

Editors Remarks

Welcome to the First Edition of the 2014 Newsletter for The Mackenzie Institute. This issue contains various book reviews and articles concerning the past and current security climate.

If you haven't already read *The Taliban Don't Wave* or *The Dogs are Eating Them Now: Our War in Afghanistan*, both are definitely worth picking up. Our authors present very provocative and controversial arguments of our military personnel and dealing with the mission in a war zone.

The leading article in this month's Newsletter is an update on the current climate in Ukraine. This is a second piece in a series addressing the volatile and unstable situation in Ukraine and Russia. Our second story is a personal account of a Canadian-Iranian's fight to overcome a repressive regime and live a free and unguarded life in Canada. An emotional story, the author fills it with passion and the hope necessary to make a good life for oneself and family.

Also in this month's Newsletter, John Thompson, a long-time contributor, provides a piece titled, *Unsung Citizens: Coast-Guard Auxiliaries and Rangers*, that explores heroic actions of the CCGA and the Canadian Rangers.

While not in this month's newsletter, be sure to look for Briefing Note #45 coming out early next month, wherein Dr. Emily Spencer examines the role of cultural intelligence in *Solving the People Puzzle: The Role of Cultural Intelligence*. She investigates why people behave the way they do, combined with suggestions how to influence them toward your way of thinking, in order to minimize conflict and war and assure desired peace. Dr. Spencer argues that it is not the effectiveness of cultural intelligence that we must focus on, but rather if it can be harnessed and how people can improve their levels of cultural intelligence.

In the coming year...

We have a brand new user-friendly website with new content, videos, and photos, as well as all of our archived materials, which are available upon request. Our Insider section, which gives you access to our materials, newsletters and briefing notes, is open to the public for the next six months, so please log in and check it out.

We have also re-branded our newsletters, briefing notes and commentaries with a fresh new look. In addition, we will have "Pictures are worth a Thousand Words" where we reach out to the community and have individuals send us photos with a small summary of the photo, that tells us more than words can express.

If you are interested in becoming a contributor, please email us at institute@mackenzieinstitute.com for details on the process and our Guidelines for selection.

By the time this is distributed (week of February 24) the Institute will have sent out a subscriber survey for your feedback on the new website and our publications. We look forward to hearing from you.

Be sure to check our website regularly and sign up to be a subscriber to get our latest publications and event notices.

Finally, we plan to launch a bi-annual journal that will include trends and patterns that will be analyzed and assessed throughout the year. Topics will include critical infrastructure threats, intelligence and counterterrorism, cyber security, man-made and natural disasters, and many others.

We thank you for your continued support and we are looking forward to a year of new and exciting information to be shared with the community. For those of you in the Toronto area, we hope to see you soon at our future events.

Sincerely,

Editorial Board of The Mackenzie Institute

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Situation Update: The Ukrainian Revolution

By Myroslav Petriw

After the deadly battle of January 22, 2014, the Maidan, the Kyiv City Freedom Square that was the epicenter of two months of protest, experienced a period of relative calm. Against a background of fiery speeches, the protesters on the Maidan began to expand their so-called Maidan Self-Defense Force. Despite a call by both Yuriy Lutsenko and Former Minister of Defense Anatoliy Hrytsenko¹ for citizens to bring their legally registered firearms to the Maidan, there was very little evidence of their actual presence.

The People's Council on the Maidan had stopped short of creating a parallel government. It must be remembered that the Maidan protest was totally independent of the three opposition political parties and their leaders. In fact, a new leadership was emerging that was much more in tune with the tidal wave of public protest. This new reality made fools of anyone, including emissaries of the EU and the USA, who thought that negotiating with the trio of Klitchko, Tyahnybok and Yatseniuk meant negotiating with the Maidan.

Yuriy Lutsenko, the former Minister of the Interior under Yushchenko was becoming a fiery spokesman for the Maidan. Two years of incarceration under Yanukovich had given him time to read literature long banned in the USSR. An even more significant personality was the so-called commander of the Maidan, Andriy Parubiy², whose talent lay in his ability to coordinate the activities of the disparate groups and factions that formed this national microcosm called the Maidan. Lesia Orobets³ a deputy to the Verkhovna Rada, who famously appeared there in body armour after taking beatings from both police and some parliamentary deputies of the Party of Regions, was the one best able to voice the constitutional demands of the protesters. She painted a picture of a minarchist, if not totally anarcho-libertarian, future for Ukraine.

Finally there was Dmytro Yarosh⁴, the leader of the "Right Sector". Labeled a right wing radical by many in the foreign press, he is a language and literature teacher from the eastern city of Dniprodzerzhinsk, a former member of the Ukrainian Helsinki Group⁵ and of Rukh⁶, the movement for Ukrainian independence from the USSR. Yarosh views the Svoboda Party as "extremist" for having needlessly tacked on "socialist" to their nationalist agenda, and for having adopted racist overtones. He led the patriotic

1 ipress.ua. "Euromaidan conference unanimously voted to use firearms to defend activists." Accessed February 25, 2014.

2 [Andriy Parubiy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andriy_Parubiy), Wikipedia. Accessed February 25, 2014.

3 [Lesya Orobets](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lesya_Orobets), Wikipedia. Accessed February 25, 2014.

4 [Ukrayinska Pravda](http://ukrayinskapravda.com). The Leader of the Right Sector: When 80% of the country does not support the regime there cannot be a civil war.

5 [Ukrainian Helsinki Group](http://encyclopediaofukraine.com), Encyclopedia of Ukraine. Accessed February 26, 2014.

6 [Popular Movement of Ukraine for Reconstruction](http://www.britannica.com), Britannica. Accessed February 25, 2014.

youth organization "Tryzub" before folding it into an alliance of groups under the label "Right Sector" after the November 30, 2013 police beatings of the Maidan protesters. Formed to provide a defence against such beatings, fate had now turned the Right Sector into major players on the stage of history. With members of his Right Sector now having fought and died for the cause, Yarosh was demanding a seat at the negotiating table. He would not allow his heroism to be sold short.

By the end of January, the Maidan protest had an expanded Self Defense Force that included not only the Right Sector, but also Afghan War veterans and young volunteers from all over Ukraine. They were organized into "Sotni" (Centuries, or Companies) of a nominal 100 fighters. Reportedly there were 32 such Sotni, totaling over 2800 men. Each "Sotnia" (Century) was led by a Sotnyk (Centurion). Significantly, one such Sotnia was led by an Israeli veteran of the IDF⁷. He commanded a force that included four Israelis along with Georgians, Azerbaijani, Armenians, Russians, and Ukrainians. These units underwent rudimentary training right on the Maidan⁸.

The Yanukovich regime began an operation of sowing chaos throughout Kyiv. The regime hired "titushky" (thugs for hire) to execute a wave of violence, robbery and vandalism throughout the city, often accompanied by police or traffic cops⁹. The territory within the barricades of the Maidan was the safest and most peaceful place to be in Kyiv. The Maidan's response to this chaos, staged as an excuse for enacting martial law, was to commence Auto-Maidan car patrols throughout the city. The hunt for marauding titushky included one famous incident when Vitaliy Klitchko, the ex-heavyweight boxing-champion-turned-presidential-candidate, captured a titushko himself.

It was January 22nd when one such member of Auto-Maidan was captured by persons unknown. Dmytro Bulatov was driven outside the city, held captive and tortured. With his hands nailed to a door, his cheek was slashed, and part of his ear was cut off¹⁰. He was then abandoned in the snow near the village of Vyshenky, approximately 35km outside of Kyiv. Dmytro reported that he was questioned by men speaking Russian about whether the American Embassy was financing the revolt, and whether he was an American spy.¹¹ They were particularly interested in his recent protest visit to Victor Medvedchuk (a well known agent of influence of the Kremlin whose child's godfather is Vladimir Putin himself).¹²

On February 11th a pickpocket was captured by members of the 14th Self Defense Sotnia. Four members delivered the thief to the

7 [Ukrainian Policy](http://www.ukrainianpolicy.com)

8 "Square Self-Defense in Action." Published on February 4, 2014

9 [Video untitled](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...). Published on February 14, 2014.

10 [Ukrayinska Pravda](http://ukrayinskapravda.com). Trans. "Bulatov told the details of his abduction." Accessed February 25, 2014.

11 "Ukraine protest leader says he was tortured into saying he was a US spy." The Guardian. February 6, 2014.

12 Andriy Skumin "Kremlin-imposed "Ukrainian choice". The Ukrainian Week: International Edition. Published July 3, 2012

police. The police instead arrested the four men and, as it turned out, released the thief. The 14th Self Defense Sotnia marched to the police station demanding the release of their men¹³. The peaceful intimidation worked. The four were released.

Some 200 protesters or Self Defense members had been captured, arrested or otherwise held by the police all over the country during the two months of protests. After various negotiations, the Verkhovna Rada enacted an amnesty law on January 29. It was conditional on the unblocking of certain city streets and the withdrawal from the Kyiv City Hall building by 17 February. Again, the vast gulf between the Maidan and the various opposition politicians became apparent. There was much resistance to any compliance with the unblocking provision. Svoboda Party activists had to evacuate the City Hall by force, ostensibly handing the structure into the care of the OSCE and not the Ukrainian authorities. This still served to discredit Svoboda for many Ukrainians even outside the Maidan. However, by Monday morning 17 February, there was a narrow gauntlet passage opened for traffic on Hrushevsky St and others. Protesters that had been held prisoner throughout the country gained their freedom.

On Tuesday, February 18, a session of the Verkhovna Rada (Parliament) was scheduled to be held to enact a proposal to revert to the 2004 version of the Constitution. This change would have stripped President Yanukovich of most of his powers. This was a promise of real change. Thousands of protesters and citizens of Kyiv came to the Verkhovna Rada (Parliament Building) to show their support for the law that was being enacted. When they arrived, they found the building to be surrounded by a cordon of Berkut troops and 2000 freshly hired titushky.¹⁴

Inside Parliament the opposition deputies found that they could not achieve quorum, as the ruling Party of Region members were nowhere to be found. At first it was reported that they were in committee, but later it became known that they had left by an underground passage¹⁵ and that there had never been any intention to vote on constitutional change. The promise of this vote was part of an elaborate ruse that was about to play itself out on the streets. The peaceful demonstration outside of the Verkhovna Rada was attacked by the titushky. It was reported much later that these savages beheaded two members of the Self Defense Force and had scalped two others.¹⁶ The Maidan Self Defense Force engaged in battle both around the Verkhovna Rada and on the intersection of Institutka St and Shovkovycha St. where the arrival of fresh Interior Troop forces was being blocked by demonstrators. Both sides took losses as the Self Defense fighters forced the Interior Troops back and actually entered the headquarters of the Party of Regions.

13 "Leave no man behind." Published February 12, 2014.

14 "Riots in Downtown Kyiv Today, Feb. 18 – Afternoon Events from 12:01 – 12:45." Voices of Ukraine. Accessed February 26, 2014.

15 Brendan Kiley. "Dispatch from Kiev: 'Special 'Death Divisions' Are Acting as a Supplement to the Usual Police Forces'". SLOG: News & Arts. Accessed February 21, 2014.

16 Expres.ua News.

16 Expres.ua News.

The Self Defense Forces were engaged in combat about 1.5km from the Maidan itself, which had been left at half strength. It was at that point that the Yanukovich regime struck back. Fresh Interior Troops poured in from behind the Dynamo soccer stadium and past dismantled barricades overwhelming the Maidan's defences. By nightfall, the protesters on the Maidan were surrounded and compressed into an area of a couple of football fields¹⁷. In certain places, the Interior Troops stood on the territory of the city square itself. Their advance had finally been halted by hastily erected flaming barricades. All night the surrounded demonstrators passed lumber and anything that appeared flammable to the front lines. In a move of unbelievable brutality, some Special Forces troopers set fire to the Trade Unions building that bordered the Maidan itself. This building housed the last functioning field hospital not overrun and destroyed by the troops¹⁸. Despite valiant rescue efforts by the protesters, there were casualties inside that would be discovered days later.

Wednesday 19 February was a day of relative calm as both sides regrouped. Unbeknownst to the protesters, Yanukovich was preparing an assault on the Maidan that would involve 22,000 army troops, and Special Forces snipers in addition to 2000 Berkut riot police¹⁹. In preparation for this illegal and unconstitutional move, Yanukovich had already replaced the Chief of General Staff Maj. Gen. Volodymyr Zaman by Yuriy Il'in, a character more ready to obey such a directive. Deputy Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Yuriy Dumanskyi resigned in protest.²⁰ Fortunately this part of Yanukovich's nefarious plan was derailed as citizens far from the Capital stopped²¹ or derailed trainloads of military troops heading for Kyiv.

On February 20th some members of the Maidan Self Defense that were manning the barricades on the right flank decided to chase away the Interior Troopers that were throwing Molotov cocktails at them all morning. The surprised Interior Troopers ran. As battlefield coordination and discipline on the Maidan was not the best, the Self Defense lads did not stop, and ran after these cops along Institutka Street. Interior Troopers standing on the hill by the October Palace started shooting live fire at them. Seeing this, the center and the left flank of the Maidan Self Defense charged rushing to their aid: the first - up the grade of Institutka St. and onto the stairs of the "October", the second - along Khreshchatyk towards the European Plaza, right onto a company of fresh conscripts of Interior Troops, armed with clubs, gas and stun grenades and guns with rubber bullets. The Interior Troops retreated from the European Plaza, chased from there by sticks and Molotov cocktails right up to the Dynamo stadium.

17 Simon Shuster. "The Maidan's Last Stand: Ukraine's Protesters Resist Police Crackdown." Time World. Published February 18, 2014.

18 Voices of Ukraine Maidan.

19 Timothy Heritage. "Yanukovich planned harsh clampdown on protesters: Ukraine deputy." Yahoo News. Accessed February 24, 2014

20 Ukrayinska Pravda. "The Deputy Chief of Staff Reports his Resignation."

21 Caption translated: "Incredible! In Dnepropetrovsk, the train stopped with the soldiers and tytushkamy. Cars uncoupled from the locomotive!!" Twitter photo. Accessed February 21, 2014

Those that had been manning the freshly constructed concrete barricade at the stadium had already scrambled out of there - and for good reason: the self-defense forces by now could walk down from the already captured "October" along the Museum alley and hit them in the rear. The Interior Troops occupied this emptied barricade, but soon realized that resistance was futile and requested negotiations. They were allowed to go free on the word of honour of their commanding Major.

The Maidan's losses that morning were approximately 45 killed: 15 on Institutaska and 30 on the "October Palace" (this includes those that died later in hospital). It is clear that attacking with sticks and bats against automatic firearms is not necessarily the best way to go. But if you really need to, or "if it just happens" - and then the Self Defense Force proved that they could still win.²² All that took just 15 minutes to regain all the positions that the protesters had held a week earlier.

In those 15 minutes Yanukovych's plan collapsed. The Maidan Self Defense had shown that they would retake and hold their positions even without firearms. However, a day or so earlier in the distant city of Lviv the local Self Defense had taken a police station and captured a large cache of firearms. Fighters of this Lviv Self Defense Force arrived on the Maidan armed now with Kalashnikovs.

At this very time, Yanukovych was involved in negotiations with the three opposition political leaders that were being brokered by emissaries of the EU. Aware of Yanukovych's planned crackdown, a terrified Radoslaw Sikorsky, the Polish representative, insisted the opposition agree to a December Presidential election (a mere two month shift from the constitutionally required one in February 2015). However this concession, signed that same evening, signaled to all the waning of Yanukovych's power²³.

The Maidan would have none of such cheap compromise. The price in lives was already too high. (As of the time that this is being written the confirmed count of those killed since 18 February is 84 protesters and 16 police.) The Sotnyk that changed the course of history was 26-year-old Volodymyr Parasiuk²⁴, a video studio owner from Lviv. He went on stage that night and declared that if Yanukovych did not resign by 10:00am the next morning, his Sotnia, which was now fully armed, would hunt him down and kill him. Dmytro Yarosh echoed this sentiment. Near the Maidan stage, by the MacDonald's fast food kiosk, was a makeshift morgue with row upon row of bodies on display awaiting identification.

When Victor Yanukovych stepped out of the Presidential Administration that night he watched as his security guard detail turned and simply walked away. In that moment he knew that he

22 ZFront Kharkov UA. "Revolution Ukraine Kyiv Maidan counterattack vul. Instytutaska 2014.02.20." Published on February 20, 2014.

23 Adam Easton. "Poland's crucial role as Yanukovych's rule crumbled." BBC News. Published February 25, 2014

24Ukrayinska Pravda. "The Sotnyk that changed the course of history: We needed to keep pressing." Published February 24, 2014.

had changed from President to fugitive. Security camera footage showed him leaving his opulent Mezhyhirya residence that night by helicopter, suitcases in hand.

Since that bloody and event filled Thursday, much has occurred in Ukraine to put it back on the path to normalcy. Parliament is sitting. It has a quorum and a new majority thanks to defectors from Yanukovych's Party of Regions. Presidential elections are set for May 25, 2014. The Maidan is still holding the politicians accountable. Berkut has been disbanded. Yanukovych is an international fugitive. Former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko has been released from prison, but when she spoke at the Maidan her reception was tepid at best. People had long realized that she could never be part of the solution.

Putin's Russia is desperate. Black Sea Fleet troops moved to the outskirts of Sevastopol forming checkpoints for vehicles entering the city as a none too subtle challenge to Ukrainian sovereignty. The Russian military commenced snap readiness exercises. Ever mindful of the natural gas and oil reserves under the Black Sea shelf, Russia is fomenting unrest in Crimea²⁵, a land ethnically cleansed of native Crimean Tatars by Stalin. The 225,000 Tatars that have returned to their homeland are opposing the Russian majority. Many having just returned from the Maidan, are quite prepared to fight.

On February 25 Canada's Minister of External Affairs, John Baird, announced that he was leading a delegation to Ukraine²⁶ on February 28th and that included MP Ted Opitz and Senator Reynell Andreychuk, along with representatives of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress. This was happening at the same time that US Secretary of State John Kerry was warning Putin that it would be a grave mistake to interfere militarily in Ukraine. The prominent attention that Ukraine is getting from all western leaders may be a guarantee that these matters don't spin out of control. It would still be wise to remember that the Maidan and the people of Ukraine will no longer be a bargaining chip of political deal making. The infective nature of the freedom that the protest stood for has been reflected in the image of the crowd at a Moscow hockey game²⁷ chanting the famous greeting of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists:

"Slava Ukraini!" "Heroyam Slava!"
Glory to Ukraine! Hail the Heroes!

To get the full story, please read our Briefing Note titled, Euro Maidan, the Ukrainian Revolution: Conflict of Civilizational Choice in the Geographical Centre of Europe by Myroslav Petriw February 6, 2014. You can find it [here](#).

25 Lukas I. Alpert and Jayl Solomon. "Russia orders military exercises amid Ukraine tension." WSJ. Accessed February 25, 2014; Updated February 26, 2014.

26 Kathryn Blaze Carlson and Kim Mackrael. "Baird to lead Canadian Mission to Help Ukraine Tilt Toward West." The Globe and Mail. Published February 25, 2014.

27 "SHOCK!" "Glory to Ukraine! - Heroes of Glory!" On the match CSKA Moscow - Spartak Moscow!" Published on February 26, 2014

A Canadian Iranian's perspective

By Shabnam Assadollahi

In 1968, I was only three years old and very keen to start school early. With some help, I had finished reading Grade one text books along with eight English novels. My parents enrolled me in a private school, so that I could be in a more protected and secure environment. Nevertheless, given my tiny appearance, a few girls always bullied me and I lost my confidence during my years in elementary school. My mother had to come to school to literally feed me so that I would eat my lunch. I regained my self-confidence after signing up for martial arts courses for a few years, where I excelled to a brown belt in karate.

I was just 13 when Khomeini came into power by hijacking the people's revolution and overnight all women, including elementary school girls, were forced to cover their bodies from head to toe and were ordered to only wear dark colours. We were no longer allowed to attend school with the opposite sex. Our once praised school curriculum was now replaced by Arabic, Islamic studies and the Quran; which most of us simply loathed. It was at this time that I had an awakening and started my activism. I was robbed of my teen years by a radical regime that sought to force its values on the masses by devastating force. My childhood memories were replaced by a reality created by a regime where women were now treated as second class citizens to men and even the most mundane detail of our lives was strictly controlled by Khomeini's Revolutionary Guards and the morality police.

Like most teenagers in high school, I also spoke my mind about the changes that were happening in my country. In a modern society, teenagers attend school, openly spend time with friends, listen to their favorite music and do all the things that teenagers do. In going about their lives, they do not have to worry about political and religious consequences of engaging in normal everyday activities enforced by their government... They do not have to live in fear of expressing their opinion, no matter how unpopular that opinion. What we no longer had and would never have again under the Islamic Republic, simply put, was freedom of speech. Those who did speak up put themselves and their families in grave danger or simply disappeared behind the walls of the notorious Evin prison in Tehran. At that time, even 12 year old children faced the firing squad for political dissidence.

Imagine for a moment a mother living a quiet uneventful life with her children in the safety of her own home. Imagine the horror of that same woman when in the early hours of the morning she comes face-to-face with the infamous Revolutionary Guards. Unannounced, they forced their way into her home and arrested their 16 year old daughter. The young girl, her only daughter and the eldest of her three children, was taken to the much feared Evin prison where she knew her child would be interrogated and tortured. She also

knew that many mothers never saw their children again. At that time, people simply vanished without a trace. That child was me. I was arrested by five very large, heavy set guards. I remember distinctly four vehicles that came to our house to take me away; a 16 year old girl who barely weighed 90 pounds. Imagine the terror and anguish felt by that child. This may be unfathomable to the western mind, but this was to be my reality for the next 18 months.

In my young trustful mind, I did not think that a simple conversation, having an opinion and simply expressing it, would put my life in danger. I never considered the possibility of being tortured as a teenager and that my life would be forever changed and that I would be reminded of this torture every time I would look in the mirror and the terrible scar on my face.



Shabnam Assadollahi in Grade 1, just 4 years old and 2 years younger than her peers (first row, second from the right)

My interrogator was a man known simply as the "rapist of Evin." I never saw his face as we were always blindfolded. Both the guards and interrogators were very protective of their identity as if they knew that someday they may be the hunted like the Nazis. This gave me a clue that they knew well what they were doing was wrong or they simply could not look into the face of a child when they tortured her/him. As time went by, I realized that my interrogator had taken pity on me and decided to leave me outside the torture chambers from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. every day, blindfolded, cold and hungry, instead of physically torturing me. I can tell you that there is only one experience worse than being tortured; having to listen to others scream and beg, not for their lives but for their death.

At the end I was given an 18-month sentence but in reality I should have been hanged for my anti-Islamic and anti-revolutionary views. To this day I have no idea why and how my life was spared. But I do remember making a deal with God, in that corner of the torture chamber, that if he spared not me but my parents of the pain of my death, I would dedicate my life to fighting the Islamic Republic to my very last breath. I also silently promised each and every one of those who screamed in pain that I would live and bear witness

for them. I wanted to live, as surviving was the only act of resistance in Evin. At night I would count around 60-70 bullets which meant 60-70 souls had been executed and I was hearing the last shot they would give the victim in the head. Many of my beautiful cell mates were taken before my eyes. All left bravely and without fear in their eyes and soul. We had decided that dying proudly was our final act of resistance. We were children but we wanted to die like high ranking officers.... proud and defiant.

After I was freed from the clutches of Evin, I decided to find out exactly why I was taken and why so many were killed.

I found out that the Islamic Republic of Iran demanded absolute compliance with the penalty of torture and death for those that dared question it. There is absolutely no room for error by the citizen and there is no forgiveness. There were teenagers who were shot for simply being in the possession of leaflets or books of the opposition. The Islamic Republic ran elections to give an image of democracy, while allowing the masses to choose only among its carefully handpicked candidates who had subscribed to the fundamental beliefs of the regime and had an invested interest in seeing the continued survival of a dictatorship.

What are these beliefs? That boys and girls are separated throughout their schooling. That girls as young as nine years of age are forced into marriages, traded like property. Women are treated as second class citizens only second to men. Islamic Republic of Iran demands compliance to the regime and does not tolerate dissent. Young men and women that speak against the regime are rounded up and sent to notorious prisons, where they are tortured and left with scars for life, and others executed, some in public settings to teach a lesson to others. Sex outside of the marriage is at times punished by a brutal practice of stoning to death.

Outside of Iran, the regime openly and covertly supports terrorist activities. The Islamic Republic of Iran supports terrorist organizations including, the Hezbollah and Hamas in the Middle East. Those who hold positions of authority in Iran have been found responsible for bombings in Argentina and murders in Germany, to name a few. These are not isolated cases, with growing evidence of Iranian covert and terrorist activities in the Americas.¹ Inspired by North Korea, it has sought to further guarantee its existence by building its nuclear know-how.

There has been a great deal of effort by the international community to persuade Iran to slow down its nuclear program. Promises of relaxing economic sanctions and opening up relations have been put on the table.

In fear of Iran becoming a nuclear power, world leaders are willing to put aside the fact that the Islamic Republic of Iran is a dictatorship that continues to deny its people their fundamental rights and will remain on course to export its radical ideology. Removing sanctions and opening relations will make it easier for Iran to achieve this end.

The regime and its followers are trying hard to revive and better market a dictatorship that has brought so much pain and suffering to Iranian people for 35 years. I wish that Khomeini never started an Islamic revolution (or devolution) 35 years ago, let alone try to revive it today. The Islamic Republic of Iran enshrined the clergy and brought three decades of pain to an entire society and humanity as a whole. It speaks of moderation, reform and protecting the establishment yet during the regime's time in power, has restricted human rights, engaged in mass executions, taken hostages, and stood in defiance of the world.

The reformists who are part of this establishment have blood on their hands. Today it is time for them, and the regime which Khomeini was so instrumental in establishing, to go.

Let's hope this regime is overthrown soon so that our world is set free from this dangerous contamination. I hope that Iranians can live in a free society and have their deserved human rights which this regime has taken away from them completely. The truth about the Islamic Republic of Iran needs to reach the ears and hearts of the world for knowledge is the vessel of constructive change.

I believe that many world organizations and politicians have made the Islamic Republic stronger by refusing to hold it accountable for its dubious activities both inside and outside Iran. The regime has become even more brutal and vicious due to the impunity it has been given for the last 35 years by the international community.

Shabnam Assadollahi is a veteran human rights advocate who has worked extensively helping newcomers and refugees resettle in Canada and has distinguished herself as a broadcaster, writer and public speaker. While her primary and heartfelt interest focuses on the Iranian community and world events effecting women and minority communities in the land of her birth – she also advocates for the emancipation of women and minority religious communities worldwide. A resident of Ottawa she is active in community affairs including cultural, educational and humanitarian activities.

¹[Prosecutor in Argentina Sees Iranian Plot in Latin America](#), New York Times website, 29 May 2013.

Opinion Piece

Unsung Citizens: Coast-Guard Auxiliaries and Rangers

By John Thompson

“What is the use of living, if it be not to strive for noble causes and to make this muddled world a better place for those who will live in it after we are gone?”¹

-Winston Churchill, *speech at Dundee Scotland, 10 October, 1908.*

Under the usages and broad recognition of nation sovereignty since the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia, for a nation state to maintain sovereignty over its territory, it must demonstrate that it can monitor what goes on in its territory, and place military force there. In short, to have control over one's territory, a nation must be able to enforce that control.

Canada's problem is that it has large swathes of uninhabited territory that cannot be easily protected by the military. The late Brigadier General Dr. George G. Bell, one of Canada's pre-eminent strategic thinkers, frequently pointed out that the strategic reality of Canada is that the country consists of a long narrow band of settlement in its southern fringe and an under-populated wilderness to the north. Everything Canadians do is accompanied by an additional expense imposed by time and distance our space imposes on us. Bell often remarked to colleagues, students and junior officers that it was no coincidence that Canada relies on collective security and alliances to help maintain its own sovereignty.²

However, this is not all we rely on as Ottawa has found other ways to get value for our defence dollar and a number of otherwise ordinary and unremarkable citizens have been playing some surprising roles.

Two of the most remarkable roles for these Canadians are the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary (CCGA) and in the Canadian Rangers. The CCGA has a recent history, only dating from 1978, but can be seen as being part of an older tradition going back to the volunteer life-boat crews of the 19th Century. The Canadian Rangers have been patrolling remote regions of Canada since 1947.

Several years ago, a member of the CCGA had a rather interesting weekend.³ Lake Ontario can be rough in late autumn and the water is always cold, but seldom much above freezing with some anaerobic pockets of oxygen-poor. Regardless, a four man team of Auxiliary Coast Guards were out looking for a missing fisherman;

1 The Churchill Centre, [Quotations](#)

2 The Second Annual CIC George G. Bell Strategic Leadership Award Dinner honoured Dr. George R. Lindsey, OC, PhD. The dinner took place at the Delta Ottawa Hotel & Suites in Ottawa, 1 November 2009.

3 Much of the inspiration and the background for this story came from individuals within the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary and the Canadian Rangers who have narrated their experiences to the author.

he was already presumed to be dead but an effort was being made to find his body. The tension on the drag increased late on Saturday night and they brought up a body, put it into a body bag, landed their boat, and delivered the corpse to the local coroner.

The next morning the coroner informed the skipper of the Coast Guard Auxiliary boat that they would have to go back and drag the lake again as the body they found was not the missing fisherman.

The body the Coast Guards had pulled from the lake had wooden dentures and the corncob pipe. Cold anaerobic environments can preserve things for a long time; enough that the body of a man drowned around 1840 could be mistaken for a fisherman missing in 2010; particularly when pulled up from the bottom out in the dark late at night on a cold storm-tossed lake. The boat crew had to go out again. Nobody paid these four Coast Guard Auxiliaries to go out onto Lake Ontario in late autumn. They are among hundreds of unpaid volunteers who work in partnership with the Canadian Coast Guard, the Department of National Defence and other agencies.

Most recently, individuals aboard the LaHave cable ferry drifted down the river into the open sea. “The Joint Rescue Co-ordination Centre received word of the drifting ferry and dispatched a Cormorant helicopter from 14 Wing Greenwood to the scene. At the same time, a Canadian Coast Guard auxiliary vessel and Canadian Coast Guard Ships Sambro and Earl Grey were dispatched to the area to monitor the situation.”⁴

In contrast to their American counterparts, the Canadian Coast Guard has never been a component of the Armed Forces. Its functions were variously performed by organizations answering to Canadian Ministers of the Marine, of Fisheries, and of Transport, prior to the official creation of the Canadian Coast Guard in 1962⁵. However, the Coast Guard has many complex tasks, some of which overlap with functions of the Armed Forces – including maritime enforcement and Search and Rescue (SAR) roles. Currently the Canadian Coast Guard is a “Special Operating Agency” answering to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans.⁶

On both coasts, up the St. Lawrence and through the Great Lakes, CCGA members pick up much of the burden of enhancing marine safety and provide SAR services in support of the Canadian Coast Guard and the Canadian Forces. Since being founded in 1978 they have steadily grown and currently some 4,000 volunteers with over 1,000 small craft can be found in five regional organizations, constituted as non-profit entities.

4 Frances Willick. [“LaHave Ferry Floats Away; Three People Rescued.”](#) The Chronicle Herald, 4 January 2014.

5 [History of the Canadian Coast Guard](#), Government of Canada Canadian Coast Guard website, accessed 18 December 2013.

6 Ibid. Also see James R. Mitchell, [The Canadian Coast Guard in Perspective](#), Action Canada website, August 2013.

They pick up a lot of the work-load in handling small craft in coastal waters, harbours and the Great Lakes, and are involved in over 2,000 SAR episodes per year.⁷

These unpaid volunteers pay for their own uniforms and fundraise to get the money for their own high performance, seaworthy and very serviceable watercrafts. They are trained in first aid, seamanship and boat handling, and the many other elements of marine-safety. Given that they get credit for saving hundreds of lives and tens of millions of dollars-worth of property every year, it would seem that Ottawa has received a real bargain.

It might be easy to characterize CCGA members as enthusiastic amateurs, for at one level this is what they are. However, the standards they strive to meet are very professional because the work environment they often encounter is an exceptionally unforgiving one. Moreover, if one is providing safety inspections to yachtsmen and pleasure boaters, one's own safety equipment and boat must be of high standard. Leadership requires setting high standards and meeting them.

Those high standards are being met. The CCGA is internationally recognized for the excellence of its services and is now an integral part of SAR efforts on both coasts and inland waters. Given the dedicated service they provide, CCGA organizations are also being drawn into new relationships with various Canadian police forces, the United States Coast Guard and other agencies.

The CCGA crew went back in Lake Ontario, spending their weekend in a small boat in conditions that could turn most people simultaneously green with sea-sickness and blue with cold to continue the search for the body of a missing stranger. CCGA members are unpaid- spending their time away from their families and loved ones, and yet the work they do is beyond value.

The other often unheralded volunteers are paid but it is a stipend, although a welcome one. These are the hunters, fur-trappers, prospectors, geologists, and others who serve in the Canadian Rangers as the Armed Force's 'eyes and ears' in remote sections of Canada.

It is unknown if the Allies were aware of the German U-boat landing in Labrador in late 1943 to install an unmanned weather station (Operation Kurt); but Canadian authorities did know all about a U-boat lurking in the Bay of Chaleur in the Gulf of St. Lawrence that year as part of a foiled plot (Operation Kiebitz) to spring some U-boat aces from a Canadian prisoner of war (POW) camp.⁸ The long empty coastline from Vancouver Island to Alaska during the same war also resulted in the raising of the Pacific Coast Militia Rangers, a force of 11,500 loggers, fishermen,

⁷ For more information on the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary (or to contribute to them), visit their [website](#)

⁸ Operation Kurt is described by Michael Hadley in *U-Boats against Canada: German Submarines in Canadian Waters*, (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1190). p.163. The weather station itself is an exhibit in the Canadian War Museum in Ottawa. [Operation Kiebitz](#) is described on the web page of the Musée Naval de Québec.

trappers and ranchers during 1942.⁹

The Pacific Coast Militia Rangers were lightly armed, often only with hunting rifles (the Winchester and Marlin 30/30 was apparently most common), and were expected to function as a combination of Coast Watchers and local defence forces if the Japanese threatened the Coast. The possibility of a Japanese raid or landing rapidly faded after 1942 and the Rangers were completely disbanded in August 1945. The idea would be revived later. The Second World War had seen the far north become a sphere for military activities – Canadian troops had been deployed to Iceland in 1941 and had taken part on raids on the Arctic Ocean island of Spitsbergen that same year.¹⁰ Canada had also been involved in the Aleutian Island campaign against Japan in 1943. Moreover, the Americans had sent thousands of troops to build the Alaska Highway through Alberta and the Yukon in 1942-43. In 1947, it was becoming clear that the end of the Second World War had not brought on universal peace, and relations between Western nations and the Soviet Union were rapidly growing cool. Canada's far north could not be left untended in future.

The result was the creation of the Canadian Rangers, but this time the force would be open to Inuit and Aborigines¹¹. The Canadian Rangers would cover coastal regions that the Royal Canadian Navy does not patrol, stretches of the Canadian Arctic that the Royal Canadian Air Force seldom overflies, and would traverse sections of wilderness that have hardly ever seen a Mountie or a Canadian soldier.

The Canadian Rangers are constituted as an element of the Canadian Army Reserve and have a current strength of some 5,000¹² members based in some 200 remote communities. They are all volunteers, and Canadian Reserve pay scales are modest. The Rangers are organized into five patrol groups to cover remote under-populated areas in Western Canada, Ontario, Quebec, Newfoundland and Labrador, as well as across the far north.¹³ Rangers are armed only with rifles - and their venerable Lee-Enfield Mk 4 bolt action rifles dating back to the Second World War are due for replacement.

The main task of the Rangers is to enforce Canadian sovereignty and to be the eyes and ears of the Canadian Forces in remote places. They also assist the Canadian Forces in SAR activities and sundry other tasks such as providing aid during disasters, support for training, etc.

⁹ See [Pacific Coast Militia Rangers](#), Canadian Soldiers.com, for information on organization and uniforms.

¹⁰ Department of National Defense, [Official History of the Canadian Army. The Canadian Army 1939-1945: An Official Historical Summary](#). p. 30

¹¹ Sean Davidson. [Canadian Rangers: the thin red line patrolling our harshest terrain](#). 7 September 2013.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ [About the Canadian Rangers](#), Government of Canada website, retrieved 11 December 2013.

A Canadian Ranger might be the only set of eyes that looks in on a remote site from one year to the next, and their input on high arctic travel and survival technique has been invaluable to other members of the Armed Forces on innumerable occasions.¹⁴ While a part of the Primary Reserves, the Rangers are not ‘combat troops’ per se, nor are they trained to be such and the Canadian military does not ever appear to have regarded them that way. Rather they are “guides and subject matter experts”.¹⁵ The expertise can be quite startling for today’s urbanized soldiers as they sometimes underestimate the myriad skills and experiences of the Rangers.

The military training that the Rangers receive also provides other benefits during emergencies. In 1999 when a landslide in the northern Quebec village of Kangisualujuag slammed into a school gymnasium during a community dance, the 28 Rangers (later reinforced by 41 more that were flown in from nearby towns) in the village immediately played key roles in handling the disaster. The Rangers performed numerous critical tasks in this remote isolated community.¹⁶ When authorities ordered the evacuation of Sandy Lake and some other remote communities in Northern Ontario, the local Rangers immediately coordinated the evacuation.¹⁷

The strong First Nations component of today’s Rangers has an unexpected benefit that was perhaps unconsidered in 1947, but it provides purpose and function to many members of our most remote communities and encourages them to keep and hone survival and wilderness skills that might otherwise become lost. These benefits led to the creation of the Junior Canadian Rangers Program, which has had considerable success in improving the lives of the young in those same communities. By letting Native Elders and the military cooperate in teaching navigation, survival, hunting and wilderness travel techniques, these Junior Canadian Rangers develop skills that will assist them in their daily lives as well as possibly in future careers.

Some of those who have worked with the Rangers find the experience to be highly educational. Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) officers who turned up to run SAR operations in Northern Ontario swiftly learned that Rangers have a far more efficient sense for these things. For instance, local Rangers did not need to dredge a river looking for a drowned fisherman when they knew exactly where currents would eventually deposit the body. Countless Canadian soldiers have been taught the small tricks that let them cross tricky terrain, quickly find shelter, and better protect themselves from the harsh Arctic elements.

¹⁴ They have also supported research, letting scientists accompany them on some sovereignty patrols in the most remote and otherwise inaccessible parts of the Canadian north.

¹⁵ Kitikmeot Inuit Association, “Canadian Sovereignty, the Military and Infrastructure Development in the Inuit Homeland:”, Submission to the Senate Standing Committee on National Security and Defence; December 2010, pg.6
¹⁶ Jane George, “Nunavik rangers honoured in Montreal”, Nunatsiaq News, 26 November 1999

¹⁷ Peter Moon, “Canadian Rangers play key role in evacuations”, Wawatay News, August 2011

The Coast Guard Auxiliary and the Canadian Rangers are a bargain for Canadians – volunteers who commit their own time to develop and practice scarce skills which can become priceless where and when it really matters, and who provide an official presence where we might not otherwise have one.

The rest of us owe these citizens more than we know.

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March Break Travel Tips

As March Break is quickly approaching, we would like to remind our readers of some important safety tips for travelling at this busy time of year.

Learn: Research as much as possible about your destination prior to embarking on your trip.

Hotels: Stay in hotels that are reputable and have online ratings; first floor rooms are easier to break into, and rooms above the sixth floor are sometimes too high for fire ladders to reach.

Be Aware: Have situational awareness of your surroundings. If it feels “iffy”, it probably is. Walk away or excuse yourself and leave the area. In 2012, Mexico had an average of 72 kidnap cases a day! The figure does not include “express” kidnappings where victims are detained for a matter of hours, usually for a ransom payment. The areas that saw the most kidnappings were the states of Morelos, Puebla, Mexico state, and Jalisco; areas that don’t have a strong drug cartel presence. Countries like Venezuela have similar numbers; over 1,300 in 2012 (or 20-40 kidnappings a day), not including “express” kidnappings.

Money: Try to go to the bank/bank machines in groups to avoid complacency about safety. Go to the bank during the day and be aware of your surroundings before you go in and when you leave.

Drinking: You will do it, BUT be smart about it. Don’t overdo the drinking- it can lead to arrests, kidnapping, violent crime, and in certain instances death.

Rules: Laws in foreign countries are not the same as they are in Canada; some countries have severe penalties. Do not argue with law enforcement.

Contact: Keep in touch with friends and family. Whether you call, use Facebook, twitter, or email, just keep in touch. It only takes 2 min to chat and 26 characters to tweet.

Emergency: Register with the Embassy or Consulate in the country you are visiting.

Book Review

The Dogs are Eating Them Now: Our War in Afghanistan by Graeme Smith

Reviewed by Craig Ruttan

The Canadian Forces are preparing to finish withdrawing from Afghanistan in mid-2014. Looking back over our decade-long military involvement, the longest in our history, Canadians are still evaluating the legacy of the war – and whether the gains were worth the cost in lives, effort, and tax dollars.

Author Graeme Smith is evidently still processing the experience as well. From 2006 to 2009, Smith served as correspondent for *The Globe and Mail* in Afghanistan, primarily working out of Kandahar in the south. In *The Dogs are Eating Them Now: Our War in Afghanistan*, Smith chronicles his experiences and changing perceptions of the conflict. As Canada and other NATO members flooded the south with troops and development projects, the deterioration of the security situation accelerated. The book, Smith's first, won the 2013 Hilary Weston Writers' Trust Prize for Nonfiction.

Smith describes his optimism and excitement upon first arriving in the country. He initially accepted the prevailing narrative that since 2001, Western forces had defeated the Taliban and were in the process of spreading international security beyond Kabul to the other regions. As Smith puts it, "Foreigners were helping, but they needed more troops." Media reports at the time focused on challenges posed by warlords and militias, with the Taliban reduced to a non-player.

From there, the book chronicles Smith's growing scepticism of the narrative being told by the military. In one visceral example, a military convoy loaded with journalists was on its way to a victory ceremony in southern Afghanistan when they were struck by a suicide attacker, killing four civilians in the process. Nevertheless, the NATO commander went ahead with the ceremony, claiming their mission "broke the back of [the Taliban] insurgency here." This naive optimism persevered long after it was no longer warranted.

Smith contrasts the stories he heard from infantry and military commanders to others told by Afghan troops, civilians, and the Taliban. Were civilians in southern Afghanistan co-operating with the Taliban out of fear, longing for Western forces to arrive and secure the area? Or did the conflict break down along tribal lines, with the families allied with President Hamid Karzai and the NATO presence exploiting their power and exacting retribution on opponents in the south – who chose to ally with the Taliban for protection against their own? The book recounts Smith's internal conflicts in trying to determine the truth – his optimism being challenged by conversations with locals and evidence of co-operation with the Taliban.

Smith makes clear that his goal is not clear-cut analysis, or a grand narrative. Unlike other monographs or histories that have been published on the war, *The Dogs Are Eating Them Now* tells a personal story. It does not explore the first five years of international involvement after 9/11, and only touches on domestic policy in relation to the political fallout from Smith's 2008 articles on detainee transfers.

In one chapter, Smith discusses his award-winning series of interviews with Taliban members, in an attempt to more fully tell the story of the war in Afghanistan. Working with a local researcher and translators, Smith assembled interviews that depict the group as divided along tribal lines, driven by honour and revenge, closely tied to the drug trade, and fiercely nationalistic.

This understanding of the insurgency was not reflected in NATO's military-centric, technocratic counter-terrorism approach. Troop surges and large-scale campaigns fuelled opposition, and instead of providing local safety from insurgents, it fed a fundamental sense of insecurity. Accumulated anger at Western airstrikes and Afghan corruption meant that, despite the Taliban giving entire villages advance warning before the massive jailbreak at Sarpoza Prison in 2008, no one tipped off the local police or military stations.

A conflicted relationship with international funding lies at the centre of the book. Smith disagrees with those who claim NATO's problems in the south stemmed from insufficient money and troops, highlighting numerous examples of expensive development projects failing to win local hearts and minds. Looking past Western troop withdrawals in 2014, however, he also argues that maintaining stable international funding will be required if Afghan forces are to gain and maintain control. Money is a necessary but insufficient condition for security in the country, which can ultimately only be improved through commitment from various internal factions.

Smith begins his memoir by writing, "We lost the war in southern Afghanistan and it broke my heart." He acknowledges the high-minded intentions of the intervention and some of the progress in education and civil infrastructure, but demonstrates concern that it will be too fragile to survive in the tense and insecure environment.

While not prescriptive, Smith's account should be essential reading in future counter-insurgency and state-building endeavours as a reminder of how grand military strategy and national security-driven decisions can fail to capture or account for the impact of ground-level perceptions. Interventions cannot afford to ignore the opinions and feelings of those whose hearts and minds they are supposedly pursuing.

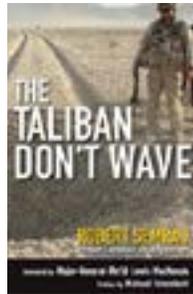
Book Review

The Taliban Don't Wave by Robert Semrau

Reviewed by Howard Michitsch

Former Captain Semrau was charged with murder, attempted murder, failure to perform a military duty, and conduct unbecoming an officer in connection with the death of an Afghan Taliban fighter. He was convicted of only one charge; conduct unbecoming an officer, sentenced to reduction in rank from captain to second lieutenant, and dismissed from the Canadian Armed Forces.

This is his story. Yet, his words are the echoes of thousands of Canadian soldiers who have gone before from the Boer War to the War on Terror and all of the frustrations, danger and illogic that is a war zone. But also, his words speak to the moral and ethical issues of fighting a terrorist insurgency in a complex and strange environment.



This is a first person account of a soldier and leader in Afghanistan who finds himself abruptly removed from the field and on trial at a court martial. The story he tells is a soldier's eye view in a soldier's voice, and the four and a half pages of abbreviations will help the reader through scenes that would be otherwise tedious. The story of his deployment moves quickly onward and through 19 salty chapters. Mr. Semrau sets the scene for the reader in the prologue and – in the end – what happened at trial in an epilogue.

The story itself describes his tour of duty including mortar attacks and going on patrol with all of the tension and fear and courage that manifests itself. He worries he might fail, yet works to support his own men, a small team of Canadian soldiers in a support training mission mentoring a kandack (battalion) of the newly established Afghan National Army (ANA). He describes patrols, artillery, and drone support missions that go awry through incompetence, miscommunication, sheer bad luck, or being last in line for assistance. His rage against the machine - when support is not forthcoming - is the same that every commander at every level has felt - and is expressed in graphic terms. This is the nature of war. It is in one of these stories that the title of this book is found, a potential "blue on blue" attack by Apache helicopters on him and his group.

The foreword by Major-General Lewis MacKenzie begins with a quick summary of the Afghanistan situation and moves directly to address the incident for which Mr. Semrau was convicted, and how it was done through court martial. At the preface, Michael Friscolanti again goes directly to the murder charge.

Mr. Semrau devotes very little of his main narrative (19 lines out of 456 pages) to the actions for which he was charged and convicted and the reader must infer what happened and is left with - "The truth of the moment will always be between me and the insurgent."

Accused of executing a wounded and dying Afghan fighter, Semrau's defence maintained it was not murder and painted a picture of a "mercy killing". But why was he then convicted?

The recent news of a Royal Marine convicted of murdering a wounded Afghan fighter is instructive. In this case a fellow soldier's helmet camera recorded the entire incident. To anyone watching the video it is obvious that this was not a mercy killing. The marine shot the wounded man at close range with a 9 mm service pistol before appropriating a line from Hamlet: "Shuffle off this mortal coil, you c***. It's nothing you wouldn't do to us!"¹ There are now 11 different inquiries concerning deaths of prisoners in British military detention.

Only Mr. Semrau knows what was in his heart at that critical moment of his action. The court martial obviously saw mercy there. The thought of tolerating a Canadian officer dispatching the wounded on the battlefield, or in any way letting it be known that it would be tolerated is too much to bear – Semrau may be not guilty of murder but neither could he stay. What he did may have been morally right, but was it his decision to make? Take his journey through the book, maybe draw your own conclusions.

The ancient Greeks might say in the end he was guilty of the crime of hubris.



¹ Tom Rawle, [Royal Marine jailed for life for murdering wounded Taliban fighter 'in cold blood'](#), Express website, 7 December 2013.