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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello All USINNI Members. It is with profound disappointment that I must announce that our scheduled September luncheon/meeting has been cancelled due to the changing COVID-19 situation. Back in early/mid July, the BoD, communicating via email, were unanimous in their opinion that the COVID-19 situation had settled down to the point where it would be possible to renew our monthly luncheon/meetings and as such, arrangements for a venue, a hot lunch and guest speakers were made. An announcement was published in our August newsletter. However, as we proceeded

through August, we received several concerns from Members with respect to the uncertainty around community spread and the possible consequences of schools reopening.

We are however remaining on a positive note for the October luncheon/meeting, should all develop well in late September/early October. More information on the October luncheon meeting will be included in the October newsletter.

We remain very optimistic.
Stay safe, stay well.

Edwin

Nanaimo, 27 August 2020...

in a weak moment, the Editor told me I could "have a bit more space" if I needed it for any of my columns. Wow! It's like I've been turned loose in the Candy Shop...or, with a credit card at the local LCB outlet! TY Ed!

First off though, I had a query about some "public affairs-like" postings I send out to a separate non-USI list from "time-to-time." Some years ago, at one of our USI AGMs, Alex Greenwood reminded us that our USI address lists (there are several) are privileged, not for wanton or whimsical use. AGM Minutes reflect this as Institute policy. When I stepped down from the Board this past March, I asked Members in general to let me

Military & Security Musings:

RUMBLINGS!!!



know if they wished to be kept on a new personal (non USI) Military-Security email list. Those who did were added via a *Reply All* Mil-Sec Musing List; those who didn't, weren't. Privacy was/is respected.

I have a bit of a potpourri for you this month. First, I'd like to pick up from my April Column on the Russian Federation's ambitions in Eastern Europe. Russia's President Putin and Belarus's President Lukashenko are making it very clear that neither NATO nor the EU are welcome any further east than they now already are. A Ukraine-like drift-away by Belarus is simply not acceptable in Moscow. In any such case, the Russian Federation's member oblast of Kaliningrad could end up some 400 km further west from the rest of the Federation. For the Russians, looking from East to West, this must seem like the home port for Russia's Baltic Fleet ends up some 400 km behind prospective enemy lines! To some extent, I can appreciate Russian paranoia. However, Eastern Europe looks different from a West to East perspective, with a restive Vladimir Putin on the Imperial Throne in Moscow. Putin has the prospects of roughly another fifteen years as President. When seen from the capitals of the former Warsaw Pact countries, the picture is very different. The three Baltic States, now members of NATO are still very much regarded by the Russians as wayward children of the Russian Federation. Like-wise, Ukraine is in an ambiguous state with the Russians. In 2014, the latter annexed Ukraine's southern Crimean Region, and, are now busy assisting the extended rebellion in Ukraine's eastern Donbas Region. The Russians now also largely impede Ukrainian shipping to Ukraine ports on the

Sea of Azov.

To the west of Ukraine, Russian troops are also permanently deployed as "peacekeepers" in breakaway regions of north-eastern Moldova. The Ukrainians are, in a real pervasive way, boxed in and surrounded by the Russians. Elsewhere in the nearby Balkans, the historically tribal wars smoulder on; many borders remain in dispute, with many thousands of people remaining refugees-in-place or exiled from traditional homes & lands. In the midst of this brew is Serbia, a Russian protégé that is largely at visceral odds with the rest of the Balkans.



And, in the Balkans as is the case for a number of other former Warsaw Pact nations, real working democracy remains a tenuous reality. The veneer of just societies is factionally thin over much of Europe... East and West. With America in a disordered global retreat, and, Western & Central Europe otherwise preoccupied, the Great Game is back in play for Eastern Europe, featuring Russia's ambitious and newest Tsar at Stage Centre. Smoother than Comrade Stalin, but as ruthless as

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Military & Security Musings: BOOK REVIEWS

Nanaimo, 27 August 2020...as the Summer Dol-drums drift inevitably into Autumn..." *the melancholy days are come; the saddest of the year...of wailing winds and naked woods and meadows brown and bare*" ...with apologies to WC Bryant (1825)

With COVID 19 or 20 or whatever comes next, here are a couple of books with which to while away an idle afternoon.

Russians Among Us: (Harper Collins: Publisher) by Gordon Corera, a BBC security correspondent who has been accorded fairly remarkable access to UK and USA insider sources involved in the grey world of spy and counter-spy. Focused on the activities of deep cover Russian illegals beavering away in the Unites States & elsewhere, the book does suggest that Canada has too often provided the beginnings of the "legend" afforded Russian agents enroute to a life of espionage. At 300 pages, it's a long but easy read, although a pad to keep track of who's who using which alias helps.

Claws of the Panda: (Cormorant Books: Publisher) by Jonathan Manthorpe, a Canadian with some fifty years journalistic experience behind him. He will, hopefully, be speaking to us at one of our upcoming USINNI Lunch Meetings. In some 270 odd pages, the author lays out the torturous, convoluted history of Canada's embarrassingly mindless surrender to the whiley machinations of the Communist Party of China. The book will shock you! Canadian politicians and public servants from the right, left and centre of the political spectrum, along with business, banking, academic and social circles have allowed themselves to be little better than convenient "fronts" and dupes for the Peoples' Republic of China. The claws are deeply dug in to our collective backsides. It's past time the Panda was declawed!

I also have **Destined For War:** (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt: Publisher) by Graham Allison running to about 250 pages plus another roughly hundred of pages & afternotes waiting my attention. It appears to be a thoughtful book, but before tackling it, I need to first find out more about *Thucydides's Trap*.

Also waiting attention is **Hidden Hand:**

(Optimum Publishing International) co-written by Clive Hamilton and Mareike Ohlberg, some 270 pages with another hundred pages of footnotes and a glossary. **Hidden Hand** is promoted as an exposé of just how the Communist Party of China is smack in the middle of reshaping the World to meet China's needs. Too bad; Napoleon Bonaparte warned us, saying it best: *There sleeps China! God pity us if she wakes. Let her sleep!*

These Reviews are by Colonel (Retd) W.J. (Bill) McCullough, a Past President of our Institute and the former 16-year Chair of our Military & Security Committee. His "pickings" are his own! All are available through chapters.ca, but may also be on the shelf at your local library.

China test fires DF-21 dubbed the "carrier-killer" missile.



Beijing—China's military test-fired two missiles into the South China Sea, including a "carrier-killer" military analysts suggest might have been developed to attack US forces, a newspaper reported Thursday. The DF-26B and DF-21D missiles fired Wednesday targeted an area between the southern island province of Hainan and Parcel Islands, the South China Morning Post newspaper of Hong Kong reported, citing unidentified sources close to the Chinese military

The ministries of defense and foreign affairs in Beijing didn't immediately respond to requests for confirmation.

Dispute over control of the South China Sea, one of the world's busiest trade routes, are growing irritant in Beijing's relations with Washington.



Your friends and colleagues of the United Services Institute of Nanaimo North Island are concerned and are standing by to help if you are in need or difficulty during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Please contact our President WO (Retd) Edwin Peeters at 250-751-2360 or by email at ejpeeters@shaw.ca if you need help.

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any of his Kremlin predecessors, Vladimir Putin is a modern throwback to early Romania's *Vlad III Dracul*, aka *Vlad the Impaler*.

Russia's de facto President-for-Life has now been imaginatively media-tagged & is widely known, East & West, by the sobriquet of *Vlad the Poisoner*. Born in 1953, Putin is intelligent, well educated and a very fit athlete. Two of his preferred "post-secondary" interests were Chemistry and Biology. Hmm! He went straight from School to the KGB and then straight along into politics! Putin's no slouch when it comes to wet ops! "Bon appétit!"

The author of this column is again Colonel (Retd) W.J. (Bill) McCullough, MSC, CD, a Past President of our Institute and the former 16-year Chair of our Military & Security Committee.

The views & conclusions expressed here are his own.