

Defence chief warns of 'war' against the West

Russia, China sowing division, committee told

RYAN TUMILTY

OTTAWA • Chief of Defence Staff, Gen. Wayne Eyre, told MPs that Russia and China consider themselves to be at war with the West and Canada must rise to meet this challenge.

Eyre was meeting with MPs at the Commons standing committee on national security to talk about the threat Russia poses to Canada. He said Russia and China don't differentiate between peace and war and are actively seeking to challenge the West.

"Russia and China are not just looking at regime survival but regime expansion. They consider themselves to be at war with the West," he said. "They strive to destroy the social cohesion of liberal democracies and the credibility of our own institutions to ensure our model of government is seen as a failure."

Eyre said the threat is broader than the war in Ukraine, but a systemic effort to change the way the world has been structured.

"The rules-based international order, which has underpinned world stability, and indeed our national prosperity for generations is faltering. It needs to be defended, the gravity of these times should be apparent to all."

Caroline Xavier, chief of the Communications Security Establishment, Canada's cyber spy agency, told MPs that there is a growing concern about cybercrime, but state actors are also threatening the country.

"The state-sponsored

cyber programs of China, North Korea, Iran and Russia pose the greatest strategic threat to Canada. Foreign cyber threat activities including Russian-backed actors are attempting to target Canadian critical infrastructure operators," she said.

CSC said Russian-backed actors are trying to sow doubts and division about the war in Ukraine.

"CSC noted that he had continued to observe numerous Russian-backed disinformation campaigns online aimed at supporting Russia's brutal and unjustifiable invasion of Ukraine."

Eyre said this rising level of concern is happening just as the military faces a recruitment challenge. In other parliamentary testi-

“RUSSIA AND CHINA ARE NOT JUST LOOKING AT REGIME SURVIVAL BUT REGIME EXPANSION.”

our numbers and that's why we're putting as a priority effort the reconstitution of our military."

Eyre said they're worried not just about getting new people into the Forces, but also ensuring current soldiers stay. To that end he said they're focusing on issues around pay, but also ensuring CAF members have the right tools to do the job and opportunities for training.

"The pandemic has not been kind to the Canadian Armed Forces, our numbers have shrunk. And so we're embarking on a priority effort to get our numbers back up recruiting retention, so that we can provide that readiness."

A separate Commons committee has been studying whether the Forces is being used too often for disaster relief in Canada. The number of deployments for floods, fires and hurricanes has all risen in recent years.

Eyre said the Armed Forces have to be available for disasters, but they are being used too often today.

"With increasing frequency and intensity of these natural disasters, we're called upon more and more to respond, not necessarily as a force of last resort, but in some cases the force of first choice."

Eyre declined to say whether the government should be spending more on defence, but said they unquestionably are facing a new environment and Canada is not ready for it.

"I am concerned that as the threats to the world's security situation increase, the threats at home increase, our readiness is going down," he said. "The military that we have today is not the military that we need for the threats that are occurring in the future."

National Post
rtumilty@postmedia.com



TONY CALDWELL

must rise to the challenge posed by Russia and China, Gen.

Generals push Canada to shift to 'war footing'

BOOST FOR UKRAINE

DAVID PUGLIESE

Canada's military leaders are pushing for industry and the federal government to go to a "wartime footing" so more weapons can be supplied to Ukraine.

National Defence and top firms that produce arms, such as Lockheed Martin, are financing a conference in Ottawa on Oct. 25 titled "Putting Canadian Defence Procurement on a War Footing."

Top defence officials, including Chief of the Defence Staff Gen. Wayne Eyre and assistant deputy Minister for procurement Troy Crosby, will be key speakers at the event.

Eyre has been pushing for companies to switch to what he is calling a "war footing" so weapons production can be ramped up both for Ukraine and to replenish Canadian military stocks.

Eyre has argued that the war between Ukraine and Russia should be the catalyst.

"I think what this has shown, though, is we need to increase the capacity of defence industry," Eyre told CBC in May. "Given the deteriorating world situation, we need the defence industry to go into a wartime footing and increase their production lines to be able to support the requirements that are out there, whether it's ammunition, artillery, rockets ... you name it. There's a huge demand out there."

NATO nations, including Canada, have donated billions of dollars in weapons and equipment to Ukraine.

But Alan Williams, a former assistant deputy Minister for procurement at National Defence, said industry wouldn't ramp up produc-

tion unless it received contracts from the federal government.

Defence firms, he noted, don't build equipment out of the goodness of their hearts. "They are in it for profit," Williams said. "They have shareholders to satisfy. They want contracts ... Their attitude is, 'If you want equipment, then sign those contracts.'"

That view was echoed by defence firm representatives at a major conference and trade show last week in Washington. "I think the first thing we need is orders," Thomas Laliberty, a senior official with Raytheon Missiles and Defence, told the conference.

"We need insight into the demand, and, once we understand the insight into the demand and we understand the willingness of the government to pay for additional capacity, that then helps us go plan for what it will take for us to actually increase production."

Some defence industry officials have privately noted Eyre doesn't seem to understand industry can't ramp up its production without government contracts in hand since building sophisticated weaponry requires upfront purchasing of supplies and material.

But Eyre's office responded that "the CDS has both a sense of what is required to replenish the drawdown of CAF stocks, as well

as our ability to continue supporting Ukraine with the items they are most in need of. The CDS advice was provided in the context of what those items are and the need for industry to surge for the level of support to Ukraine to remain sustainable."

Williams pointed out there was already a process to purchase equipment on an urgent basis. That process was used during the Afghan war to acquire howitzers and drones as well as armoured vehicles. But using that process is a decision that has to be made by elected officials, not generals or bureaucrats, he noted. "Before one acts, one has to get the marching orders from government," Williams said.

Using such a process will also require Canadian procurement staff to be rigorous in their oversight to ensure firms don't rip off taxpayers, Williams added.

The Liberal government has not made any announcement that firms need to go onto a war footing or that military procurement process would use the urgent acquisition process.

National Defence has provided \$50,000 to finance the Oct. 25 conference hosted by Canadian Global Affairs Institute, a think-tank closely aligned with the Canadian Forces and the defence industry. Other sponsors include Lockheed Martin, General Dynamics, Irving Shipbuilding, Davie Shipyard; ATCO Frontec, BAE Systems Canada and General Atomics.

Defence insiders have said they hope the conference will highlight the need for the Liberal government to buy more weapons for both Ukraine and the Canadian military.

Williams said there were limits on what Canadian firms could do. Canada does produce ammunition and small arms as well as armoured vehicles and drone cameras, but many other weapons are purchased from U.S. and European firms.

For instance, in May, Canada announced it was buying 20,000 artillery rounds to donate to Ukraine, but those had to come from the U.S.

Canada has provided Ukraine with armoured vehicles, small arms, anti-tank systems and drone cameras. The latest donation involves winter uniforms.



Gen. Wayne Eyre

Canada will challenge 'disruptive' China, Joly says

Will also deepen ties with India, Japan, S. Korea

ANJA KARADEGLIJA

Canada will challenge China "when we ought to" and cooperate "when we must," Foreign Affairs Minister Mélanie Joly said in a speech previewing the Liberal government's long-awaited Indo-Pacific strategy.

"China is an increasingly disruptive, global power," which is looking to make the world "more permissive for interests and values that increasingly depart from ours," Joly told the Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy at the University of Toronto on Wednesday.

Joly said Canada would also add a "new national economic security lens" on foreign investment from China, as she warned Canadian businesses to be "clear eyed" about doing business with the country.

"The decisions you take as business people are your own. As Canada's top diplomat, my job is to tell you that there are geopolitical risks linked to doing business with the country."

At the same time, Canada will look to deepen links with India, which Joly noted is the world's largest democracy.

"As India becomes the most populous country in the world, its leadership and influence will only continue to grow, both in the region and globally. With it, so will the opportunity for Canada," she said.

Canada will also "deepen our existing friendships" with countries like Japan and South Korea, Joly said, promising to release the full Indo-Pacific strategy by early December.

Joly said Canada would "increase our military presence and enhance our defence and security relationships" with allies in the Indo-Pacific region.

Canada will also invest in boosting understanding of how China "thinks, operates and plans," and how it exerts influence outside of its borders.

"Key embassies across our network will have dedicated experts to deepen our understanding of the challenges that China opposes, and the opportunities that it pursues," Joly said.

The move appears to be partially in response to news reports this week that suggested CSIS recently alerted the Prime Minister's Office to an extensive campaign of interference by Beijing in Canadian politics.

Citing unnamed sources, Global News said CSIS alleged that Chinese diplomats had supported 11 candidates in the 2019 federal election, funnelling \$250,000 in funding at one point through a sympathetic member of the Ontario legislature.

Until now, the Liberal government has avoided harsh language about Beijing even as China arbitrarily detained Canadian nationals Michael Spavor and Michael Kovrig for nearly three years.

Joly's speech was essentially a "sneak preview" of the strategy to come, said Fen Hampson, a professor of international affairs at Carleton University.

He said Joly is "certainly intimating that we're going to be following the U.S. lead when it comes to China."

The Business Council of Canada said in a news release the policy outlined by Joly "combines a realistic assessment of risks and regional tensions with a candid recognition Canada must continue to work with China on global priorities such as emissions reductions."

The Canadian Chamber of Commerce welcomed the move to increase engagement in the region, including India. "This region holds great potential for Canada, including for Canadian businesses, and we look forward to working with the government in both diversifying and strengthening our economic activities in the Indo-Pacific," president and CEO Perrin Beatty said in a press release.

India, Japan and South Korea are the "powerhouses of Asia," noted Hampson.

He said Joly's speech includes "an alignment with the big economic powers that are also democracies in the region."

Kim Nossal, a professor emeritus of international relations at Queen's University, said Joly's statements about how Canada hasn't always been seen as a reliable partner in the region were an "important signal" to send. "Clearly that is something she wants to change," Nossal noted.

Joly also said Canada needs to assert itself as a Pacific nation, which is why it's aiming to deepen partnerships in the northern Pacific, "definitely with Japan and Korea," she added.

The northern Pacific is in Canada's "neighbourhood," she said. "Clearly there's a lot of business to do" with both countries, "but also we're like minded, and it just makes sense to work together."

"Trust me, I'll be going to this part of the world a lot."

The Arctic will also be a part of the strategy, Joly indicated. "As climate change redraws maritime routes and major countries look to the North, we will continue to uphold our Arctic sovereignty and work with Arctic partners to ensure it is a region where peace and the rule of law prevail," she said.

National Post



GREG SOUTHAM / POSTMEDIA NEWS

Thousands of positions in Canada's military are vacant due to a lack of applicants and recruiters are struggling to determine what's behind the trend. The military is getting about half the number of applicants it needs per month to meet the goal of adding 5,900 members this year.

Vet 'devastated' by offer of help to kill himself

ARMED FORCES

Case worker made unsolicited offer, panel told

BRYAN PASSIFIUME

OTTAWA • Explosive testimony Monday before the Commons standing committee on veterans affairs by a retired member of the Canadian Armed Forces suggests a combat veteran was offered MAID twice — despite repeatedly dismissing medically assisted suicide — and was told that Veterans Affairs had carried out the service for others.

The committee also heard that the Veterans Affairs caseworker suggested medical assistance in dying was a better option than “blowing your brains out.”

“He was told in his original phone call where he was offered MAID, ‘we can do it for you, because we’ve done it before, and one veteran that we’ve done this for, after we completed MAID, after we killed him, we now have supports in place for his wife and two children,’” Mark Meincke told the committee.

“That is what he told me transpired.”

Meincke is a retired Princess Patricia’s Canadian Light Infantry member who served as a UN Peacekeeper in Croatia during Operation Harmony — and suffered from undiagnosed PTSD for over two decades after witnessing the horrors of genocide.

He’s also the host of Operation Tango Romeo, a podcast helping other veterans recover from service-induced trauma and PTSD.

framework. Member of Parliament and committee member Luc Desilets described Meincke’s account as “shocking,” and asked if the veteran told him what prompted Veterans Affairs Canada to suggest suicide as an option.

“He asked that same question to the VAC manager, and she also said, ‘I don’t know,’” Meincke said.

“He was asking for a completely separate service and supports for neurological injuries, and she said, ‘oh by the way, if you have suicidal thoughts,’ and this is what he told me she said: ‘It’s better than blowing your brains out against the wall.’”

Committee member Blake Richards said the committee was assured by Veterans Affairs Canada officials last week that recordings of the call didn’t exist, who also implied to the committee that only one veteran had been offered MAID.

“We were told the conversation was only surrounding benefits that were available to the veteran, and that medical assistance in dying wasn’t pushed or proposed,” Richards said.

“You’ve indicated to us that it was pushed, and pushed numerous times despite insistence from the veteran that they weren’t interested.”

Deputy Veterans Affairs minister Paul Ledwell told the committee last week that an internal investigation revealed no other veterans had been offered MAID, and that they weren’t aware of any recordings of the particular phone call.

Meincke said he doesn’t believe recordings of the call don’t exist, and said notes about the case could easily be found through the veteran’s MyVAC account.

Meincke said the veteran described the VAC case-



PARLVU.PARL.GC.CA

Veteran Mark Meincke, who hosts a podcast for veterans coping with trauma, appears at a standing committee Monday on behalf of a veteran who was offered MAID.

“That is what he told me transpired.”

Meincke is a retired Princess Patricia’s Canadian Light Infantry member who served as a UN Peacekeeper in Croatia during Operation Harmony — and suffered from undiagnosed PTSD for over two decades after witnessing the horrors of genocide.

He’s also the host of Operation Tango Romeo, a podcast helping other veterans recover from service-induced trauma and PTSD.

The veteran, who has not gone public with his allegations or his identity, told Meincke he was in a good place mentally before making the phone call.

“He expressed to me that things were sunshine and roses prior to this phone call, he was feeling good about life,” Meincke testified.

“Post phone call, he left the country, because he was devastated by that call.”

First reported by Global News in August, the incident created shock waves across Canada’s veteran and mental health community, and fed concerns over the dangerously slippery slope of Canada’s legal MAID

Deputy Veterans Affairs minister Paul Ledwell told the committee last week that an internal investigation revealed no other veterans had been offered MAID, and that they weren’t aware of any recordings of the particular phone call.

Meincke said he doesn’t believe recordings of the call don’t exist, and said notes about the case could easily be found through the veteran’s MyVAC account.

Meincke said the veteran described the VAC caseworker to him as a “bad used-car salesman,” adding the veteran kept questioning how it was legal for assisted suicide to even be offered to Canadian combat vets — much less repeatedly to somebody who insisted he wasn’t interested in taking his own life.

“That was not reflective of the testimony that I heard on Wednesday,” Meincke said.

“And that makes me angry.”

Resources are available for those in crisis through the Canada Suicide Prevention Service at 1-833-456-4566 or by texting 45645.

National Post

bpassifume@postmedia.com

8/18/22

Sick veteran offered assisted death instead of saving treatment

that Canada's laws leave considerable room for interpretation by activist doctors," they wrote in a statement at the time.

Another British Columbian, Alan Nichols, was euthanized only days after his family brought him to a Chilliwack hospital to recover from a psychiatric episode. Despite Nichols' history of severe mental illness and suicidal tendencies, he was approved for death by health authorities after only four days in the hospital's psychiatric ward.

In 2016, Canada joined only a handful of jurisdictions in the world to legalize doctor-assisted suicide, which is officially referred to as medical assistance in dying (MAID). Although, at the time, MAID was strictly limited to Canadians with terminal illnesses whose death was "reasonably foreseeable."

After a Quebec Superior Court ruling struck down the "reasonably foreseeable" provision as unconstitutional, the government of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau responded by green-lighting a series of reforms that has effectively given Canada the most permissive euthanasia laws in the world. Starting in March, euthanasia will even become available to patients whose only underlying condition is a mental illness.

Euthanasia is rapidly becoming one of Canada's leading causes of death. In 2021, Canada saw 10,064 cases of euthanasia, representing 3.3 per cent of all national deaths. What's more, that figure represented a 32.4 per cent increase in assisted deaths as compared to the previous year.

"All provinces continue to experience a steady year over year growth," reported Health Canada.

And amid an unprecedented Canadian health-care shortage leading to increasing instances of emergency rooms shuttered by understaffing, the federal government's own internal calculations have identified euthanasia as a potential cost saving.

In 2020, a report by the Parliamentary Budget Office estimated that each MAID death represented approximately \$17,000 in savings on "end of life costs."

Patient dealing with traumatic brain injuries

TRISTIN HOPPER

Another case has emerged of a chronically ill Canadian patient being offered euthanasia instead of treatment.

This week, Global News interviewed a Canadian Forces veteran suffering from PTSD who was casually offered the option of euthanasia during a conversation with an employee of Veterans Affairs Canada.

The veteran, who was not named, was trying to seek help in recovering from traumatic brain injuries suffered as a result of his military service, which included combat deployments.

Unprompted, a Veterans Affairs Canada service agent then mentioned that the veteran could opt for a medically assisted death. Family members of the veteran contacted by Global News said that he felt betrayed and disgusted by the offer, and that the encounter derailed what had previously been a gradual and positive shift toward recovery.

"VAC deeply regrets what transpired," read a statement issued to Global News by Veterans Affairs Canada.

The story comes only days after a widely circulated Associated Press feature broke revelations about a patient in London, Ont., who was similarly given an unprompted offer of euthanasia.

Roger Foley suffers from a degenerative brain disorder and claimed he was being offered euthanasia so regularly

that he began secretly recording hospital staff. In one recording obtained by AP, a hospital ethicist tells Foley his care is costing the hospital "north of \$1,500 a day" and asks if he has "an interest in assisted dying."

The two incidents add to a growing list of controversial cases in which Canadians with chronic conditions were offered death in lieu of treatment.

B.C. woman Donna Duncan was approved for a medically assisted death last year after years of declining mental health exacerbated

(VETERANS AFFAIRS) DEEPLY REGRETS WHAT TRANSPIRED.

by a chronic inability to access psychiatric care.

Duncan's death in an Abbotsford hospital so blindsided her family that they reported the case to the Abbotsford Police. "While we have been advocates of death by Medical Assistance in situations where there is a terminal diagnosis or death is imminent, we had no idea



Roger Foley

National Post

The City of London Is Hiding the World's Stolen Money

Nicholas Shaxson

IN 1969, two years after the Cayman Islands, a British territory, passed its first law to allow secretive offshore trusts, an official government report struck an ominous note. A tide of glossy propositions from private developers, it warned, was washing through the islands. Cayman was fast becoming a state captured by shady finance.

Those were the pungent beginnings of a modern system brought to light by the Pandora Papers, an enormous data leak coordinated by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists. The papers exposed a smorgasbord of secretive and questionable financial dealings by more than 330 politicians and public officials from over 90 countries and territories — and over 130 billionaires from Russia, the United States and elsewhere. On display was a dizzying array of chicanery and wealth hoarding, often by the very people who should crack down on it.

The revelations, published on Oct. 3, are global in scope. But if there is one country at the system's heart, it is Britain. Taken together with its partly controlled territories overseas, Britain is instrumental in the worldwide concealment of cash and assets. It is, as a member of the ruling Con-

servative Party said last week, “the money laundering capital of the world.” And the City of London, its gilded financial center, is at the system's core.

For Britain, whose bloated financial sector exacerbates widespread economic problems, that's bad enough. For the world, at the mercy of an economic system rigged for the rich, it's even worse.

The offshore ecosystem is, by design, fiendishly complicated. Many intricate and opaque instruments — including offshore trusts, tax loopholes and shell companies — plus banking secrecy and negligent regulation shroud the wealthy's assets in murky legal mists. Central to it all are tax havens, such as the Cook Islands, British Virgin Islands and Jersey (one of the Channel Islands), which can operate like smugglers' coves. The wealthy and nefarious take their money there to protect it, but also to escape from rules, laws and taxes they don't like.

The wealth held in tax havens is staggering: Estimates range from \$6 trillion to \$36 trillion. And some tax havens are closer to home than many would imagine. The United States, with its shady Delaware shell companies and South Dakota trusts, has long been a big part of the secrecy system. A cluster of European countries, including Luxembourg, Ireland and Switzerland, offer another menu of escape routes. Asia, of course, has

Hong Kong and Singapore.

But the British network is surely the biggest. The Tax Justice Network's Financial Secrecy Index, a ranking of tax havens, shows that Britain and its “spider's web” of offshore satellites would rank first. Over two-thirds of the 956 companies that the Pandora Papers link to public officials were set up in the British Virgin Islands.

Central to the process is the City of London. Through international stock market listings, currency trading, bond issuance

The Pandora Papers leak exposes Britain's role in money laundering.

and more, the City handles perfectly respectable financial activity from around the world. But it is also the main nerve center of the darker global offshore system that hides and guards the world's stolen wealth.

Once the finance-pumping heart of the British Empire, the City has refashioned itself as a crucial conduit for international capital of all sorts. The key moment came when, amid decolonization, the Bank of England let the country play host to the

new Eurodollar market. This was an almost unregulated and highly profitable offshore space, separate from the British economy, where foreign banks, mostly American, could do things they could not at home.

In the 1970s, this fast-growing market began to meld with Britain's tax havens, and others, into a seamless global network. The British havens have since acted as collecting vessels for diverse financial activity from around the globe, often passing the legal, accounting and banking work to companies in the City.

The two have caused untold damage. The tax revenue lost is eye-watering: Corporations use tax havens to escape paying an estimated \$245 billion to \$600 billion a year. (A new global deal for a 15 percent minimum corporate tax rate will curb those losses.) Individuals stash vast sums, too. But tax is only part of the story. The global game of deceit, played for decades by the wealthy and their functionaries in the City, has eroded the rule of law — and stripped away citizens' trust in the system.

After the global financial crash in 2008, which exposed the extravagant excesses of the financial system, there were some efforts at reform. The “London loophole,” as the chairman of a U.S. regulatory agency, Gary Gensler, called it, was reined in. But now, as memories of crisis

fade and Brexit begins to bite, the government wants to revive the City's darker arts. A key guidance document it published in July clearly signaled a return to more permissive times. “Competitiveness” and “competitive,” code words for low taxes, weak regulation and lax enforcement, appear over 15 times.

Britain's deference to shifty money is self-defeating. Its overly “competitive” financial center is a curse whose consequences are legion: regional inequality, waning productivity, stalled investment, asset-price inflation and political corruption. After years of austerity, and amid food and fuel shortages, Britain can ill afford an oversize City.

But it's the world that suffers the most. For shady businesspeople and long-serving political leaders, the offshore ecosystem provides impunity, cloaking capital and shielding wealth. Unaccountable and often untraceable, the system ensures that prosperity remains the preserve of the few. To overturn inequality and injustice, exposed so starkly by the pandemic, we must take on the havens — and the vested interests in London that protect them. □

NICHOLAS SHAXSON is the author of “*Treasure Islands*,” a book about tax havens, and “*The Finance Curse*,” about oversize global finance.