struggling financially, Trudeau can safely ignore calls for more military spending

Canada still has one of the largest defence budgets of NATO nations and is ranked 14th in the world for military spending.

[David Pugliese](#) Ottawa Citizen

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Over the last several months, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has faced a public relations barrage over military spending.

Analysts and retired senior officers, many with links to National Defence or military equipment firms, have warned about a coming apocalypse facing the Canadian Forces.

Without an increase of some \$20 billion a year extra for the military, the public has been told that Canada will become irrelevant. It could become a pariah among NATO nations. Canada is a laggard, a truant, an outlier when it comes to defence spending.

Not included in the discussion is that Canada still has one of the largest defence budgets of NATO nations and is ranked 14th in the world for military spending. In addition, it is one of the top contributors to supporting Ukraine with some \$8 billion so far, some of it for weapons.

In an effort to blunt more criticism expected at the NATO summit in Lithuania, which starts Tuesday, Trudeau announced a major commitment to the alliance. Canada will spend another \$2.6

billion to double the number of troops it has stationed in Latvia, the prime minister announced Monday.

That may dampen the criticism, but it won't go away. As Eric Van Rythoven, an instructor in the Department of Political Science at Carleton University, recently pointed out, "Complaints about the country's lacklustre spending has become something of a time-honoured tradition.

For the last two decades, Canadians have seen a variety of defence and security figures dramatically inflate threats well beyond a reasonable point," he added in a May 1 article in *The Conversation*.

Van Rythoven is right. In the last several years, generals and defence analysts have pushed fantastical scenarios designed to generate fear among the public. In 2021 and 2022, those included the possibility Russian troops could land in Iqaluit or the Russians might launch a sneak missile attack on Toronto's electrical grid. Retired general Rick Hillier falsely claimed the Canadian navy was so broke that every single one of its ships was confined to port because of a lack of fuel.

One of the highlights of the latest effort to push Trudeau on more military spending was an April 16 letter from the Conference of Defence Associations Institute, an organization that receives some funding from National Defence and military equipment firms. The letter prompted much media coverage. "Dozens of political and military luminaries call on Ottawa to stop backsliding on national defence," the CBC headlined its article on the letter.

Among those signing the document were former defence ministers Peter MacKay and Jason Kenney, members of the Conservative government that actually cut defence dollars.

The Prime Minister's Office examined the letter and noted some of those who signed were also part of the country's defence lobby; a number of the retired generals are consultants to or involved with military equipment firms.

"I think it is really important for people in various industries to advocate for their sectors and industries," Trudeau said in response to the letter. "As everyone knows, governments are challenged with a whole bunch of different priorities."

Retired Vice-Admiral Mark Norman, also a signatory to the letter, defended the initiative, claiming most of those who signed had nothing to do with the defence industry. (Norman is listed as a senior defence strategist for Samuel Associates, a government consultancy firm that boasts it can help firms sell defence equipment and services to the Canadian government.)

Norman told CBC Radio the letter is from "an association of primarily veterans' organizations that's advocating for security and defence issues — they're not advocating for the defence industry."

"I believe that defence and security, if not at the top of the list of priorities, needs to be near the top of priorities and it shouldn't be subject to the ebb and flow of popular opinion," Norman added in the CBC interview aired April 22.

But despite Norman's suggestion, Canadians do get a say in how their tax dollars are spent.

If anything, it could be argued by critics that the letter from the so-called defence luminaries revealed just how out of touch they are with their fellow Canadians.

The average Canadian is struggling to meet their rent or buy groceries. A report released in October 2022 found a record number of Canadians are now relying on food banks. There are a growing

number of homeless on our streets. Medical services are faltering, with emergency departments temporarily closing. Six million Canadians are without a family doctor.

It's these types of concerns that are the priority for Canadians, not defence spending, argues Van Rythoven. "If politicians can't speak to how Canadians actually feel and experience insecurity, citizens won't listen to them on defence and security issues," he wrote.

Conservative prime minister Stephen Harper ignored the NATO spending guideline despite signing on to the initiative in 2014. Instead, he cut defence spending.

Trudeau, like Harper, will probably be able to ignore the NATO spending guidance with few actual consequences.

Of course, there will be admonishments from allies and opinion articles and hand-wringing from media outlets, defence analysts and retired generals.

But NATO won't reject the extra troops Canada is offering. The U.S. won't reject the tens of billions of dollars in military equipment orders coming from Canada to U.S. firms, ensuring Americans in that country's defence industry continue to have decent jobs.

OF INTEREST

US National Intelligence Strategy-

https://www.dni.gov/files/ODNI/documents/National_Intelligence_Strategy_2023.pdf

New Zealand's Threat Assessment-

<https://www.nzsis.govt.nz/assets/NZSIS-Documents/New-Zealands-Security-Threat-Environment-2023.pdf>

UK Defence Procurement Report-

<https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/40911/documents/199247/default>

The Sir Percy Lake Distinguished Service Award

Gary Del Villano's work with the Military Oral History Program has been outstanding



The Spitfire Luck of Skeets Ogilvie: From the Battle of Britain to the Great Escape

You will recall the presenter from 10 May meeting, Keith Ogilvie and his telling us of Skeets Ogilvie's incredible experiences during WW2.



This framed sketch was gifted, by RUSI-VI Vice-President Paul Seguna, to Keith Ogilvie. Paul was so inspired by Keith Ogilvie's book *The Spitfire Luck of Skeets Ogilvie*, that as an amateur aviation artist, he created a drawing displaying Skeets' intercept and shoot down of a Do-17 twin-engine bomber over London. The sketch is entitled *Skeets Ogilvie In action over London, 15 September, 1940*. This was a gracious and unexpected gesture by Paul.