



Security & Defence Briefing (17/2014):

"Intervention in Iraq, Canada and the Baltic Air Policing Mission, developments in the Middle East, and the geopolitical imperative"

23 September 2014

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From the Desk of the Executive Director

Today is the first day of fall - the leaves are changing colour, the weather is cooler, our parliament is back in session - and most importantly, the CDA & CDA Institute's roster of activities is shifting into high gear.

Yesterday saw the first US-led, wide-ranging strikes on ISIS and the Khorasan group in parts of Syria. Including regional states is a major breakthrough in this fight, and hopefully this strategy will lead to greater international resolve to degrade, constrict and eventually eliminate this serious threat to international security. For further analysis, take a read through board member George Petrolekas' [latest article](#) in the National Journal.

The first activity of the fall season is our 17th Annual Graduate Student Symposium, "Canada's Security and Defence Interests", held at the Royal Military College in Kingston, Ontario on October 16-17. With keynote speakers, six panel discussions, networking breaks and meals, the two-day event is our premiere event in promoting security and defence scholarship in Canada. [Registration](#) is free but required, and you can find out more about the [agenda](#) at our website.

The Vimy Gala Reception and Dinner will be held on Friday, November 7 at the Canadian War Museum, to honour the winner of this year's Vimy Award, [Blake Goldring](#), Honorary Colonel of the Canadian Army. If you would like to buy tickets (\$300 each, \$250 for donors to the CDA Institute) or are interested in tables or sponsorship opportunities, please contact us by [email](#) or call 613-236-9903.

Speaking of awards, we are accepting nominations until November 7 for the **2014 Ross Munro Media Award**, which recognizes Canadian journalists who have made a significant and extraordinary contribution to increasing public understanding of security and defence issues of importance to Canada and Canadians. You can find more information on the nomination guidelines on our [website](#).

In case you missed it - last week we released *Vimy Paper 20*, "**Canada's Defence Procurement Strategy: An End or a Beginning?**" by Charles Davies. You can read the [release and the paper](#) on our website.

Some events of interest in the Ottawa area: this weekend (26-28 September) the **Group of 78** will be holding a conference on "World War 1 and Contemporary Policy on War and Peace". More information is available on the [Group of 78](#) website. Finally, the **Canadian Military Intelligence Association's Second Annual Intelligence Conference** will take place on October 17. You can register at the [following link](#), with the password "intrepid".

Tony Battista

"Emergency Parliamentary Debate on Iraq"

By Lindsay Coombs

On September 16, 2014, an emergency parliamentary debate was held in the House of Commons to discuss the current government's unilateral decision to send Canadian troops to Iraq. This decision has resulted in the deployment of up to 69 Special Forces advisors for an initial period of 30 days, after which the mission will be re-evaluated. Moreover, it has been stressed by the Conservatives that this is not a combat operation.

Though it is the prerogative of the Prime Minister and the federal cabinet to deploy troops without a discussion in parliament, the official opposition - the New Democrat Party (NDP) - did not support the decision. The NDP, as well as the Liberals, urged the Conservatives to hold a vote before making a commitment, yet no such vote was conducted. ...

To read more, [click here](#) or copy-paste the following link:
www.cdainstitute.ca/en/blog/entry/emergency-parliamentary-debate-sept-16-2014

"Canada and the Baltic Air Policing Mission - a Retrospective"

By Mark Aruja

On 1 September 2014, the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) assumed the Baltic Air Policing mission with CF-18s stationed in Lithuania. This date happens to coincide with three events. Firstly, exactly 20 years ago the last Soviet troops left Estonia, the northernmost of the Baltic States - arguably the end of the Second World War. The second is the 75th anniversary of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, which set the stage for the initiation of the Second World War. Thirdly, it is also the 20th anniversary of my arrival in Estonia on secondment from Canada, where I was assigned the task of building an Estonian Air Force. That story leads directly to the Baltic Air Policing mission.

I arrived in Tallinn, Estonia with two tasks: to report to the commander of the Estonian air force as his chief of staff and develop the conceptual rationale for an air force, and secondly to act as an advisor on NATO integration to the Estonian chief of defence. I had just left Winnipeg as the air force Deputy Chief of Staff Personnel at Air Command Headquarters, where I was implementing the Forces Reduction Program. Given the choice between building or dismantling, the choice was easy. ...

To read more, [click here](#) or copy-paste the following link:
www.cdainstitute.ca/en/blog/entry/canada-and-the-baltic-air-policing-mission-a-retrospective

Roundtable Summary: "Current Developments in the Middle East"

By Lindsay Coombs

Conflict in the Middle East is not a new phenomenon, however, the past year has been marked with a heightened sense of crisis. This is displayed prominently in the media via headlines that emphasize the disintegration of the Middle East; citing the activities of IS, the collapse of the Iraqi armed forces, the apparent dissolution of the Sykes-Picot boundaries, and the devolution of Libya into chaos. One could argue that the current sectarian division within the Middle East began with the ouster of Saddam Hussein and was subsequently exacerbated by events in Bahrain. Ultimately, however, the current conflicts in the Middle East have to do with its tumultuous history.

The Middle East is evolving and the central issue that the international community, particularly the West, must focus upon is how they are going to respond to this evolution and, moreover, the challenges that this evolution presents. Furthermore, the fundamental issues that are currently being experienced in most of the Middle East revolve around the concepts of legitimacy and authenticity of the government and institutions, as well as the relationship between the state and the citizen. Though these issues are not exclusively confined to the Middle East, they underscore that the West can no longer implement a classic state-based model of intervention and expect it to be totally successful at stabilizing society and government. ...

To read more, [click here](#) or copy-paste the following link:

www.cdainstitute.ca/en/blog/entry/roundtable-summary-current-developments-in-the-middle-east

"Geopolitical Security Imperatives: Luncheon with George Friedman"

By Lindsay Coombs

On 10 September 2014, I had the great pleasure of attending a luncheon with George Friedman, founder and Chairman of the global intelligence company STRATFOR, at the Château Laurier in Ottawa. This piece is a brief overview of the presentation as I have interpreted it.

Friedman's presentation began with a few brief witticisms regarding himself and his career; this included the amusing assertion that he obtained his PhD by writing a thesis that has never been cited, regarding affairs of no interest. As he dove into the meat of his lecture, it became clear to the audience that his primary arguments revolved around the geopolitical trajectory of events in

Europe, the Soviet Union, and the Middle East. The manner in which he presented these arguments was akin to the function of Morpheus in the Matrix; Friedman hoped to open our eyes to the geopolitical realities of the globe. ...

To read more, [click here](#) or copy-paste the following link:

www.cdainstitute.ca/en/blog/entry/geopolitical-security-imperatives-luncheon-with-george-friedman

Security & Defence News Round-up: 13-22 September

By Melissa Hawco

Veterans before Politics, by Paul Manson in the *Globe and Mail*: In recent years, smaller veteran support groups have been launching politicized attack campaigns criticizing government policies on veteran care. The aggressive approach is likely detrimental to the cause of veterans nationwide and is not increasing public support for the solemn duty of Canadians to care for their veterans. In order to appeal to the public, veterans should centralize their efforts and stand together on important issues.

Canada Favours United States Fighter Jets (Reuters): The Canadian government is currently favouring American fighter jets over European competition to replace the aging CF-18 jets. However, the decision could be postponed to 2020 due to the anticipation of international political fallout.

Canada Announces Iraqi Support (Government of Canada): The Canadian government has announced Operation Impact, ongoing this September, which is providing strategic airlift support for military supplies to Iraq from the Czech Republic. Canada has been one of the most vocal nations condemning the actions of Islamic State militants but has been prudent about extending military support to Iraq thus far.

Cancelled US-Canada-Russia Military Exercise (National Journal): An annual northern military training exercise between Canada, the United States and Russia that has taken place for the last seven years has been cancelled due to Russian aggression in Ukraine.

Canada's Northern Strategy (Interview by NATO Council of Canada): The Russia-Ukraine crisis has perturbed members of the Arctic Council, which Canada is presiding over as chair. Canadian prime minister Harper stresses that military security is not a mandate of the council but Canada should tighten up its lax attitude in the Arctic if Russia continues to militarize. At the very least, increased northern vigilance is warranted.

ISIS Radicalization a Possible Threat to Canada (Global News): The phenomenon of youth radicalized to support the Islamic State cause may pose a threat to Canada, especially regarding returning radicals from Iraq or Syria. Recent laws aim to combat terrorism but they are ignoring the main source of the IS group's influence abroad: social media. This may be a battle better fought through intelligence, counter-propaganda and de-radicalization programs.

Russian Military Jets fly near Canada (Steven Chase in the Globe and Mail): Russian bombers flew into the Canadian Air Defence Identification Zone in the Arctic recently, prompting an interception by CF-18 jets. While Russian training flights near Canada are nothing new, the air activity closely follows the visit of Ukrainian President Poroshenko to Canada and the United States. This appears to be another case of Russia flexing its military muscle in response to Ukraine's continued alignment with NATO.

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