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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello All USINNI Members. Well, I'm going to state the obvious. A very warm summer it has been so far and all indications are that it will not end shortly. Century old temperature records are being surpassed almost weekly.

From the USINNI 2018 CDI Planning Group there is pleasant news. Fantastic progress has been made compiling the Master Invitation List. Drafts of the dinner programme and the formal

invitations, both hard copy and email versions have been completed. Now we wait for a positive response from our selected guest of honour.

This month being August, as per tradition, we hold our Annual BBQ Luncheon/Meeting, rain or shine. Pauline and I have completed a recce of the location at Rath Trevor Beach Provincial Park and the facilities and venue look great. Please remember to dress appropriately for

the event - casual and comfortable. There is more than adequate shade from the sun available to maintain everyone's comfort. If you are so inclined, please bring your cooled refreshments to compliment your meal. We have rented the BBQ shelter for the entire afternoon so there is no rush to leave. Come on out, enjoy the companionship, fresh air, beach and scenic view.

Edwin

Military & Security

Musings:

**THERE'S AN UNPREDICTABLE HOMBRE LOOSE
.....IN THE MIDDLE EAST**



of the US F 35 (pair shown opposite), has ordered 116 of that stealth fighter aircraft. The first of these has now rolled off the basic production line in the States, and, with software and dodads added, will presumably be ready for delivery to the Turks next year or by early 2020 at the latest.

Coincidentally, 2020 is also when Turkey will take delivery of the Russian-provided & Russian bankrolled S-400 Triumph (Триумф) Surface-to-Air Mid & Long-Range Missile Sys-

Nanaimo, 21 July 2018...Turkey, a program partner in the development

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tem. What isn't clear is against just whose aircraft the S-400 is intended; Israel; Greece?

Members will, I hope, recall my prediction two years back that Turkey will almost certainly have left or have been booted from NATO within five years, ie, by the end of 2021. That's still my view. However, should Donald Trump still be President then, anything, but anything, is possible!

An Israeli think-tank has been monitoring the strained & ambiguous relations NATO has with Turkey. These relationships are made more awkward by longstanding Turkish resentment at being treated as "second class" by the European Union, which includes many NATO partners. One BESA paper (published in Israel), authored by Burak Bekdil, formerly an Ankara-based columnist, outlines Israeli reasoning on why Turkey is neither a reliable NATO partner nor a trustworthy regional ally for anyone. According to Bekdil's report, *"...Turkey and Syria held a joint military exercise in April 2009 – the first of its kind between a NATO member and a Russian-armed and trained client state. In September 2010, Turkish and Chinese aircraft conducted joint exercises in Turkish airspace. This, too, was a first for a NATO member. In 2011, before finally providing NATO forces with logistical support for their anti-Qaddafi campaign, then-Prime Minister Erdogan angrily asked, "What business can NATO have in Libya?"*

The study points to the fact that in the beginning in 2015, Turkey came under international suspi-

cion for systematically and clandestinely abetting various jihadist groups in Syria, including ISIS. The Turks were believed to have included logistics and arms. While the West's primary goal was to fight ISIS, Erdogan has sought to topple Syria's Alawite President Bashar Assad and install a Sunni, pro-Turkey, Islamist regime in his place..."

"In the past year or 18 months, Turkey's relations with Russia and Iran are now better than like-relations with Turkey's NATO partners."

Of course, I can't attest to the full accuracy of Bekdil's report, but it rings true for me. More critically, over the past two years, the Turks have attacked Kurdish & Arab forces in Syria and Iraq, forces that right then were allied with and cooperating in Alliance (NATO) military actions against Sunni Islamic terrorist forces (ITGIS). Turkey has, on a number of occasions, also actually dangerously interfered with & obstructed US, German and other NATO missions conducted on the ground in or the skies over Syria, some of those NATO missions launched from Turkish bases hosting NATO forces. In the past year or 18 months, Turkey's relations with Russia and Iran are now better than like-relations with Turkey's NATO partners.

Increasingly radically Sunni Salafist-bent with President Erdogan at the helm, Turkey has become part of the problem for us all in the Middle East. Most who have given it any thought at all, no longer consider Turkey to be a fully-fledged democracy, citing: the lack of free & fair elections; the endemic purges & jailing of opponents; curtailed press freedom; and, Erdogan's

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2018 SUMMER BBQ

WEDNESDAY AUGUST 8th 2018

The USINNI is pleased to present the "2018 Summer BBQ" to be held at Rath Trevor Beach Provincial Park, Group Picnic Shelter No 2, in Parksville, BC on Wednesday, August 8th, 2018, from 11h30 to 15h00. rain or shine.

As usual, your guests are always welcome. Come on out, enjoy the sun and the fresh air. Enjoy the outdoors and the companionship.

Dress: Please dress casual, comfortable and for the weather.

In order that we may properly prepare for this event, our Telephone Coordinators will be in contact with you to confirm your attendance.

\$25.00 per person - BYOB.

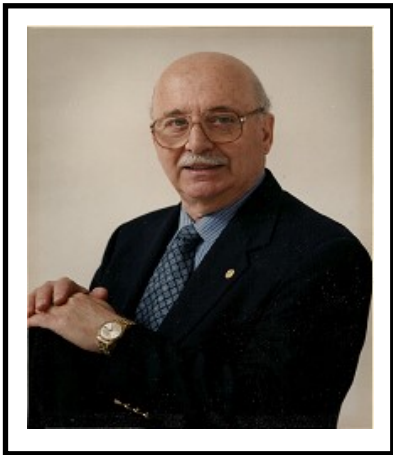
Should you require any further information please contact Pauline at (250) 758-7632.



Water Water... continued from page 2...

efforts to broaden his own personal executive powers to dictatorial standards. The current *Rule of Law Index* ranks Turkey as 101st in a list of 113 countries (Denmark being 1st, Canada 9th, with the USA 19th & sliding).

So, there's a new Ottoman Sultan in Ankara, an all too-unpredictable hombre loose in the Region. But, his two new best friends in Tehran and Moscow need to remember the old Arab tale of the fate of the frog that was persuaded to piggy-back a scorpion across the Nile. Mid-river, the scorpion just couldn't resist stinging the frog...even though scorpions aren't amphibians.



This Musing Column is by Colonel (Ret'd) W.J. (Bill) McCullough, MSC, CD, a Past President of our Institute. The views expressed on Turkey and Erdogan are his own. The Report quoted and the F-35 photo used in this column were extracted from social media. No copyright infringement is presumed or intended..

This month's Luncheon/Meeting will be held at

**RATHTREVOR BEACH
PROVINCIAL PARK**

**HIGHWAY 19A
PARKSVILLE, BC**

on

**WEDNESDAY
AUGUST 8TH, 2018
1130 HOURS.**

\$25.00 per Member/person

LUNCHEON MEETING ATTENDANCE

Your telephone contact coordinator will attempt to contact you in the days prior to our monthly luncheon/meeting in order to confirm your attendance. In this manner we can provide attendance numbers to the volunteer kitchen staff at RCL 257 so that they may prepare adequately for our function.

If for some reason she has missed you, please attempt to contact her or Edwin at 250-7511-2360 or ejpeeters@shaw.ca.

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