



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

44th PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION

Standing Committee on National Defence

EVIDENCE

NUMBER 007

Wednesday, February 16, 2022

Chair: The Honourable John McKay



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• (1605)

[English]

The Chair (Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.)): I call the meeting to order.

Thank you, Mr. Clerk, for testing all the various pieces of technology.

I thank the witnesses in advance for their patience.

Colleagues, I see we're about 35 minutes past our starting time. I would propose to go to at least six o'clock unless there are wild objections to the contrary. We have extraordinary witnesses today, not the least of whom are Mr. Kolga and Mr. Hampson.

I appreciate both of you and what you have to say.

With that, I'm going to ask Mr. Hampson for his five-minute opening statement, after which we'll turn to Mr. Kolga for his five-minute opening statement and then to questions.

Thank you.

Dr. Fen Osler Hampson (Chancellor's Professor, Carleton University, President, World Refugee & Migration Council, As an Individual): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I'll jump right in to it.

Let me start with some hard truths.

Today, Canada's armed forces are seeing their lowest overseas deployment since the Korean War. Four years ago, the Trudeau government announced a commitment to increase military spending by \$62.3 billion over the next 20 years, which included a commitment to increase spending by \$6.5 billion or \$6.6 billion over the next five years, yet budget documents have shown that the government has fallen short by more than \$2 billion annually on new military equipment expenditures because of project delays, although some projects have come in under budget.

At full strength, Canada's military should number around 100,000-plus troops, regular forces and reserves, but today it's facing a shortfall of 12,000 and the situation appears to be worsening.

Today, the world is a much more dangerous place. There is no peace dividend to enjoy and certainly no holiday from history. The international system is becoming highly competitive and unstable with the rise of China and Russia's resurgence. Both countries threaten their neighbours and aspire global influence. There are also regional actors—Iran and North Korea—that threaten their neighbours with new provocations, and instability in many parts of the world, including our own hemisphere.

With the return to geostrategic competition and rivalry, Canada's armed forces confront the challenges of what might be characterized as twin or two-front deterrence: how to contend with the growing military threat posed by both Russia and China. Russia and China are now joined at the hip with their new friendship without limits that challenges the current political and military order.

I think we can agree that Russia's actions against Ukraine take place against a background of a series of interventions in its near abroad: Georgia, Belarus and Kazakhstan.

Russia's defence spending is focused on deploying new weaponry, including nonstrategic systems equipped to carry nuclear or conventional warheads, new anti-satellite weapons, directed energy weapons and sophisticated cyberwarfare capabilities that will exploit asymmetrical capabilities against more powerful adversaries.

There is a similar disturbing pattern of aggression in China's behaviour under President Xi Jinping and its own military buildup. Between 2010 and 2020, China's military expenditures rose by 76% and the People's Liberation Army's war-fighting abilities have vastly improved. By 2030, China's navy will be more modern and bigger than that of the United States. Like Russia, China is investing heavily in modernizing its military with hypersonic ballistic and cruise missiles, anti-satellite weapons, cyberwarfare, and the list goes on.

The leisurely pace of modernization of our armed forces to confront new geostrategic realities stands in sharp contrast to our Australian cousins, who have put their foot on the accelerator. Despite being two-thirds the size of Canada in terms of both population and GDP, Australia's military budget is 2.2% of GDP, which is \$26.9 billion U.S., versus 1.4% for Canada, which is \$21 billion U.S.. That's 28% more than Canada. Australia is committed to a major increase in its own defence spending over the next four years, boosting its air and naval capabilities in order to prepare for what Australia's prime minister, Scott Morrison, calls a “poorer, more dangerous and more disorderly” neighbourhood, and a world in which “we have not seen the conflation of global, economic and strategic uncertainty” experienced since the 1930s.

No such warning has come from Canada's leaders.

Given the importance of the Indo-Pacific region to Canada's economic future and the government's new Indo-Pacific strategy, Canada has a key stake in the region's security and stability. For our economic partners in the region, economics and security are two sides of the same coin. They have repeatedly told us that, if Canada wants to strengthen its commercial and economic ties in the region, it must be a much more engaged and reliable security partner.

- (1610)

Former ASEAN secretary-general, Thailand's Surin Pitsuwan, was uncharacteristically blunt in his assessment of Canada as a security partner. "Canada knows that it has been rather absent from the region", he remarked in 2012, and I dare say not a whole lot has changed in the intervening years.

In fact, we were blindsided by the U.S., U.K. and Australia security pact. Australia is considered a serious defence and security partner in the Indo-Pacific. Canada is clearly not in that first tier. Australia received seven mentions in the just-released Indo-Pacific strategy of the United States. Canada had none. We weren't mentioned at all.

The Chair: Mr. Hampson, I apologize for interrupting you, as I apologize all too frequently, but we're way over time here.

Dr. Fen Osler Hampson: Okay. The bottom line is that we have to run faster, jump higher and stop punching below our weight.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Mr. Kolga, you have five minutes, please.

Mr. Marcus Kolga (Senior Fellow, Macdonald-Laurier Institute, As an Individual): Mr. Chair and members of the committee, thank you for inviting me to speak with you today about the threat posed to our security and our democracy by foreign influence and information operations.

In addition to being a senior fellow at the Macdonald-Laurier and CDA Institutes, I am the director of DisinfoWatch, a platform that is dedicated to monitoring and exposing foreign information warfare that targets Canada and our allies, and to helping Canadians develop the cognitive resources to allow them to recognize and reject disinformation and influence operations.

As has been repeatedly noted by Canada's intelligence community and the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians, the threat of foreign information warfare and influence operations—known more broadly as cognitive warfare—is persistent and growing. Canada's a significant target for Chinese, Russian and Iranian actors who seek to manipulate our media, elected officials, civil society, armed forces, ethnic communities and Canadian interests with information operations.

During the 2021 federal election, DisinfoWatch first alerted Canadians to a coordinated Chinese government-aligned influence operation that included disinformation on Chinese state media platforms. The Atlantic Council's DFR lab and researchers from McGill University later published similar findings.

Since early 2020, we've observed Russian state media and its proxies here in Canada trying to polarize our society by promoting

narratives that take advantage of public fear, anger and confusion that have grown during the COVID pandemic.

I'd like to stress that the Kremlin does not share any ideology or values with any major Canadian political party. Vladimir Putin's only ideology is corruption and power. As such, our democratic values represent an existential threat to his regime, which is why he targets us. Vladimir Putin can only compete with democratic nations that are divided and whose defence alliances, like NATO, are broken.

To achieve this, Russian state actors operating in the shadows of the extreme political left and right seek to divide our society by eroding our bonds within it. In the United States, we've witnessed state actors exploit civil unrest, environmental issues and other sensitive political issues. In Canada, we recently observed Russian state media exploit COVID protests by promoting extremist voices who seek the overthrow of our democratically elected government.

Our armed forces serving in Latvia and Ukraine have also been targeted by Russian information warfare. In efforts to subvert the trust of Russian speakers in Latvia towards Canada's NATO mission and troops, Russian state media published an outrageously false report about it in 2017. The news report featured photographs of a former Canadian officer and convicted killer, Russell Williams, wearing women's underwear and falsely claimed that he was leading a gay Canadian army to convert Latvians into homosexuals.

In order to remain in power, Vladimir Putin needs his people to believe that Russia is in a constant state of conflict and crisis with enemies all around it and that only he can protect his people against them. This is one important reason why he's created the current crisis on Ukraine's and NATO's borders. Vladimir Putin is seeking to gaslight Ukrainians, Canadians and the western world to believe that NATO and our friends in Ukraine have caused the crisis that he has manufactured.

He wants everyone to believe that NATO has encircled Russia and that nations like Ukraine, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and yes, even Canada, pose a threat to Russia's sovereignty. The Russian government also wants us to believe that Ukraine isn't worth defending. That's why Russian state media promotes disinformation about Ukraine's government being controlled by neo-Nazis when it is actually led by a democratically elected government whose president is a member of the Jewish Ukrainian community.

A 2019 Russian state media report even accused the Ukrainian Canadian community of controlling our foreign policy. This is a conspiracy theory narrative that is directly intended to delegitimize the voice of this community and discriminate against them. We've seen this tactic before with other minority communities.

Cognitive warfare, disinformation and influence operations along with cyber is the primary battlefield of 21st-century warfare. Our government and our armed forces must be equipped with resources to defend against this growing menace that threatens our security and our democracy. Canada should take the immediate steps of placing economic sanctions on Russian and Chinese state broadcasters to limit their ability to pollute our information environment and profit from it.

Finally, the Canadian government's understanding of cognitive warfare must develop beyond one that focuses primarily on elections and social media. As many of us, including our intelligence community, have repeatedly warned over the past few years, this threat is persistent and growing. We must start taking cognitive warfare seriously. We should begin by creating a task force to learn from our allies and develop capabilities and resources to defend our democracy against it.

• (1615)

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I look forward to your questions.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Kolga.

With that, we'll commence our six-minute rounds, starting with Ms. Findlay, Mr. Fisher, Madame Normandin and then Ms. Mathysen.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay (South Surrey—White Rock, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Hampson, on our Canadian government finally providing lethal aid to Ukraine, you were reported to have said, "It's a bit like showing up at a potluck dinner party with the canapés when the guests are already into dessert." Can you elaborate further on those remarks?

Dr. Fen Osler Hampson: I don't think there's that much to elaborate. There were predictions that an attack was imminent.

By the way, those remarks were quoted in the *The Globe and Mail*.

There had been a lot of discussion in this country about providing lethal aid, pivoting away from our commitment and efforts to provide non-lethal aid. Other countries have been doing that in some cases for quite some time. It's very late in the game, when an attack is imminent. If you're providing even small arms, they have to be put on a plane. They have to get there. It's a challenging situation, as I think we all know, on the ground right now, and—

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: In your view, that decision should have been taken earlier. Is that correct?

Dr. Fen Osler Hampson: Yes, correct.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: Also, it should be a broader range of what's been offered as well. Is that what you're saying?

Dr. Fen Osler Hampson: I think we're limited in terms of what we can offer and certainly what we make. What Ukraine needs are

anti-tank weapons. It also needs surface-to-air missiles. We have attached conditionality to the guaranteed loans that we're giving Ukraine so they can't use that money to make those kinds of purchases.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: Something like our RADARSAT technology would be very helpful to Ukraine, wouldn't it?

Dr. Fen Osler Hampson: Certainly, but again, it's difficult to provide that now.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: How would you characterize Canada's place in the international system as a middle power? Is that description even still accurate in your view?

Dr. Fen Osler Hampson: I've never liked the term "middle power". There are almost 200 countries in the world and "middle" suggests you're somewhere around 100 in the tier. We're a principal power. We're a member of the G7. We're a member of the G20.

We traditionally, as I indicated earlier, have been a major guarantor of global peace and security, not only through our diplomacy but also through our defence spending. The last time we hit the 2% level of GDP defence spending—and I agree, it's a crude metric, but again, it shows you in general terms what kind of contribution we are making—was in 1988 under the Mulroney government. It has been a steady downhill ever since.

• (1620)

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: Mr. Kolga, you talk about cognitive warfare. That's something that certainly concerns many of us, that state of cyberwarfare.

We see that now being used by the Russians, it would appear, against Ukraine. Do you believe that a Russian invasion of Ukraine is imminent?

Mr. Marcus Kolga: Thank you for the question.

I think it's very difficult to say whether an invasion is imminent. It would appear, because of the number of troops and the hardware that has been placed around Ukraine to its east, south and north, that some sort of activity is imminent.

How and what that will look like is difficult to say at the moment, but we have seen cyber-attacks against Ukraine over the past number of days. Its defence ministry servers were brought down with a massive DDoS attack, and a number of experts have predicted that a cyber-attack would occur ahead of any sort of military action, so I think we all need to be aware that something may happen imminently.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: I have just a minute left, so for either of you, how would you describe the threat to Canada's Arctic region and our grip on the Arctic archipelago?

Jump in quick.

Dr. Fen Osler Hampson: I don't think we have a grip, to be honest. The threat up there is growing from the Chinese who are building heavy icebreakers equipped with weapons and others who see the Arctic as not just a place to exploit natural resources but of transit and military competition.

Mr. Marcus Kolga: If I may add quickly, the Russian government has engaged in a mass mobilization of the Arctic over the past 10 years. They've built over 20 new bases or refurbished 20 new bases, including offensive bases for long-range bombers. They've also created superweapons for the Arctic, high-speed torpedoes, nuclear-armed torpedoes that are designed to irradiate our Arctic coastline. Last spring, Russia laid claim to all of the resources underneath the Arctic sea right up to Canada's coastline. There's definitely a growing threat in that region.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Findlay.

Mr. Fisher, you have six minutes.

Mr. Darren Fisher (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, Lib.): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to our witnesses. My questions are going to be for Mr. Kolga.

This committee was recently briefed on the threat of foreign influence and interference, a subject that you have been very vocal on. How are foreign actors using disinformation tactics to advance their interests?

Mr. Marcus Kolga: I'll focus specifically on Russia right now.

We know that over the past two years during the pandemic the Russian government has focused its disinformation efforts on exploiting the pandemic and COVID. We were warned already in March of 2020 by the European Union that the Russian government would in fact be doing this. They would try to amplify the effects of COVID and use it to divide us and erode the trust within society, and this is something that we've been tracking all along.

Later that summer, in August 2020, we saw massive anti-vaccination and anti-lockdown protests in Berlin that were covered live by Russian television and certainly promoted by them. The effect of this is that these protests are then legitimized.

Again, these protests may be legitimate. People feel these emotions. They have the fear. There is confusion about COVID. A lot of them are coming out with the best intentions. The fact is that Russia is exploiting those fears and those emotions and is promoting, quite frankly, anti-government narratives within them. This is something that we've seen come out over the past number of weeks in Ottawa. I don't believe that Russia has had a hand in directing what we've seen in Ottawa, but it certainly adds fuel to the extremist elements who are involved there. This is one of the ways they try to undermine our democracy and erode Canadian trust in media, in our elected government and certainly eventually in each other.

• (1625)

Mr. Darren Fisher: You referenced anti-mask and anti-vaccination narratives in Germany, and you talked about what's going on in Ottawa. You noted that there is evidence that, and I'm going to quote here, "Russian state media and its proxies were aggressively

promoting wild conspiracy theories, anti-mask and antivaccination narratives and movements" and that "Canadian anti-mask and anti-vaccination movements have transformed into aggressive anti-government movements during the [2021] election."

Given what we've seen unfold over the past few weeks—and you did touch on this for a moment when I asked you the last question—how do you assess the evolution of this threat?

Mr. Marcus Kolga: In the context of COVID?

Mr. Darren Fisher: Yes.

Mr. Marcus Kolga: It's been persistent. It's been there all along. We have seen the transformation of these protests and the introduction of anti-government narratives. We saw that happen already in the fall of 2020 when the first protests started appearing in Canada. I think the first one was in Montreal. Those anti-government narratives have stuck with those protests all along. Clearly, the state actors, Russian proxy platforms—one of which is right here in Canada, in Montreal, in fact—and Russian state media have used those narratives. They've amplified them. They've legitimized them.

What they're doing with them is dividing Canadians using those specific narratives and they're allowing these anti-mask movements, these anti-lockdown movements and the anti-government narratives within them to harden. Through that, our society is becoming more and more divided.

Mr. Darren Fisher: That's unbelievable. Thank you for that.

I want to go back a couple of years. The last time I was on this national defence committee, from 2016 to 2020—I'm not absolutely certain when this happened—I was on Facebook one day and I saw.... You're an expert in communications and media strategy, and it's timely that you're here because I've been wanting to ask this question to somebody for a long time.

Anyone can be media now. This incredibly well-produced news program, I believe it was in Russia, was saying that a U.S. ship had fired at the Russians in the Mediterranean, or something of that sort. I don't know if you remember that, but when I looked down in the bottom corner where it said "Share", it had been shared something like 25,000 times. This was a Facebook post of clear misinformation. Mainstream media is certainly going to speak about an attack by the Americans on the Russians, or an attack by the Russians on the Americans.

Do you remember that? It was so slick and so well produced that I can totally imagine why the population would believe it and then share it as if it were real.

Mr. Marcus Kolga: There are two answers, quickly.

Russia has become an expert in creating completely fake news. They've used scenes from video games in the past that they've tried to pass off as real television news reports.

The other thing is that Russian state media doesn't only broadcast through RT. That's not the only platform they rely on. They rely on online platforms, whether it's YouTube or their own website, and a lot of the content that appears there is shared, as you say, very widely on platforms like Facebook, unfortunately, Twitter and others.

They don't rely just on that television medium but on online media. The problem is that the information on those platforms gets shared very widely.

The Chair: We're going to have to leave it there, Mr. Fisher.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Normandin, you have six minutes.

Ms. Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

I thank both witnesses. I invite them to jump in when questions arise that interest them.

At the outset, Mr. Hampson, you mentioned the severe lack of resources in the Canadian Armed Forces. Based on what you both said, obviously there's still a lot of work to be done in terms of cyber threats and psychological operations.

Is that where we should really prioritize resources? Are there other more important areas that might not have been thought of?

• (1630)

[*English*]

Dr. Fen Osler Hampson: You have to make some tough choices. As we've just heard from Marcus, there are cyber-attacks and cyber-influences when it comes to social media discussions in this country. The question is, who should do it? When it comes to some of the things Marcus was talking about, that's a role for the Communications Security Establishment, CSE. It's not really a role for defence, although defence has to be appraised.

One aspect of that, which we need to pay a lot more attention to, is not just infiltration of social media but attacks or penetrations that steal our intellectual property. It's important to remind the committee that one of the reasons why Huawei is one of the greatest telecommunications companies in the world today, if not the biggest, is that they did a great job of stealing a lot of Nortel intellectual property. That has found its way into Huawei equipment.

However, when it comes to our armed forces, we're on the right path in acquiring a new surface combat capability. That's going to be hugely important. At the same time, it's going to be very vulnerable to hypersonic cruise missiles and hypersonic weapons. That's also true of our partners. We definitely need those 88 new fighter jets. We should have done that a long time ago.

Our problem is not the direction in which we're moving, but the fact that we're moving far too slowly and far too inefficiently. Every time there's a change in government, some program gets cancelled and things get put on the back burner, only to resurface in a

decision four years later. We can start with Mr. Chrétien's helicopters there.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Christine Normandin: Thank you, Mr. Hampson.

With regard to the role that the Department of National Defence has to play, I was just wondering whether certain operations were indeed within its remit. In the case of military propaganda operations, however, I cannot believe that they do not fall directly under the responsibility of the Department of National Defence.

In this context, it is understandable that psychological operations are often reserved for the reserve force. It is they who do it, rather than the regular force. However, there is a loss of expertise, as there is a large turnover of personnel within the reserve force.

Should we, as a priority, ensure that this expertise is maintained within the regular force?

[*English*]

Mr. Marcus Kolga: I'll just quickly answer that.

I think it's extremely important that our forces be equipped to deal with cognitive warfare. As I mentioned in my opening remarks, this is the 21st-century battlefield, and our forces are being targeted regularly, especially in places like Latvia and Ukraine, with cognitive warfare. We need to make sure that our forces are equipped with the resources to defend against this.

Back to your earlier question about where we should be placing our resources, we need deterrents in NATO and we need to ensure that we add resources to our mission in Latvia, perhaps working within NATO to call for a permanent mission in the Baltic states to deter Vladimir Putin. That's something we should be looking at, because it is that sort of power, the deterrents, that will stop Vladimir Putin from acting the way he is right now in Ukraine.

Finally, I would say the Arctic, as I mentioned earlier. Vladimir Putin is engaging in a mass mobilization in the Arctic. We need to be better prepared for Russian activity and certainly Chinese activity in that region. Right now, we're woefully unprepared for that.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Christine Normandin: We talked about psychological operations. Should there be more one-on-one training for reservists and officers so that the military on the ground are prepared when there are disinformation operations?

• (1635)

[*English*]

Mr. Marcus Kolga: Yes, absolutely. They need to be trained. I know that some training was occurring about a year and a half ago, two years ago, which was unfortunately derailed. I know there was a unit within the armed forces to deal with cognitive warfare, which has now been sort of pushed aside. We need to reinstate that unit and we need to make sure that all of our forces, whether reservists or regular forces, are trained to have at least the basic resources to detect information warfare and to be able to cognitively recognize and handle it when they do see it.

The Chair: Ms. Mathysen, go ahead for six minutes, please.

Ms. Lindsay Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Just to sort of build from that, there have been a lot of reports recently in the media because of what's happening here in Ottawa and across the country with the anti-government movement you were talking about before and of course the identification of that within our own military. How concerned does our own leadership need to be about that within our own military as well?

Mr. Marcus Kolga: I think members of our own military are allowed to believe and think and speak the way they feel appropriate, but if these members of our military and members of our law enforcement and others are active in these sorts of anti-government movements, then I think we should be more aware of that and try to curb it whenever and however possible.

Ms. Lindsay Mathysen: Mr. Kolga, you also mentioned those actors. You mentioned Montreal media in terms of the Russian actors involved. Could you expand on that a bit? We've also seen within this movement that foreign money is being funnelled in. How is that money moved in? Do we know that Russians are funneling it through the United States to get it here? How does that all work?

Mr. Marcus Kolga: I can't really speak to how these movements are being financed, especially the ones in Ottawa right now. What I can speak to is the first part of your question about these proxy platforms.

There is an entire disinformation ecosystem being created by the Russian government. We're talking about RT, Russia Today, the state media, but also these proxy platforms that are sort of.... You can't say that they're necessarily funded or controlled by the Russian media or government, but they are definitely aligned with the Kremlin, share its values and also help to advance its narratives.

This platform in Montreal that I mentioned earlier was identified by the United States State Department's global engagement centre about a year and a half ago. It's Global Research. This is a platform that has been regularly publishing, during the COVID pandemic, wild conspiracy theories, some of the wildest you can imagine, the QAnon types of conspiracies that suggest that, for example, big pharma is injecting Canadians and people who are accepting the COVID vaccine with these vaccines that are full of graphene and various different substances that are intended to allow big pharma and the elite western governments to track the people who receive these vaccines.

Some of these stories posted on Global Research appear on other websites, including Russian state media, and they get shared very widely when they're shared on Global Research. This platform also gives the Russian government a way to sort of launder the narratives. It's a step in between. People who might feel uncomfortable sharing narratives that appear on state-run platforms may feel more comfortable with this platform that seems to be independent.

Those platforms—not just Global Research but a number of others—are instrumental in sharing these narratives that are shared by a lot of anti-government extremists, and we've been seeing this happen, like I said, over the past two years and even before that. It's

something that the Canadian government needs to be taking a closer look at and working with our allies on to ensure that Canadians have the cognitive resources to recognize these narratives and reject them for what they are when they see them.

• (1640)

Ms. Lindsay Mathysen: Shifting gears a little bit, we were talking about Canada supplying lethal weaponry, and for years experts have warned about the misuse and potential diversion of small arms and light weapons. We don't have the ability to track them. Years from now.... I'm thinking long term in terms of the repercussions of this. Could we open up that discussion a bit?

Dr. Fen Osler Hampson: I assume that was directed to me.

Absolutely, there is a risk. There's a risk whenever you provide weaponry to another state, even so-called strong states, in terms of how they might be used by state authorities or fall into the wrong hands if there's a collapse of the state.

I think it's fair to say Ukraine has a well-run, professional military. We've been investing ourselves heavily in training, and so have other countries, but if there's a full-scale invasion of Ukraine and state collapse, I dare say weapons can fall into all kinds of wrong hands. That's the risk you run, but if you don't arm the Ukraine state, as many have urged, to make it the so-called bitter pill for Russia to swallow, then the risk you run is that an invasion looks relatively easy for.... I'm not saying it is easy, but a weak Ukraine is going to be much easier to attack than a strong Ukraine.

The Chair: Thank you.

Thank you, Ms. Mathysen.

Colleagues, we have 20 minutes, and I have 25 minutes' worth of questions here. I'm going to be a little arbitrary and just cut a minute off everyone.

With that, Mr. Motz, you have four minutes, please.

Mr. Glen Motz (Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner, CPC): Thank you, Chair.

Mr. Hampson, in your opening remarks, you didn't paint a very pretty picture of Canada's military presence, our capacity and our strength on the global stage and even nationally here at home.

In your opinion, sir, what are our top military threats and shortcomings, and what should our government be doing now to fix those shortcomings and address those threats appropriately?

Dr. Fen Osler Hampson: The major threat is geopolitical. I tried to stress that in my opening remarks. It's not [*Technical difficulty—Editor*] that Russia poses to our NATO allies and obviously to our friends in Ukraine right now, but it is the other bully on the global stage, and that's China, which is bullying its neighbours, flexing its military power and muscle. We're hoping through the new Indo-Pacific strategy for Canada to diversify our trade in the Indo-Pacific to take advantage of what is the world's most populous neighbourhood, and increasingly the richest neighbourhood. It has the biggest growing middle class in the world. It's where the action is, but it's also increasingly unstable as a result of China's geostrategic ambitions. China's interests are not—

Mr. Glen Motz: I'm sorry for interrupting you. I want to get to the thrust of my question. What are CAF's, our military's shortcomings? What do we need to do as a country to address those threats and address our shortcomings?

Dr. Fen Osler Hampson: We need to build the size of our armed forces with more personnel, certainly fill the shortfall that we have now. We need to acquire new ships, new aircraft, new cyber-capabilities of the kinds that were discussed, and to work more closely with our allies, not just in Europe but also in the Indo-Pacific. We're coming late to the party, if I can use that metaphor again. [*Technical difficulty—Editor*] that has seen what the threats are and is taking action to deal with it.

• (1645)

Mr. Glen Motz: Thank you for that.

I'm sensing maybe from both of you but certainly from Mr. Hampson that our focus needs to be global—our threat is global—and on being a better partner with our allies, as opposed to focusing only on domestic issues. Would you concur with that?

Dr. Fen Osler Hampson: Is that directed at me or Marcus?

Mr. Glen Motz: It's to both of you. I'll start with you, sir.

Dr. Fen Osler Hampson: We're using our military domestically for various kinds of disasters, emergency kinds of activities. I would suggest that's not a very good use of our military. It's a very expensive snow shovel to send to Newfoundland. We should be following the German example. They have an all-volunteer force of some 100,000 civilians who are well trained to deal with emergencies. We saw them going into action during those floods in Germany. That's something we should be thinking about very seriously here in Canada so that our military, as we've heard from—

The Chair: We're going to have leave Mr. Motz's question there. Thank you, Mr. Hampson.

Mr. May, you have four minutes, please.

Mr. Bryan May (Cambridge, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you to both of our witnesses for their testimony here today—an absolutely fantastic contribution so far.

My questions are going to be to Mr. Hampson. You started to talk a little bit about it in Mr. Motz's questions. You've written about the need for Canada to prioritize Indo-Pacific engagement from a foreign affairs' perspective. Could you speak to the role of the military co-operation in Indo-Pacific operations in deepening this engagement?

Dr. Fen Osler Hampson: To be charitable, in recent years, we are obviously participating in RIMPAC exercises. We sent a frigate through the Taiwan Strait with our American friends and others, but showing up for the occasional what I would call “naval cameo appearance”, and I don't mean to be overly sarcastic there.... We need to have more assets in the Pacific. We need, quite frankly, to decide which countries are going to be priorities in terms of developing deeper partnerships. My list would be Japan—that's an obvious one—South Korea, Australia and Indonesia. I think we can start by having more military attachés in the region, and as we start acquiring new equipment, we can start building those relationships.

Mr. Bryan May: Mr. Hampson, how should Canada prioritize its military engagements?

Dr. Fen Osler Hampson: The challenge right now is that we're once again being pulled towards Europe and Russia and, depending on how that story unfolds—and I don't have any better tea leaves in my teacup than anybody else—I think one of the challenges is going to be to develop what I would call “dual conventional capability” to deal with different contingencies in the Indo-Pacific.

That starts, by the way, by having a stronger naval presence so that we can work more closely with the Australians and with the Americans. At some point, they may invite us to join AUKUS, but I don't think that invitation is going to be coming any time soon. It means putting more real assets and, at the leadership level, having minister-to-minister meetings on a regular basis to find out from them. As opposed to our going to them and saying, “Here's what we think we should do”, we should be talking to them to find out how we can help them in more constructive ways.

• (1650)

Mr. Bryan May: What about obligations? We heard testimony already today about an “expensive snow shovel”. How do we start that balance?

Dr. Fen Osler Hampson: I think we have something like Germany has, which is to start now to develop our disaster civilian protection and disaster management systems, and to start building a semi-professional volunteer force that can deal with those kinds of natural disasters. I mean, that could be a great nation-building exercise, particularly with younger people, at a time when national unity is increasingly fragmented, for reasons that we're all too familiar with. I think that could be a great initiative, and it doesn't have to be that expensive.

The Chair: Thank you again, Mr. May and Mr. Hampson.

We have a minute and a half for Madame Normandin.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Christine Normandin: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

We see that Russia has started to withdraw its tanks. From a more conventional military point of view, people are saying that this looks like de-escalation, but on the other hand, we see an increase in cyber-attacks. We see that the Duma has called on President Putin to recognize Donbass as a sovereign region. Russia is maintaining the discourse that Russian speakers are victims of genocide in Ukraine.

Isn't this just the proof that hybrid warfare can be effective?

I would like you to make a brief comment on this.

[English]

Mr. Marcus Kolga: This is definitely part of that hybrid warfare and cognitive warfare. As for any suggestions that there's some sort of a genocide, as Vladimir Putin said in his presser just two days ago—that there was some sort of genocide going on in Donbass—this is disinformation.

Russia de facto controls the militias in that area, and if there were any genocide that was happening, they would be aware of it. I think that Canada and our allies need to be aware of some sort of a false flag operation. We've been warned from the U.S. intelligence side as well that Russia has been planning one.

That narrative about a genocide will be the narrative that's used to create the pretext for some sort of Russian action in Donbass, whether it's recognition of Donbass as an independent nation and then having Russian forces come in at the request of the government there.... We need to be very aware that Russia is actively operating in the information space in that area right now, and we need to be very careful about—

The Chair: Thank you, Madame Normandin and Mr. Kolga. I'm impressed by the talents of both members and witnesses to stretch time limits.

With that, we'll go to Ms. Mathysen for a minute and a half, please.

Ms. Lindsay Mathysen: I, too, will try to stretch it.

Just to continue on with what Mr. Kolga was talking about, ultimately in terms of that information, that misinformation trying to lead NATO forces in or not, there is a certain timeline that Putin has and there has been a lot of “will he or won't he.” Again, there is that timeline in terms of when things thaw in that area. I guess I'm thinking about is this: If we can get to a point where things thaw and there isn't that option, how do we avoid this going forward into next winter or what have you?

Mr. Marcus Kolga: I think there's a certain timeline on a full-blown invasion of Ukraine, but let's not forget that Vladimir Putin can continue intimidating Ukraine, can continue intimidating NATO for quite some time and he's benefiting from this. The price of oil is reaching record highs, and let's not forget that half of Russia's economy is based on resources and oil. He's benefiting right now from the situation that he has caused, this crisis that he's causing.

Will there be a thaw? Will he pull back some troops? He said he's going to do that, but up until an hour ago, NATO clearly stated that there's no evidence of this happening.

As I stated in my opening remarks, Vladimir Putin requires these constant conflicts to be happening, whether they're internal with opposition activists like Alexei Navalny or others, or externally like NATO. I don't think anyone in Canada should expect a complete thaw, and we need to prepare for that. That means sufficient resources for our forces.

• (1655)

The Chair: It's a good thing I know Mr. Kolga very well, so he will not be insulted that I'm cutting him off.

With that, we'll go to Madam Gallant for four minutes, please.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC): First of all, to Mr. Hampson, NATO has most recently added space and cyber as new domains of warfare. Where or what is the next domain of warfare as you see it?

Dr. Fen Osler Hampson: I think it's fair to say the next domain of warfare—and we're already in it—is in what I would call the pre-attack phase, shortened warning times through satellite blinding, anti-satellite activities and capabilities, which both Russia and China are investing heavily in, and a new class of what could be characterized as hypersonic weaponry, both conventional and nuclear, cruise and ballistic, endo-atmospheric and exo-atmospheric, that will, again, shorten warning times and enhance what I would call the “fog of war” and the risk of miscalculation.

We've talked about what Putin is up to today, on the ground, an hour ago. That all comes from satellites that are gathering information in real time and sending it to NATO headquarters and here in Ottawa as well. Imagine if those satellites are taken out, which can be done. What then? What do we know? That, I think, is the biggest risk. I know arms control is not your remit here, but it's going to be very important to look at what's happening in the evolution of new technologies to try to afford some of that.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: The government argues that Huawei equipment is already part of the telecom infrastructure. How does the indecision on banning Huawei to 5G impact Canada's threat environment?

Dr. Fen Osler Hampson: First of all, I think it makes us look very foolish with our Five Eyes partners who wonder why, again, we've been taking our sweet time to make a decision that they've already made. It has also proven quite costly with our telcos, although some of them have essentially voted with their feet and cancelled contracts with Huawei, seeing the writing on the wall, but there still is equipment there. It's a front door into communications, and I think the sooner we make the transition the more secure we'll be.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Mr. Kolga, on your website, DisinfoWatch, various headlines are depicted. They are essentially headlines that we have seen in Canada, but don't mesh with the government narrative.

For these headlines that we've seen on major networks, I'm wondering how the Russians implant that disinformation. There's also a website called Project Veritas. I'm wondering if that is also a source of Russian disinformation.

The Chair: Answer very briefly.

Mr. Marcus Kolga: Thank you for the question.

I am not aware of Project Veritas.

On DisinfoWatch, we try to scan for headlines that are published in Chinese state media, Iranian state media and Russian state media and those proxy platforms. We try to dissect the narratives in there to expose the disinformation. We try explain to Canadians why this is disinformation, why these narratives have been produced and what they might be targeting. That's the objective of the platform.

• (1700)

The Chair: Thank you, Mrs. Gallant.

With the final four minutes, I'll go to Mr. Hampson.

My first question has to do with Taiwan. Do you think that Canada should be changing our posture on Taiwan and changing, if you will, our public policy with respect to Taiwan?

Dr. Fen Osler Hampson: When it comes to Taiwan, one thing we should be working on and pursuing is welcoming Taiwan into the trans-Pacific partnership trade agreement and supporting Taiwan's position or seat in various international organizations where the Chinese have indicated they don't want them to be sitting any longer.

The Chair: Do you think it's in Canada's best interests to do that, though?

Dr. Fen Osler Hampson: Yes, absolutely. Taiwan is an important trading partner. It's important to send a strong message to our friends and allies in the region that we are strong supporters of Taiwan.

There is creative ambiguity going back to the Taiwan act of 1972. Occasionally President Biden has overstepped that and irritated the Chinese. We have to obviously live with that going forward. You don't want to precipitate a Chinese attack on Taiwan because they think it's going to declare its full independence.

The Chair: I take your point, but we may be at the end of the utility of creative ambiguity.

Unfortunately, I have to move on because if I'm going to make my colleagues' lives miserable with the clock, I have to make my own life miserable with the clock.

Mr. Kolga, you and I first met over Magnitsky sanctions. They had some utility. The utility maybe hasn't been as exploited as it should have been by the Government of Canada. I would be interested in your thoughts.

Mr. Marcus Kolga: Thank you very much for the question, Mr. Chair.

Yes, Canada has been reluctant in using Magnitsky sanction legislation. This is, of course, legislation that allows the Canadian government to target individual human rights abusers and corrupt offi-

cial in countries like Russia and China. We've fallen behind our allies in placing names on our own sanctions list.

The fact of the matter is that corrupt Russian oligarchs hold significant assets—I'm talking about hundreds of millions, if not billions of dollars in assets—in this country. Targeting those assets with sanctions would send a very strong message to Vladimir Putin and would almost certainly cause him to change his calculus with regard to the situation in Ukraine and the conflict that he's trying to create with NATO right now.

We need to be using those sanctions more efficiently. We need to be targeting Putin in his own wallet through his corrupt oligarch enablers. We need to be updating that legislation to introduce some reporting and transparency to it to make it work more efficiently.

The Chair: Thank you to you both. This has been a fascinating hour of the changing nature of warfare and each of you have brought your own expertise to help the committee look at how the threat analysis is literally changing on an hourly basis. It was very helpful.

On behalf of the committee I want to thank both of you. It's been extraordinary beneficial.

With that we will suspend while we re-empanel. Thanks again.

• (1705)

(Pause)

• (1705)

The Chair: I call the meeting back to order. We are again very fortunate to have two very excellent witnesses. We're going to ask Mr. Fadden for a five-minute statement and after that Mr. Taillon for a further five-minute statement, and then we'll go to questions.

Mr. Fadden, you have five minutes please.

Mr. Richard Fadden (As an Individual): Thank you, Chair, I very much appreciate the opportunity of speaking to you.

I believe that the treatment of threats [*Technical difficulty—Editor*] and I want to start my remarks by suggesting a number of considerations that I hope will assist your work in assessing threats.

First, I suggest that an effective consideration of threats has two distinct parts. The first is relatively objective as it deals with the intent, the capability and the likelihood of actions against Canada. The second part is subjective and it's how a government, a minister, a group or a person chooses to view those actions potentially directed at Canada. For example, one government may consider that Russian activity in the Baltic states constitutes a threat to Canada that needs a Canadian response, while another government may not take that view.

The subjective part clearly changes over time, not least because governments change, but this perception of threats is important for the Canadian Forces and the requirement that they be prepared to act effectively in response to government action or not. While it is important for governments to have room to adjust their views, I suggest there is not a national consensus on these matters. This has consequences for all sorts of prioritization decisions taken by governments and eventually by the Canadian Forces.

My second meta point concerns the nature of current and future warfare for which governments and the CF must prepare. The danger that government direction, doctrine and operational preparedness be oriented to past threats must be consciously avoided. For example, it seems unlikely that Canada and NATO will see Russian tanks roll across the plains of central Europe, which was one of the main fears during the Cold War, yet it's a distinct possibility. What does that mean? Should we consciously beef up our air and land based anti-tank weaponry? It's not an insignificant cost and decision. It does have major implications for doctrine and procurement. I'd suggest that Canada's most likely to encounter threats requiring a response in the cyber-realm and by special and limited forces. This is not to suggest that more traditional forces and planning are not needed, but that we need to rethink this balance.

A third issue is the extent to which we, Canada and the Canadian Forces, can parse our operational capabilities by sharing capabilities with allies. It's not an easy thing to do, but it's not impossible. For example, we often rely on specific U.S. support. If we opt out of having, for example, an air defence capability and have a deal with another country, what does that do for operational effectiveness and readiness in that area?

This last point is closely linked to what I believe is an accepted fact. Canada is unlikely alone to deal with an external threat of any significance. It's either through our settled alliances, NORAD and NATO, or an ad hoc alliance that we're going to meet those threats. This in practice also means that both elements of threats of which I spoke earlier are very likely to be a product of consensus. The question in my mind is to what extent can Canada alone reasonably define threats that originate beyond our borders? I don't think it's possible to do that across the board. We have to take into account the impressions of our close allies.

Another issue linked to the subjective part of a threat relates to the fact that governments broadly are aware of the capabilities of the Canadian Forces and are unlikely to ask them to do something they cannot effectively deliver. Thus, in these circumstances the Canadian Forces are seen to be operationally ready. This is a relatively dangerous situation, because it does not take into account the objective part of threats that I talked about a moment ago.

Let me talk for a couple of minutes about those areas where I think there are gaps in the Canadian Forces' operational readiness. The first, and I think the individuals appearing before me mentioned this, is cyber-capability both offensive and defensive. I would also add to this that I think there's room for discussion here as to what portion of the cyber-environment the military should deal with as opposed to CSE, as opposed to other parts of the Canadian government. It's not extraordinarily expensive compared with other parts of the defence establishment, but overlap is not very useful.

Then there's our capability in the Arctic. We have no bases. We have limited comms. We have limited surveillance, and likely far from enough training in a very difficult area.

Thirdly, I think we lack significantly surveillance capability overall against Russian, Chinese and North Korean threats. Much of it is linked to what we are doing with NORAD.

Fourthly, I think we need to have a measure of agreement nationally on the nature and extent of threats. I say this because I don't think it exists, and no government is going to want to spend billions of dollars more on the Canadian Forces unless there's some measure of a national consensus on what the threats are that we have to face. We don't have that right now.

• (1710)

Lastly, we need to prioritize. A number of the questions from your members pointed to this, and I don't think we've been very successful in doing this. We can't effectively say that we're going to ignore Europe or we're going to ignore China, but we do not currently have enough resources to do that.

Lastly, truly, the CF lacks personnel, both because it has retention and recruiting challenges, and because its personnel cap is likely too low. I leave it to others to discuss whether the forces have the right mix of skills for the kind of work that we're likely to face, but I'm not convinced that the case has been made.

As well—others can do this better than I—budgeting and procurement decisions and policies frequently negatively impact operational effectiveness because they make the acquisition of replacement or new equipment too slow, too complicated and too expensive.

I'll stop there, Chair, and I am happy to try to answer any questions you might have.

• (1715)

The Chair: Thank you.

Go ahead, Mr. Taillon.

Dr. J. Paul de B. Taillon (As an Individual): Thank you.

I am here as an academic and a private citizen who is deeply concerned by the approach to the activities of the Chinese Communist Party. For me, an important reference is the 1999 publication of *Unrestricted Warfare: China's Master Plan to Destroy America*. I believe, and a number of my other colleagues firmly believe, that we've been operating in that environment since 2000.

The authors, Colonel Qiao Liang and Wang Xiangsui, both PLA colonels, had an idea of conducting a multi-faceted approach in the conduct of kinetic and non-kinetic warfare. The authors explored a full spectrum of non-kinetic but focused warfare to include the diplomatic, financial, trade and biochemical to regulatory, smuggling, drug, media and ideological, among others. This typology would be married with other forms of more known warfare, such as nuclear, conventional, guerrilla and terrorism as a potential PLA war-fighting strategy.

Some in the academic and the intelligence communities have argued that the greatest security threat to Canada's economic well-being is the increasingly pervasive intelligence and economic espionage threat orchestrated by the Chinese Communist Party. This is not a new revelation, as Canadian diplomats and intelligence leaders, such as the former ambassador to China Mr. Mulroney, Mr. Fadden and the present director, Mr. Vigneault, have clearly and openly stated their concerns regarding the ever-expanding and problematic activities of the CCP. Moreover, China experts, such as Dr. Burton, have further reinforced these misgivings regarding China's spectrum of nefarious activities within Canada and our allies.

Our American allies have also surfaced their uneasiness—more aggressively, I may add—about the range of the CCP activities domestically and internationally. In 2020, at the Hudson Institute, FBI director Christopher Wray posited that the FBI is opening a new China-related counter-intelligence case about every 10 hours. Moreover, he stated that of the nearly 5,000 active FBI counter-intelligence cases currently under way in the country, almost half are related to China.

To fully understand the CCP's strategic threat to Canada and our allies, we must appreciate that President Xi views that the CCP is conducting a generational fight for strategic, economic and technical leadership to replace the United States and dominate the global commons. For President Xi, his plan incorporates a whole-of-state strategic approach to become not just an international economic competitor but the only global superpower.

From an intelligence standpoint, the spectrum of tradecraft and methodologies employed by the Chinese government's bureaucracy and intelligence apparatus can be subtle, diverse and sophisticated. Canada and our [Technical difficulty—Editor] intrusions, stealing personnel, corporate and financial data to the more traditional aspects of corrupting individuals, utilizing sex, ethnicity and greed in the pursuit of sensitive information, access or materials.

Chinese—

The Chair: Madame Normandin has a point of order.

[Translation]

Ms. Christine Normandin: Mr. Chair, I don't like to interrupt the witnesses, but I would like to point out that there is no more interpretation.

[English]

The Chair: I think you cut out for a second and then came back.

Please continue.

Dr. J. Paul de B. Taillon: The Chinese communist leadership fully appreciates that to eclipse the west it needs to make dramatic leads in full-spectrum technological innovation and application. The pursuit of intellectual property, as well as penetrating business, academic and other centres of research and development in order to appropriate or steal R and D appears to be a consistent, yet effective, methodology.

One American example of the foregoing is the Chinese scientist Hongjin Tan, a lawful permanent resident in the United States who stole more than one billion dollars' worth of trade secrets from his Oklahoma-based petroleum company employer. He was subsequently arrested, found guilty and sent to prison. Some analysts and observers have argued that since 2012 and the coming to power of President Xi Jinping we have witnessed a dramatic increase in the Chinese Communist Party's intelligence activities amongst western nations.

A number of intelligence personalities, journalists and CCP analysts have argued that their intelligence activities have reportedly infiltrated different levels of government, be they local, provincial or federal. This has enabled the CCP diplomats, administrators and intelligence personnel to gain access in order to influence Canadian public policy and public opinion.

A number of Canadian citizens have bravely reported their experiences with the CCP influencers, and some politicians have noted manipulation of the Chinese Canadian community, as recently did Conservative Mr. Kenny Chiu. In fact, two McGill University researchers and research conducted by the Atlantic Council reportedly observed that there were anonymous articles circulating on Chinese-language apps and websites that misrepresented a private member's bill that Mr. Chiu had tabled, and allegedly negatively influenced his electoral campaign during the 2021 election. This incident, by itself, must be investigated and fully explored.

A decade before, in 2011, CTV News surfaced that a Conservative MP was reportedly engaged in a flirtation with Shi Rong, an attractive journalist for the CCP state-owned media outlet, Xinhua. Strangely enough, this publication had been suspected as having connections to the Chinese intelligence apparatus.

• (1720)

The Chair: Mr. Taillon, could you bring it to a close, please?

Dr. J. Paul de B. Taillon: All right. Thank you.

The Chair: That brought it to a close very quickly. Thank you. I think you'll have a fair bit of time to work in your conclusion.

Mr. Doherty, you have six minutes please.

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to our colleagues for being here.

Mr. Taillon and Mr. Fadden, as a matter of fact, you took away a lot of what I was going to say. For a time in the early 2000s, I worked on a number of inter-agency security projects. I was shocked when I was doing my work to find out how many times a day our systems were attempted to be compromised by foreign actors, whether through cyber-threats, economic disruptors, etc. The work that we were doing looked at the potential threats for both kinetic and non-kinetic as Mr. Taillon mentioned, the bio fears, as well as economic.

I think it was Mr. Fadden who said there is not a general consensus as to the actual threat that's out there.

Could you maybe share with us the number of times a day that our systems are attempted to be compromised by foreign actors?

Mr. Richard Fadden: I think it's fairly certain that we're talking about millions of times every day, multiple of millions, and this goes on day after day after day. Sometimes they're successful and sometimes they're not, but the number of pings, if I can use the vernacular, are in the millions.

Mr. Todd Doherty: Mr. Fadden, would you say that China presents the most significant national security threat to Canada?

Mr. Richard Fadden: In the medium to long term, absolutely. We should call them for what they are. They are a strategic adversary.

I remember a while ago the Prime Minister was asked if he would agree with this definition and he declined to answer. They're not an enemy—we're not at war—but they're far more than a competitor. It goes to my point that we don't really understand as a country the nature of the threat: kinetic, cognitive, all of them.

The first thing we need to do in dealing with China is to recognize the nature of our relationship with them and call them a strategic adversary.

Mr. Todd Doherty: I remember one of the very first debates we did. I stood in the House and said that it's not all sunshine and lollipops, as my colleagues across the way would like to think. Every day we have foreign actors who are trying either influence or disrupt our well-being as a nation.

Mr. Fadden, do you believe Huawei presents a significant national security threat to Canada?

Mr. Richard Fadden: I absolutely do. I think it acts as an agent of the Chinese party state. As has been said earlier today, and as I can repeat in detail if you want, they have clearly indicated that acquiring information, intellectual property and intelligence from western countries is part and parcel of their basic approach to governance. Huawei will give them the opportunity of using any number of entry points into our communication system, both the old-fashioned one and the digital one. Whether they do this or not, it's not really.... We don't know because I don't think we've proven that yet, but why would we give them the opportunity, given they've already said clearly that it's part of their objective?

Huawei, beyond a shadow of a doubt, operates as an agent of the Chinese party state, so it seems to me it's beyond reasonable debate. There's a significant risk for us in allowing them to operate.

• (1725)

Mr. Todd Doherty: I always say that speculation is a fool's practice, but I'm going to ask you to speculate as to why you believe the Canadian government has failed to act on this file and ban Huawei.

Mr. Richard Fadden: I think part of it in the recent past was that they were very concerned about the two Michaels. I think that was a reasonable reason for delaying. I think eventually they decided they were going to develop an Indo-China policy. Given that, and I don't know where that is, they probably decided they were going to hold off on Huawei until they got the policy out.

I would argue that the two issues are severable, particularly because I believe we significantly lessened our credibility with our Five Eyes and NATO allies by refusing to do this. We could develop an Indo-China or an Indo-Pacific policy while right now saying no to Huawei.

That's my guess, but it is only a guess.

Mr. Todd Doherty: How do we launch a two-front war, or really a multi-front war, but two-front for the sake of this, domestic and international—maybe not a war but an offence—to ensure that we can protect Canadians at home and abroad?

Mr. Richard Fadden: I believe the starting point in this, again, is to recognize the nature of the threat, but I think also it's to be realistic. We're not going to be able to do a great deal as a country alone. I think Canada has relatively less influence now as a middle power than it had during the Cold War.

I think we have to be realistic. Our diplomats and our military personnel should be out there trying, every day, different alliances and different groupings of people to push back on the things you talked about. To begin with, we need to recognize that there's a threat.

It also involves, I think, a whole-of-government undertaking. The CRTC and ISED have a role in dealing with some of these activities that we're talking about on the cyber front. It's not just the military. It's not just CSE. I'm not sure we're using every asset that exists, let alone the additional assets that we may want to bring to bear to the problem.

Mr. Todd Doherty: I couldn't agree with you more. As I mentioned, in the inter-agency work I did before, it was a whole-of-government approach that we participated in previously.

In your view, do you believe Canada's lack of action on this file has negatively impacted our standing within the Five Eyes alliance or has the potential to, for example, Canada being cut off from vital intelligence sharing or being seen as more of a threat to our Five Eyes?

Mr. Richard Fadden: That's a tough question to answer. I think none of the Five Eyes will ever cut us off from operational intelligence that constitutes a threat to Canada, but if we continue along this path, broader cutbacks are a real possibility.

Mr. Todd Doherty: Thank you to both of our witnesses for being here.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Doherty.

Madam Lambropoulos, you have six minutes, please.

Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos (Saint-Laurent, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'd like to thank both of our witnesses for being with us today to answer our questions.

Mr. Fadden, my question goes to you. We've recently seen a closer bond between China and Russia. I wonder if you could let us know what you believe a military relationship between two of our biggest threats could mean for us. Basing it on what you said a little bit earlier in your testimony, what type of warfare should Canada and its allies be prepared for from these two threats?

Mr. Richard Fadden: I think we need to recognize that the PRC-Russian Federation get-together, if I can use that expression, is a tactical one. I think the differences in the power and influence on the planet today between Russia and China are such that they do not have and they will not have a strategic relationship of the sort we might have had between two countries that were more evenly based. I do think, on the other hand, that in the short term, their capacity to create mischief in the Indo-Pacific and in Europe are increased because of this. In particular, if they start supporting each other on the cyber front, I think it will be quite significant.

I, for one, don't think—I may be in a minority—that Russia is going to invade Ukraine in the same way the Nazis invaded Poland during World War II. I think they're going to continue using a whole variety of devices. That's probably going to be the case with respect to China as well. They don't want to take over other countries. They want to increase their indirect control and their influence far beyond what it is now.

The difficulty with the west, I think, is that we haven't quite come to grips with this. I mean, what constitutes war, and what is not war, when you can use cyber-attacks to destroy the infrastructure of a country, which, if done kinetically, would immediately result in a declaration of war?

I think in the short term, Russia and China together—fine. They'll collaborate with one another. I don't think it's going to stay that way in the long term.

• (1730)

Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos: Thank you very much.

Another thing you touched on a bit was that the best strategy going forward would really be to be a bit more dependent on our allies.

I am wondering what you think Canada should do in order to better our relationship with our allies. Where do you think we currently stand in the way our relationship is with our allies? How quickly would our allies come to our aid, and how can we improve the situation?

Mr. Richard Fadden: I didn't mean to say that we should be more dependent. I think we should be more mutually dependent with one another. I don't think any country today, even the United States, can function alone successfully against China, Russia and a number of other states that are causing a great deal of difficulties.

The first thing that Canada can do is recognize that we need to do this, and secondly, we need to pay the piper. We have not been a country that has spent a great deal of money on military things over the course of... This is not a partisan comment. We have never done this; we just don't do it. Since World War II we have not done that, I think in part because we don't see a threat.

I think we should start contributing more than we have to NATO. I think we need to develop a view of what we're going to do in the Indo-Pacific, and I think Australia and Japan are two countries we could start dealing with a great deal more than we have in the past.

One of the things that struck me when I was still working and visited those parts of the world is that everybody was delighted to see me, but after our formal meetings, we'd have a cup of coffee or a beer, and they'd say, "You know, we're happy that you're here, but the last time we saw a federal minister was eight years ago, and the last time we saw a warship was in 1953." It requires consistency over time and dedicated efforts from everybody, from the head of government down to junior desk officers in the military, in DND and in Global Affairs.

Until we do that, it's hard for other countries to take us seriously. I don't mean to suggest that we flit around, because I don't think we do that, but we're not very consistent when we decide that we're going to do something.

I think a very good example is Japan, which is a significant middle power very interested in working more with Canada. We could do a great deal more.

Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos: Our previous witnesses spoke a lot about cyber-threats and the way in which Russia has used cyberspace in order to influence things within our own country here in Canada, which has created a lot of division among different people in our country.

Given the fact that our next warfare is ideological, as you mentioned in your previous answer, what can we do to protect ourselves from this in the cyberspace, in your opinion? I know we heard a lot about it in our previous testimony, but I'd like to hear what you have to say about this as well.

Mr. Richard Fadden: The first thing, again—and I'm going to be repetitious, and I apologize—is that we have to convince the Canadian population, not just you and your colleagues and not just ministers but Canadians generally, that this is a risk. We're not going to do this unless reports like the one I hope you will produce, like ministerial statements, start talking about this. Once that's done, I think it becomes much easier to point out where there are problems.

There are countries that I believe consciously decided to set up a separate stand-alone agency to deal with misinformation or disinformation. Maybe it's something we should think about and give them a real mandate to educate the public, but I don't think there's a silver bullet here. There is not a switch that we can pull to, all of a sudden, make it go away.

Again, I think we have to work with the allies.

Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos: Thank you very much.

That's okay for me.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Ms. Normandin, you have six minutes.

Ms. Christine Normandin: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

I want to take several questions already asked by my colleagues further, but first I would like to come back to some points that Ms. Lambropoulos has just raised, including the perception of the general public.

Both witnesses have talked about, among other things, industrial espionage and intellectual property, which may seem to be more of a civilian than a national defence issue.

I would like to hear your comments on the relevance of making sure that the public understands that this can pose threats to national security.

I would also like to hear from you about who should actually take on the role in terms of protection. There is a perception that in some cases it is the Canadian Security Intelligence Service and in some cases it is more the Department of National Defence.

Is it possible that both are passing the buck? In other words, when it's everybody's job, ultimately it's nobody's job.

I would like to hear from both of you on this aspect.

• (1735)

[*English*]

Mr. Richard Fadden: Could I give my colleagues a chance?

The Chair: Yes.

Go ahead, Mr. Taillon.

Dr. J. Paul de B. Taillon: I didn't get the interpretation. I'm sorry.

The Chair: Okay. Monsieur Fadden can then respond.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Richard Fadden: Yes, I'll try to answer your question.

You ask an excellent question.

I think national security has to be defined relatively broadly today. It's not the same context as in the 1950s, when the only real risk was a Russian invasion. You can undermine a country's sovereignty through military interference, but also by making it lose control of its economy. I think that's what's happening right now. The theft of intellectual property in Canada is abominable. It's happening not only in Canada, but throughout the west.

The key element lies in a relatively broader definition of national security. I'm not talking about a definition that is so broad that it is meaningless, as you suggest. Nevertheless, it is not the same situation as in the 1950s and 1960s.

Who should do the protecting? That is an excellent question. That is a matter for the machinery of government, which is the primary responsibility of the Prime Minister.

I don't think the Canadian Forces should be given the responsibility to protect the private sector. Rather, the Communications Security Establishment should be given that responsibility, with the assistance of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service. Indeed, there must be collaboration between the agencies. As I suggested to one of your colleagues, I think a whole-of-government approach is crucial here. We don't have enough resources for either of us to start mucking around; I'm exaggerating, but it's an image to back up my point.

Essentially, the military should be concerned about what is going on outside the country, while remaining very well informed about what is going on here, and it should be up to the CSE to protect the private sector, with the help of a department or other agency. In this regard, we should give the CSE a much more public and much clearer mandate.

In addition, it should be emphasized that when the private sector is subject to cyber-attack, we should always make sure that we talk about it. One of the difficulties we have at the moment is that the target organization never wants to talk about it because of the potential financial consequences. It's true that there is an obligation to report it from time to time, but in very specific circumstances. In the United States, on the other hand, every time there is a cyber-attack, it has to be reported to the federal government. I would suggest that you follow the same rule; I think it would be helpful.

Ms. Christine Normandin: Aside from the intellectual property and espionage aspects, I am keen to hear your comments specifically on information warfare.

[*English*]

The Chair: Excuse me, Madame Normandin, for a second. I just want to check with Mr. Taillon.

You didn't get the interpretation. Is that because you weren't on the English channel, or was there some other issue?

Dr. J. Paul de B. Taillon: I'm on the English channel.

The Chair: Are you getting the interpretation?

Dr. J. Paul de B. Taillon: No.

The Chair: Unfortunately, we have the killer clock up here.

Dr. J. Paul de B. Taillon: No worries.

The Chair: I'm going to continue on with Madame Normandin. I apologize for the difficulties.

Madame Normandin, please continue.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Christine Normandin: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

So, I wanted to address the issue of disinformation.

I understand that some countries, like the United States and Germany, have already had regular units assigned to this since World War II. Obviously, this is not the case here. I guess people agree that some aspects are much more military.

Can you explain why we haven't kept pace here with disinformation?

Mr. Richard Fadden: I'm repeating myself a little bit, but I think one of the reasons is that we didn't feel it was a very strong threat. If the government or the general public doesn't feel a threat, Parliament is not going to give the resources to launch this kind of initiative.

I think it's important to remember that in the United States, the National Security Agency, which deals with these issues, is a joint organization, that is to say a military and civilian organization. So these issues are not just dealt with from a military point of view. I think the solution is really in that direction. You have to involve both sides of the coin: the civilian and the military.

I think in Canada, we're slowly starting to address it. At least, we are much more concerned about it than we were a few years ago. Nevertheless, we're still falling behind.

In general, the problem is that we don't feel the threat.

Ms. Christine Normandin: I will ask my next question, although the answer may have to wait until my next turn to speak.

You talked about the importance of creating synergy with allies. Ms. Lambropoulos and Mr. Doherty have also spoken about this.

However, the fact that we don't recognize the threat probably makes us a less serious partner. We have to have something to offer to get something in return.

I would have liked to hear you elaborate on what Canada can do to have something to offer, precisely in order to ensure a good partnership with its allies.

I understand that my time is short, but that is the question I would like to hear you answer on my next turn, if any.

• (1740)

[*English*]

The Chair: That's an important question, but there's no time to answer it.

You have six minutes, Madam Mathysen.

Ms. Lindsay Mathysen: Thank you so much, Mr. Chair.

I guess this could actually be an extension of what Ms. Normandin was going towards. On Monday, we certainly heard in this committee that Canada needs to focus, that we do not have the ability to focus on Europe and China and to defend our own Arctic borders, and that we need to focus more and choose a way to go and be really good at it. Earlier today, we heard that we have to invest more. We have to cover them all. We have to face the reality of the threat of China, the threat of Russia and what the world expects of us. We had this discussion just now.

Mr. Fadden, you said that we are so far behind and we've never really seen the threats that are upon us or in the world, and maybe that's because we have relied so heavily upon the U.S. Perhaps you could comment and give your opinion on that in terms of what was said to us on Monday about that focus, and why we should or why we shouldn't, and narrow that down a bit more for us.

Mr. Richard Fadden: Let me try.

I don't think it's a binary choice, to begin with. I think the world is sufficiently integrated today that we cannot just say that we're going to focus on only the Indo-Pacific or only Europe or only terrorism or only this or that. We have to distribute a little bit of our attention and our resources. I would argue that we need to prioritize, which is somewhat different from just choosing one or the other. Whether we like it or not, we are a western nation and that means we are connected, to a great extent, to Europe. We do a great deal of trade with them, and our ties to them are historical. We cannot ignore Europe and Russia. Indeed Russia is our neighbour.

On the other hand, if we're going to deal effectively with the world as we find it today, then, in concert with our allies, we have to do something about China. I understand the government is producing an Indo-China policy. I think that's a good thing, but I don't understand how we can have an Indo-China policy in the absence of a broader foreign policy that tries to address these prioritization issues.

I think we could be a little bit more proactive on a number of files, but I also think we need more resources. I don't mean just the Canadian Forces. I mean GAC, CSE, CSIS and whatnot, to reflect to the allies that we take all of these issues seriously. I don't think the allies are ignoring us. We are making a contribution. We're talking about levels of contribution right now, and for a G7 country, we do less than a lot of our partners do.

It's an inadequate answer to your question, but I think the best I can do is to argue that we cannot choose only one or the other. We have to prioritize among them. As I was trying to suggest with Madame Normandin, we have to be persistent and consistent once we do opt for a particular path. Just going in and going out, trying to deal with an issue and then letting it be forgotten.... I want to stress again that this is not a partisan comment. We've been doing this for decades. We need to be persistent and consistent as we develop allied relationships, much more than we have in the past.

Ms. Lindsay Mathysen: Actually, I'll ask the same of Mr. Tailon.

Dr. J. Paul de B. Taillon: In the wake of World War II we had a million people under arms, the fourth-largest armed forces in the world. We basically worked on that very positive impression with our allies and friends all the way up arguably until the 1980s. Then we started to fail, not only in the issues of defence and foreign affairs, but we started to look really inward, in my humble opinion. I think it's time. As Mr. Fadden has said, we have to be out there and be seen. There is much talk about sending more peacekeepers out. Well, there's not that much peace to keep. I've been on about five peacekeeping missions, shot at on three of them. There's not that much peace out there.

The other aspect is that we have to be very closely affiliated and allied with our closest allies, the United States, in particular, for obvious economic and trade reasons. Also, when we look at the Pacific, we have to look at maybe AUKUS, which has been signed off. Just recently the Australians and Japanese have basically made an agreement. We have to reinforce ourselves in NATO. We pulled ourselves out in the 1980s. We wanted a peace dividend, and we paid through the nose. The armed forces are in terrible shape, quite frankly.

It's a terrible thing to say. There was a shakeup because of Afghanistan. We got monies, fortunately, through that. That's not one way of doing it. If you want a military, it has to be prepared to fight at a drop of a hat, particularly in today's world.

We've seen the panic within the EU and NATO just over what has happening in Ukraine, which is indeed problematic. If anything has happened out of this, all of a sudden, Putin, in the eyes of his people, is seen as a real player, because literally everybody in the EU and NATO went to tug their forelocks to him. He's won an impressive psychological victory by just deploying troops.

From what I've heard as of today, this withdrawal is essentially a redeployment along the border. That is something to be waited and seen to be confirmed.

• (1745)

The Chair: We're going to have to leave it there. I apologize, Ms. Mathysen.

Colleagues, we're into our second round. We have roughly 10 minutes left in 25 minutes' worth of questioning. I'm going to have to be a bit arbitrary and cut everybody down to three minutes and one minute.

Ms. Gallant, you have three minutes.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Mr. Chair, at a time when our foreign affairs agencies are seized with the further incursion of Russia into Ukraine, Canada, domestically, is also seized by the demonstration in front of the Parliament Buildings. There have been inferences that the truckers have been influenced by Russian disinformation. In another standing committee, the demonstrators have been likened to terrorists, and anti-terrorist actions such as freezing bank accounts have already occurred.

How do we as parliamentarians ascertain whether the presence of parked transport trucks, hot tubs and bouncy castles in and around the parliamentary precinct, represent a threat to our national security and justify the never-before-used Emergencies Act?

Mr. Richard Fadden: I can try to start with that.

I don't know to what extent the Russians have been involved in causing difficulties. I don't know to what extent other groups, terrorist groups, might have been injecting their views into this. To my mind, the way of doing this is to recognize that there is an issue here with compliance with the law, be that the anti-terrorism law or the laws relating to foreign interference, or any other law, and to allow domestic law enforcement to deal with this as they see best.

I don't want to get into an argument about whether the Emergencies Act is a good thing or a bad thing, but it was a device made available to Parliament, to the government of the day, and they chose to use it. For my part, and I listen to the media and I talk to people, I don't think a compelling case has been made that this demonstration is being run by the Russians or being run by the terrorists, if I can use somewhat exaggerated language. I would not be surprised if there are a variety of people, through social media, who are trying to make it worse than it really is.

I would argue that the thing to do now is to let law enforcement do its bit and do it as effectively as they can. As I understand it, a number of blockades outside Ottawa have been resolved. Being an Ottawa resident, I profoundly hope that the same thing can be said about Ottawa very soon.

• (1750)

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: How is the execution of the Emergencies Act, with the potential of seconding military personnel to be inserted to intervene in civilian enforcement, in our national interest?

Mr. Richard Fadden: I'm afraid you have the advantage of me here. I wasn't aware that the Emergencies Act allowed the use of military personnel. In fact, if you need military personnel with very specialized functions, you don't need the Emergencies Act. They can simply be seconded to other organizations. I'm sorry, but I can't answer beyond that.

The Chair: Thank you, Mrs. Gallant.

Mr. Spengemann, you have three minutes, please.

Mr. Sven Spengemann (Mississauga—Lakeshore, Lib.): Mr. Chair, thank you very much.

Mr. Fadden, it's good to see you and good to have you back.

Dr. Taillon, thanks very much for your service and for sharing your expertise.

Mr. Fadden, I'll start with you. I don't have much time, but I wanted to take you to the idea of an expanded definition of security.

We're looking at the threat analysis affecting Canada. We have 12 UN peace operations around the planet that are currently ongoing: Western Sahara; Central African Republic; Mali, where Canada made a significant contribution and, in fact, this committee actually visited that mission a couple of years ago; the Democratic Republic of Congo; Golan; Cyprus; Lebanon; Abyei and Sudan; Kosovo; South Sudan; India and Pakistan; and UNTSO in the Middle East.

How do you factor these in with respect to what we're talking about now, which really is possible potential conflicts with or between great powers affecting Canada very directly? These peacekeeping operations are very important in an indirect way, but also important in terms of the values that we espouse and defend and the commitments we've made to the UN system.

When we're being asked for more funding for ODA—overseas development assistance—on the humanitarian and development side and also for more funding on the defence side, how do we look at these obligations that we have multilaterally within the UN system?

Mr. Richard Fadden: Wow, one could take an hour just to try to answer that question. It's a good question.

To begin with, I would urge the view that the long list that you enumerated would have to be divided between some that are legitimately peacekeeping and a couple that are really peacemaking, and I think they have to be treated somewhat differently. Also, it depends on the level of development of the particular countries at issue.

If we take the Congo for example, that's a peacemaking undertaking. The country is almost a failed state. I don't think the UN has been given enough resources overall—ODA, diplomatic or military—in order to deal with the issue. I think that over the years, just to take an example, we've talked seriously about involving ourselves more in the Congo, and a lot of people have sort of said that it's just not worthwhile, that we just can't make enough of a difference because we don't bring enough oomph to the battle.

I think we have to be very selective when we decide which peacekeeping or peacemaking activities we're going to be involved in and pick those where we can make a contribution or where the UN specifically asks us for help.

I would make the point, if I may, that help on the military side does not necessarily need to have privates and corporals carrying rifles. I was told once by a very senior UN peacekeeping officer that

what they need more often than not are staff officers who can organize things. We have very good staff functions in this country, and we have good logistical support, but small-p politically, people want to see soldiers with guns. I think we need to work our way through all of this and be selective.

Mr. Sven Spengemann: What kind of a resource carve-out would you propose for the entirety of these UN peace operations?

Mr. Richard Fadden: It would be unfair for me to answer, except that I would—

The Chair: Unfortunately, he has asked a question that is an hour and a half long and is two seconds over the time already. This is fascinating.

Madame Normandin, you have one minute.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Christine Normandin: I understand that we cannot be on all fronts at the same time and that to be a good ally you also have to have something to offer. We talked about peace missions.

Regarding what we have to offer in cybersecurity, are we a lost cause or can we hope to one day get up to speed?

Mr. Richard Fadden: I am absolutely convinced that there is hope. In fact, over the last two, three, four years, we've started to accelerate our efforts in this area.

I am not suggesting that our efforts are not important; they are. However, given the current circumstances in international relations and the security that is becoming very problematic, I think we need to increase our efforts.

I think if we did, our allies would be delighted, and we could catch up with them very quickly.

• (1755)

Ms. Christine Normandin: Thank you very much.

[*English*]

The Chair: Ms. Mathysen, you have one minute.

Ms. Lindsay Mathysen: Since we have so little time, I would like to remind witnesses that, hopefully, if they have anything to add, they can certainly do so in writing and submit it to the committee.

My question is again around what we heard on Monday. A witness talked about how it takes seven years and a million dollars to make a soldier.

Mr. Fadden, you talked about that being one of our gaps in terms of that retention and the ability to have soldiers right there, as we of course know. Could you expand on your thoughts on that? I know that you were getting into it with Ms. Normandin in her short minute.

Mr. Richard Fadden: I'm simply noting that recruiting is becoming increasingly difficult. That's not particularly difficult to understand, given the bad publicity the military has had. Retention is also a problem because generally speaking, when the economy is not in bad shape, people leave.

Part of the difficulty is that people are increasingly of the opinion that the military lacks the tools to do what it wants to do. People don't join the military to go to Lower Mandible, Manitoba—my apologies to Manitoba—to sit in garrison and do nothing interesting.

To the earlier question about UN peacekeeping or peacemaking, we have to do something outside of the country that has the possibility of having a real effect. We aren't even meeting our top numbers now in the military. If we cannot do that, we're in very bad shape. We do not have enough people right now, given the new space, cyber and other activities that we're going to have to deal with.

The Chair: Ms. Mathysen, we're going to have to leave it there.

Ms. Kerry-Lynne Findlay, you have three minutes, please.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Good to see you again, Richard.

In your opinion, should we prevent or restrict Chinese investment and access to certain sectors of our economy, like precious or rare earth minerals?

Mr. Richard Fadden: I think we should enumerate those publicly and make it very clear that we're doing that for national security reasons.

I don't think we should be ashamed of doing that because there's no reciprocity with China on any front. The possibility of a Canadian company investing in one of these strategic sectors in China is effectively zero, so I do believe we should do that. Again, I think we should do that in concert with our allies.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: Thank you.

Mr. Taillon, what is your view of China's influence and operations in Canada and its strategic objectives in this country?

Dr. J. Paul de B. Taillon: They're looking for vassal states that can provide them with resources, a market and no problems. They don't like a bilateral relationship in negotiations. They want to overwhelm the individuals economically, politically and, in some cases, socially.

The other thing that really is concerning is that education becomes vitally important. I think Mr. Fadden alluded to it. We have to educate the Canadian public on the threats and on the cyber front. China is a full-spectrum operation basically being conducted non-kinetically.

As I alluded to in my remarks, drug warfare is one of their big issues. Between January 2016 and March 2021, we lost 22,828 Canadians who died from opioids. The cost is tremendous, not only in lives and potential. What I find really concerning is that if you want to destroy a nation, you destroy it from within. The United States has lost over 100,000 people a year to drug issues. A lot of these opioids are coming in from China.

If you look at just pure costing.... When I chatted with police officers about, unfortunately, taking up an individual who had passed away on the street, that was between \$20,000 and \$30,000 because you have police officers and medical people there, and then you take them to the hospital. Losing the numbers that we did, \$30,000 accrues to \$684,840,000. If you take it at a lower price of \$20,000, that's \$486,560,000.

• (1800)

The Chair: I'm sorry again. We're going to have to leave it there.

Ms. O'Connell, you have the final three minutes.

Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Pickering—Uxbridge, Lib.): Thank you. No pressure but I'll try to get to my questions as quickly as possible.

We've heard about Russia's and China's more recent co-operation in some things. We also know that both Russia and China have demonstrated an interest in the Canadian Arctic.

My question is in and around whether you think that perhaps they will work together in those endeavours or whether that could actually be a pressure point between the two countries in terms of access to the Arctic or a stake in that area.

Mr. Taillon, you could maybe start.

Dr. J. Paul de B. Taillon: The Chinese view themselves as a near-Arctic state. They're also desperate for protein. There are fisheries up there. It's going to cut the steaming time between China and their markets, ideally in Europe, possibly by eight to 10 days. Yes, there is a definite interest in the Arctic.

This also poses a possible threat for Russia. Russia's made it very clear its North Sea route across the northern part of Russia is internal waters. Russia has made it very clear. Not only that, but Russia reinforces it by having major military bases up there and large scale exercises, including an airborne operation. Having been a paratrooper myself, leaping out at minus-30 can be a bit of a shocker, particularly at night.

Meanwhile, there are discussions whether the Canadian Northwest Passage is Canadian. I think there are going to be some interesting clashes on the northern side for both of them.

Ms. Jennifer O'Connell: Do you think they will clash with each other, or will they act as a combined threat to Canada?

Dr. J. Paul de B. Taillon: They may clash with each other. They're not natural allies. All we have to do is look back at the Ussuri River incident. Right now, the enemy of my enemy is my friend. We know how well that worked out in some areas for us in the past, and the west in particular. It's a problematic issue, and it's something we have to keep an eye on.

To have the Russians basically support the Chinese on Taiwan means that the Chinese will be more than happy to support them on the Donbass region. So, watch and shoot, as we say.

Ms. Jennifer O'Connell: Thank you.

• (1805)

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. O'Connell.

On behalf of the committee I want to thank both of our witnesses.

I'm particularly thankful, Mr. Taillon, that when you got on these peace missions, nobody could shoot accurately so that you're here to share your wisdom with us.

Mr. Fadden, it's good to see you again. As always, you're concise, brilliant and insightful.

This is very helpful to our study.

The meeting is adjourned.

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