



UNITED SERVICES INSTITUTE

OF

NANAIMO AND NORTH ISLAND

c/o Vancouver Island Military Museum
100 Cameron Road, Nanaimo, BC V9R 0C8

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

A warm hello All USINNI Members. Happy British Columbia Day to you all as well. The summer of 2019 has so far proven to be pleasant season, without any really significant anomalies. Let us hope that the remainder



**British Columbia Day
August 5th**

of the summer follows suit.

As most of you are aware, the Board of Directors has given me per-

mission to enter into discussions with 808 Wing (RCAFA) on the matter of our two organizations amalgamating into one

organization.

I, personally, see this as a win for both organizations on many fronts, but more importantly, I am keenly interested in the input of our members. I would like to hear and address and respond to all your

concerns and ideas with respect to this matter. Further, any written submissions on this matter

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MILITARY & SECURITY MUSINGS:

Militant Islam Hasn't Gone Away

NANAIMO, 11 July 2019...the continued “drawdown” of counter-terrorist forces in the Middle East might lead us to accept the naïve belief that the war against *ISIS*, *al Qaeda*, *daesh* (*ITGIS*) etc. is, somehow or other, over. It isn't. It's just morphing. Claims of “*Mission Accomplished*” ring hollow, confirming how easily Western governments play for “good press.” With elections in the of-
fing almost everywhere

these next 18 months, sitting presidents and prime ministers dread any news that might blemish their chances with their own electorates. But, cool, calculated second thoughts will confirm that the wars just aren't over now, nor will they be anytime soon, if ever.

First, a recap. Iranians are not Arabs; they are Assyrian-Persians with historical Indo-European roots in South-Central Asia. Shia Islam is the dominate religion of Iran. Most Muslim Arabs are Sun-



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ni Muslim, historically hostile to the Iranians on two counts: race and religion. Muslim Arabs are split religiously 80% Sunni versus 20% Shia. Each regards the other as apostates, a capital offence under Koranic law. Shia influence now dominates in Iran & Iraq, where the Shia are the

“Each regards the other as apostates, a capital offence under Koranic law”.

majority religion, and, in Syria & competitively in both Lebanon & Yemen where Shia Islamists are a minority religion. The Egyptians are not Arabs, but Sunni Islam is the predominant religion practiced in Egypt. Most Muslims in Africa are Sunni Muslims, but comparatively few are Arabs. The Sunni-Shia war, and it is a real to-the-death war between the two versions of Islam, dominates the entire Middle East and further afield. That just won't change.

Meanwhile, another war is being fought between Palestinians and Israelis, and, at the same time between Shia Islam and the Israelis. In this one, Sunni Jordan and Egypt cooperate with Israel, while the Saudis and most Gulf States are neutral, leaning towards Israel. These latter actually hope Israel will bloody the Iranian nose! Palestinians tire almost everyone in the Middle East.

But wait! There's still another war afoot. It aims squarely at reducing and eliminating Caucasian influence from the entire Region. This is the still incomplete revolution against an earlier, extended & largely European occupation of “Arab” lands, or, subsequent domination of their economies. Obviously, for this “outing” to ever be complete, Israel would just have to conveniently disappear. Internally too, in nation-state after nation-state, the war of rich vs the poor, the “ins” vs the “outs,” goes on. Inevitably too, one war bites another one right on the butt! The wars are sectarian and secular, all at the same time. In all of this, the notion of *mission accomplished* is an illusion. Thus, the

Americans, Russians, Israelis, Turks and even the Saudis all want to see Sunni ITGIS stay dead and buried. However, Sunni Muslims in Iraq and Syria simply will not live quietly under Shia governments and Iranian influence. So, a renewed Sunni rebellion is already underway in Iraq. That alone will bring ITGIS back. ITGIS only briefly moved off-camera, back out into anonymity of the refugee camps & big-city slums of the Middle East. Most People, even the Israelis can live with a weakened Shia (Alawite) government in Syria. However, Israel and Lebanon have well-justified concerns about the return of veteran well-armed Shia fighters (Hezbollah) from Syria to Central & Southern Lebanon. Hezbollah thirsts for another war with Israel on behalf of the largely Sunni Palestinians. Sunni Turkey is unhappy with Alawite governance of Syria, but is much more concerned about the resurgence of Kurdish independence

“... one war bites another one right on the butt! The wars are sectarian and secular, all at the same time. In all of this, the notion of mission accomplished is an illusion”.

movements throughout the Levant. Increasingly more radical under President Erdogan, Turkey will continue to play the national card in the Middle East. A former occupying power themselves, the Turks are only seen as friends-of-convenience by other players in the Middle East. The Turks maintain “passable” relations with the Israelis and

with the Egyptians.

This leads me to a bit of a puzzle for the Region. If Sunni ITGIS is the problem, why are Shia Iran and the United States at each other's throats to-

“... the Americans have simply never forgotten or forgiven the 1979 seizure of their embassy in Tehran. It remains embarrassingly occupied by the Iranians to this day”.

day? All of the nineteen suicide terrorists involved in the 9-11 Twin Towers attack were almost certainly faithful Sunni Muslims, most of them from Saudi Arabia! The difference is that the 9-11 attacks were the work of individuals not directly tied to a specific national state. America's extended troubles with Iran are clearly state-on-state ones. Not unreasonably, the Americans have simply never forgotten or forgiven the 1979 seizure of their Embassy in Tehran. It remains embarrassingly occupied by the Iranians to this day. In addition, Embassy staff were held hostage for 15 months, during which time an attempted rescue mission crashed in failure that cost the lives of eight American servicemen. The bartered release of the original hostages was only won on terms very favourable to Iran. This entire affair was humiliating for President Carter and probably cost him re-election.

Compounding this was Iran's involvement in and promotion of largely Shia Lebanese attacks on the

US Embassy and subsequently the Marine Barracks, both in Beirut, and, on US Forces in Lebanon in 1982-84. These cost the Americans some 300 dead. With mission planning, logistics and execution demonstrably organized & supervised by Iranian Revolutionary Guards based in Lebanon's Beka'a Valley, Shia gunmen subsequently kidnapped and very brutally murdered William Buckley, head of the CIA in Lebanon. Buckley's custody and prolonged brutal torture lasted some 14 months. During that same period, Buckley was but one of several dozen foreigners swept up in a wave of focused anti-foreigner terrorism. Some were killed, some died in captivity, one escaped and a few were released. It was a hairy time for a Westerner in Beirut.

There are two other truths relevant to and in the Middle East. First, family, tribe and clan take precedence over all-else. As required in Biblical and Koranic terms, a slight may be forgiven or balanced by payment of compensation. However; it is never really forgotten. It's like the fable of the scorpion hitching a ride on the back of a frog over the Nile River: inevitably, an old habit kicks in and neither make it across. Second though, drugs not oil are the driving growth industry across the entire region. But, that's another story & war for recitation another day.

The larger reality is that there are something up to two dozen wars being waged simultaneously in the Middle East today. This is a region that is an extraordinary polygon of competing languages, religions, ethnicities, politics and social values. There neither are nor will there be any winners in any of this; just a lot more misery to come, spread all around. It's simply not getting better; *Mission Decidedly Incomplete!*



The author of Musings is Colonel (Retd) WJ (Bill) McCullough, MSC, CD, a 37-year veteran. He was our Military Attaché, resident in Beirut covering Lebanon, Syria and Jordan 1982-84. He is a Past President of this Institute & is the long-time Chair of our Military Committee. His

views & analysis are his own and may be coloured by his own experiences.

Matt Gurney: The Supremes confirm the obvious - the military is a pretty unique institution

The things we ask of the military are so distinct from civilian life that every society that ever fielded an army made special rules and customs to govern it.



A contingent of Canadian Armed Forces members participating in the Nijmegen Marches Departure Parade at the Canadian War Museum. *Errol McGibon/Postmedia*



MATT GURNEY

July 26, 2019

A fascinating Supreme Court ruling released on Friday has confirmed what you'd be forgiven for assuming was obvious — the military is a pretty unique thing in a free society. No kidding.

The ruling dealt with a very specific legal matter. Members of the Canadian Armed

Forces, if charged with a crime, may be tried under the military's own laws and in its own court system. Note that I said "may" — there are times when a serving member of the Forces will be tried by civilian courts through normal processes. But the decision to punt the trial of a member of the military to a civilian court is at the discretion of the prosecutor. All Canadians have a Charter-protected right to a trial by jury, with the specific exception of members of the military. To add a further layer of complexity, while members of the armed forces are subject to laws that are specific to the military (and relate closely to situations that would never apply to a civilian), members of the military, at home or abroad, are still subject to the same Criminal Code as the rest of us. Taking on



The Military Museums hosted the unveiling of the LAV III and honoured the LAV III's service during Canada's mission in Afghanistan, the 40 000 Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) members who served during the conflict, and 162 fallen Canadians between 2001-2014 in Calgary on Monday September 10, 2018.

Darren Makowichuk/Postmedia

a life of service means agreeing to adhere to laws above and beyond what the rest of us have to by simple virtue of being in Canada.

Several members of the military, charged with offences covered by the Criminal Code, had argued that they had a right to a trial by jury instead of military tribunal, particularly when the charge made against them did not relate to military service. To be clear, they weren't saying that there shouldn't be laws specifically covering matters military; the argument was more narrow — while military courts should see to violations of military law, members of the military should be tried in **Continued on page 5**

President's Message ... continued from page 1.

will be published (with the author's permission) in this newsletter so that it may be heard by all Members.

I believe that the possible amalgamation of our two institutes is the most important matter that we will address this year. It is key to our continuing as institutes that support our community and support our Armed Forces. Your involvement counts! A reminder to all, dress for our BBQ luncheon/meeting is summer casual. The key is "be comfortable". I wish you all enjoy the rest of the summer and hope to see you at our BBQ luncheon/meeting in August.

Edwin

... a pretty unique institution. Continued from page 4.

civilian courts (or at least have the right to be) for charges unrelated to military law or service. Lower courts had produced conflicting rulings on this, leaving it to the Supreme Court to settle the matter.

They did. In a 5-2 decision, the court found that members of the military do not have a right to trials by jury in civilian courts. The majority ruled that the issue, despite all the legal complexity, is fundamentally simple — if you are a member of the military, you are subject to military law and can be tried in military courts. (The two dissenting judges argued that there should be strong link between the charge and military service.)



Naval units from HMCS Catarauqui, the Royal Military College of Canada and the Royal Canadian Sea Cadets paraded along Ontario Street to Kingston's Navy Memorial Park to begin a special ceremony to commemorate the Battle of the Atlantic on Sunday, May 5, 2019.

Meghan Balogh/The Whig-Standard/Postmedia Network

I won't inflict anymore legalese upon you. But I did find the decision interesting because it amazed me how much time and energy had to be invested through numerous rulings and judgments and untold time and attention in the courts, all to conclude that the military is ... unique.

It's bizarre for a very specific reason: the Charter very specifically carved out an exemption to the right to jury trials for military personnel. The exemption was clear, focused and narrow. I'm not a lawyer, to state the obvious, but as a reasonably interested observer of matters military and legal, this seemed like a pretty easy decision to me.

But it's also bizarre because, when you step back and think about what a military is for, it's not hard to see why it needs its own legal system. There is absolutely nothing remotely like the military in any other part of society.

No other group in society willingly signs up to a job that involves, if necessary, employing massively destructive weapons to blow stuff up and kill people in a purely offensive mission. No other group in society signs up for a job where they can be ordered to stay behind and die in a helpless fight if the overall tactical situation requires said sacrifice. No other group in society agrees to serve under a regimented chain-of-command that they can be imprisoned for violating. No other group in society agrees to tolerate the same level of dislocation to their personal lives as military members take on as a matter of routine. (Imagine how you'd react if your boss told you you were spending the next eight months in a primitive camp in the middle of a hostile foreign country getting shot at).



Canadian veterans of the World War II Battle of Normandy and family members stand during a commemorative ceremony at the Commonwealth War Graves Commissions Beny-sur-Mer Canadian War Cemetery in Normandy on June 05, 2019 near Reviars, France.

Sean Gallup/Getty Images

This isn't to say that there are not civilian jobs that are dangerous or involve sacrifices or require a chain-of-command and can even involve the use of lethal force (police officers have firearms for a reason). But the things we ask of the military are so utterly distinct from civilian life that every society that has ever fielded an army develops special rules, customs and processes to govern it. They do so not simply because it's become a habit, but because there's simply no other way to effectively run a military. Canada has been at peace for so long that we don't have to think about these things very much. That's a good thing. It's also a good thing that the Supreme Court came to the sensible conclusion here. I'm just puzzled they had to at all.

FULL DISCLOSURE: I sit on the board of Advocates for the Rule of Law, which intervened at the Supreme

This month's Luncheon/Meeting will be held at

ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION BRANCH 257

7227 LANTZVILLE ROAD, LANTZVILLE, BC

on

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 14TH, 2019

1130 HOURS

\$25.00 per member/person. Guests welcome.

LUNCHEON MEETING ATTENDANCE

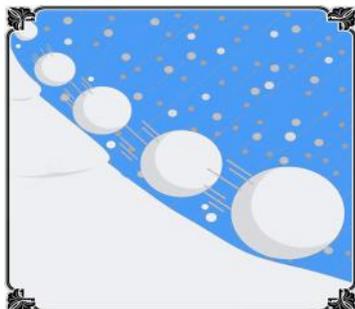
Your telephone contact coordinator will attempt to contact you in the days prior to our monthly luncheon/meeting in order to confirm your attendance. In this manner we can provide attendance numbers to the volunteer kitchen staff at RCL 257 so that they may prepare adequately for our function.

If for some reason she has missed you, please contact her or Edwin at 250-751-2360 or ejpeeters@shaw.ca.

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USINNI SNOWBALL

Congratulations to Len Campbell, winner of July's Luncheon Snowball draw. He has graciously donated his winnings back to the pot. Due primarily to the fact that our group has been getting smaller, we have introduced another element to our Snowball draw that will help insure that we do not have a winner almost every month. More anticipation, more excitement, more fun, more reward.