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Mr. Stephen Fuhr

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• (1535)

[English]

The Chair (Mr. Stephen Fuhr (Kelowna—Lake Country, Lib.)): I would like to welcome everybody to the defence committee today to talk about Canada and its relationship with NATO.

I'd like to welcome our witnesses. In person, we have Robert Baines, president and chief executive officer of the NATO Association of Canada. We have Alexander Moens, chair of the political science department at Simon Fraser University, via VTC, with some people in the background. Someone who hasn't been fed in via VTC yet, but we may see as we progress, is Robert Huebert. When he shows up, I'll bring him into the conversation, but right now he is lost in cyberspace.

Having said all that, welcome to everybody.

I'm going to give the floor to Mr. Baines for his opening remarks.

Mr. Robert Baines (President and Chief Executive Officer, NATO Association of Canada): Thank you very much.

Good afternoon, Mr. Chair and members. It is an absolute pleasure to be here to address the Standing Committee on National Defence, specifically on Canada's involvement in NATO. This is what I deal with on a day-to-day basis and it is something I am very concerned with.

The NATO Association of Canada is a charitable organization. It is non-partisan, an NGO. It was founded in 1966 to explain to Canadians the value of security and Canada's role as a member of NATO.

In order to achieve this goal, the NATO association hosts about 20 events every year. We are national. Our events are in Toronto, Ottawa, Vancouver, Calgary, and all over the country. We put on a slew of events—student events, receptions, dinners, conferences, and round tables—but the real impact we have is through social media. This is something I'm going to be talking a bit about today.

We publish about 1,200 short journalistic articles. They reach through all the different social media platforms: Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram. We try to have a short, punchy article that will get average Canadians interested in what is going on internationally. Of course, once they are, it is much easier for them to see the value of NATO and international security. On the content side, what we produce creates approximately 180,000 social media impressions every month.

Finally, we also have a high school program, which is extremely valuable, bringing in students and making sure they have a model NATO kit and other information to support teachers to design lessons for Canadian classrooms.

We are part of a NATO-wide NGO network called the Atlantic Treaty Association. Essentially, NATO, very early in its life, decided that in order to ensure that the citizens of NATO countries understand the alliance, each member should create an NGO that would be arm's-length and grassroots, through civil society, to support NATO on the ground in each of those countries. Because of the importance of sovereignty, this was very much a hands-off affair. It's a hugely valuable network, active in both NATO member and partner countries, and it has very often been the first step in creating greater networks through NATO and non-NATO members. I must also say that the secretary general of the Atlantic Treaty Association is a Canadian and a former intern from the NATO Association of Canada.

Our most prominent sister organization, which you will have heard of, is the Atlantic Council of the United States, based in Washington, D.C. We are all in this together. Every single NATO nation has something like the NATO Association of Canada.

I began leading the organization seven months ago. I'm a baby in this, but I have been involved in the organization for seven years, so I have good information on the issues facing the alliance. I have reviewed the presentations by other witnesses and note that we have a lot of experts here. A lot of them have been involved with the NATO association before. Rather than retreading some of the ground you've already heard about, especially Ukraine and some of the other issues regarding cyber, I want to discuss the communication of ideas generally.

Canada—and I include the NATO Association of Canada in this—must do more to make sure that NATO, one of the greatest ideas in the history of international peace and security, is understood by the citizens of this country. I have a very simple message, because I want you to hear it. The next generation of Canadians do not know what NATO is. They have no idea. We've seen this in many different situations.

Then again, why would they? Perhaps it's a flash of recollection from a single civics class, grade 10 or grade 12, or a line referring to NATO in a war movie they may have seen. Perhaps if they pick up a newspaper they might see NATO; otherwise, they will be taking a look at their own newsfeeds, and unless they are already interested in it, they are not going to see it. We have a serious problem here, where the next generation is not going to know anything about NATO.

Throughout your previous committee meetings, you have been presented with many reasons why NATO is important. It's one of the greatest and most successful ideas in the long history of international relations. NATO has helped to provide one of the longest periods of general global peace in the history of the world. It sounds trite but it's just true, and nobody really gives it its due in this case.

It was formed, of course, in a flurry of activity resulting from the masterful resolutions of Churchill and Roosevelt in the Atlantic Charter, a well from which NATO, the United Nations, the World Bank, the Marshall plan, and so many other international initiatives sprung. These ideas were founded upon the refrain, "Never again". Never again will we, the Allied powers, let the world slip into global conflict and total war. It's just not acceptable. The latticework of organizations and institutions that was designed and has succeeded in creating an international rules-based order is now backed up by mutual agreements and the willingness to enforce them. That is quite new in the history of the world.

Under this order, the globe has witnessed greater prosperity and development than ever in the history of our species. The condition has allowed for the lifting up of billions of people out of poverty. It has allowed for the spread of medicine, and it has given opportunity to billions. Just look at the UN development goals. It's no small achievement.

The connection between security, peace, and prosperity is clear. Unfortunately, as I mentioned earlier, this is not seen by the next generation. We've forgotten to tell the millennials how all of this came to be. The past three generations of Canadians had direct or second-hand experience of total war. They had either lived through the horrors and hardships, or heard of them from their parents or grandparents.

Now, through the natural course of time, the rising generation born in Canada has no knowledge of war, not through personal experience, nor through their parents or grandparents who lived it. This is a blessed state of affairs, obviously—I think everybody will agree—but it's one which also holds great danger.

The danger lies in not appreciating the Herculean efforts undertaken to provide global peace and security, and then, obviously, taking it for granted. It's a vicious cycle. For many reasons we have failed to teach this narrative to the next generation. Members of my team based in Toronto recently went out to the University of Toronto to do some sampling of what U of T students knew about NATO. We've done this a few times. Within one or two points, it has always been that one out of 25 people knows what NATO is. Very often, "North American", "Treaty", or "Trade" is all that they get through. To actually identify what NATO is...it's unbelievable. This is U of T as well, not the general population.

This in itself would be bad enough, but since 2014, and the annexation of Crimea by Russia, the destabilization of the value of our institutions has been unrelenting. We've been under attack constantly. There have been two major fronts here, of course. All of our allies in eastern Europe have had a lot of social media barrages thrown at them, and on the home front, that has created an amazing amount of questioning about the value of our institutions and what they're for.

Questioning is good. It's a good thing. First principles should always be addressed and should be gone back to again and again, but the answers to the questions are being supplied by those who do not believe in our international rules-based order. The answers to these questions are being given by Russia Today, and bot factories in Russia.

A recent report from the NATO centre of excellence stated that 70% of Russian-language activity about NATO is automated—it was about 26% for the English language—i.e. they are bots. This just came out in September. We're now finding out that Russia backed \$1 billion of Facebook funding, and \$191 million on Twitter. They're successfully creating wedges in the rules-based international community by spending billions of dollars on the narrative counter to ours. Ideas of course are powerful. Narrative cannot be an afterthought. We have to be unafraid of telling our story of what has created NATO and our international institutions.

It's not only an alliance of boots on the ground. It's an alliance of ideas and ideals. It's unique. It has the commitment to back those ideals with action. You can reach 2% of GDP defence spending. You can purchase all the fabulous kit that DND wants. You're still going to fail if you can't convince your own people of why you're doing what you're doing.

• (1540)

Minister Freeland's speech was an excellent articulation of our ideals. I think everybody agrees on that. It was an admirable narrative, highlighting Canada's role in the creation of the current global framework of peace and security, a story that Canadians would want to be a part of, but nobody's going to spend 35 minutes watching the speech on YouTube. It has been watched 3,282 times since June. A Canadian heritage minute, posted a week later in June, has 164,000 views.

This is the kind of initiative I'm suggesting. We need to make the message tighter and push it through social media. In short, we have to make sure the new generation sees themselves as part of the story, because the only way they're going to see the story is if it is bite-sized, in a moment, as they're scrolling through their social media feed.

NATO's public diplomacy division conducted research polls this spring, just before the NATO leaders meeting in May. A Pew research poll that was undertaken found that NATO support was certainly increasing in almost every country, which is terrific.

However, it also found that people under 30, women, and those without a university education were most ignorant of NATO. As a result, NATO public diplomacy is conducting a new campaign to get to the Canadian public as one of five countries where it's rolling the campaign out to experiment on, and it has enlisted the aid of the NATO Association of Canada, Global Affairs, and the Department of National Defence. The campaign is called #WeAreNATO. Please write it down. Do take a look at it on social media if you haven't already.

It's a platform that this government must seize. It's not, strictly speaking, NATO's job to convince the citizens of its members that membership is good. We have to show our own value. We are, after all, sovereign nations. That's why I want to ensure that you're all aware of this campaign as it begins to roll out, and that Canada makes it its own.

The NATO Association of Canada is well placed to make the most of the campaign because we can be most creative. Without the hindrances necessary in large departments and ministries, we can be a force multiplier, and we are. We intend to utilize memes and short videos, non-traditional ways of getting to millennials, because that's how to do it and the status quo is not acceptable.

Let me be clear. All of the alliance members have been bad at this. NATO makes this point quite well. Canada was chosen to take part in this because we are relatively good, but compared with Russia, we're missing in action. We're not even on the field of battle, and we must be.

Our ideals deserve it, our history demands it, and the memories of those who came before us to create the greatest stretch of peace, prosperity, and security in the history of the world require it. It's a story that needs to be told, and it's a story that millennials need to know they're a part of.

Thanks very much.

• (1545)

The Chair: Thank you for that.

Mr. Moens from SFU, sir, you have the floor.

Dr. Alexander Moens (Chair, Political Science Department, Simon Fraser University, As an Individual): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee.

Some of the things I hope to say very much follow up on what Robert Baines has just said, but at a specific new university initiative level. I also want to use this time to speak about the great question before you of Canada's involvement in NATO. It's not only a millennial problem. It's more widespread across different generations.

I would like to state my four conclusions up front, then elaborate a little on them. The first is that NATO is still Canada's premier international military security vehicle to support our values and interests abroad. Secondly, Canada's operational participation in NATO is of high value to the functioning of NATO, but our influence goes down quickly if we only talk. The third point I want to make is that Canada must be a key player in defending the approaches and access to the Arctic and securing the North Atlantic. We will not be able to do this if we continue our lack of military

reinvestment. In the fourth place, in a strategic contest of more and more Sino-Russian co-operation, the power gap between the U.S. and the NATO allies endangers our political security interests. It feeds American unilateralism and blurs democratic solidarity.

As you know, Mr. Chairman and members, Canada's third defence task is contributing to a stable and more peaceful world, but it does not highlight that Canada is a signatory to a collective defence organization. As a result, Canadians underestimate NATO.

In the late 1940s, the Soviet Union used its veto in the UN Security Council to immobilize any response to Soviet-backed communist governments conquering nearly all of eastern Europe. As a result, NATO was formed. In the last 65 years, NATO has been the most important international instrument for democratic peace. NATO means that liberal democracies have the political and military capacity, the military training, the standardization, the command and control framework, and thus the readiness to co-operate in military operations.

A lot of people were surprised that NATO continued after the fall of the Soviet Union, but why would it not? Why are people surprised? The price of military capacity continues to go up. The liberal democracies of NATO end up working together one way or another, so why would they re-nationalize their defence and throw away years of shared practice?

Moreover, there's more to NATO than national interests and military power. NATO's preamble states, "The Parties to this Treaty... are determined to safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilization of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law." Are the eastern European states to blame for wanting to join this military co-operation and the prosperity of the EU? Would eastern Europeans really have democratic independence if they were left on their own?

The Russian government is not threatened by Bulgarian, Romanian, or Latvian NATO membership. What threatens Moscow is the spreading practice of liberal democracy. If democratic rights were all around Russia, more Russian people would ask, "Why not us?"

It was NATO that successfully addressed the conflicts in the Balkans. Canada took a major role then, and we must now invest more political, diplomatic, and economic resources in helping the Balkan area—all of it, in addition to Slovenia, Croatia, and Montenegro—to come into this community of democratic states.

Is NATO relevant today?

As Canadians, I want to underline that we depend for our freedom to trade, our freedom to resist dictatorship, and our freedom in global communications on the political-military co-operation of liberal democracies. NATO is just one part of that. We do not depend on the United Nations to the same extent, and we do not want to depend merely on the United States. It is crucial for Canada to have a strong international coalition of democracies with military capability.

• (1550)

The alternative is to only depend on our own bilateral relations with the United States. Now, we love our American friends, most of them, but we want our independence. That means we need a military that matters, not a niche force, not a humanitarian force.

Soon Canada will have 40 million people with a \$2 trillion GDP. We are a very big country geographically. We have to step up. We need to build ties with our democratic friends in Asia who link us into a global framework as well.

I want to remind everyone that NATO never was a regional arrangement under the United Nations per article 53. However, after 1990, NATO undertook its crisis resolution tasks, except for one, only under direct UNSC mandate, showing that it is a power multiplier for the UN if and when the United Nations Security Council functions. In the current security environment, the UN Security Council will not function to advance democratic peace. It will not. Therefore, NATO's importance is up.

Canada needs to be a significant participant in securing the water and air approaches and access to the Arctic area as well as in securing the North Atlantic area. We need to be able to have follow-on capacity for what we do in NATO, including supplying our troops deployed in NATO. The navy and air investments for these two tasks are very demanding, and our current plans are so delayed or modest as to be nearly discredited.

I want to come back to the earlier point about a new initiative. I have started a NATO field school and simulation program at my university, and it is now inviting students from all over Canada. We engage with the Canadian Armed Forces in Canada, then we go to Brussels to the NATO headquarters at SHAPE, then we go to Latvia to watch our battle group, and then we end up with a one-week long NMDX simulation at the Naval Defense College in Rome.

It is a program whereby we're bringing Canadian university students back to this alliance, and that's where the connection is that Mr. Baines was talking about. The students see and experience the quality of our military and our diplomatic personnel, but they also see that there is really no plan B for the lack of resources and capacity.

Of all the public policy files that students learn about in our country in Canadian universities, for example, infrastructure building, food safety, environmental standards, and health care, there is nothing so dysfunctional and mind-bogglingly disheartening as reinvesting in Canadian defence capacity.

The stark reality appears to be that, short of war, Canada does not have a domestic, political bureaucratic course available to it to implement its strategic needs. Of course, the real problem is political will, and, therefore, I suggest Parliament must take a greater role in

finding a multi-partisan, multi-year, financially locked-in approach to securing military priorities.

My final point is about inequality inside the alliance and the danger it poses to Canadian foreign policy. The inequality in capacity in NATO is often disguised and exploited by many allies, but a NATO undermined from within leaves Canada with poor international security options. For example, it may lead to a spokes-and-hub set of alliances between the United States and east European allies. Other nations inside NATO may be tempted to make their own bilateral political deals with Moscow, or in anticipation of the growing role of China, they may do so with Beijing.

The relative power of the United States is down, and with it, the influence and strength of liberal democracies, unless these latter help to compensate for this power. The forces against democratic legitimacy now have two superpowers behind them: China and Russia. It is NATO's task to signal to Russia, by means of capable and credible operations, that the independence and territory of the democracies are not negotiable, and that democratic development in Europe will continue.

I think millennials need to be educated through an entirely new initiative in our university whereby NATO is not only known in the sense that they can spell it out, and they can tell you what it does, but whereby students have an opportunity to experience what it is to be involved in a multilateral organization that does political-military affairs.

Thank you very much.

• (1555)

The Chair: Thank you very much, Professor Moens. It looks like you brought some millennials with you today, so welcome to the conversation. Perhaps there will be an opportunity for you to wade into the conversation a little later on.

We have Professor Huebert who has emerged from cyberspace—I see you in the corner of the screen—from Calgary.

Welcome aboard. You have the floor.

Dr. Robert Huebert (Fellow, Canadian Global Affairs Institute, As an Individual): Thank you very much. It's indeed a pleasure to again be invited to testify before this very important committee that's examining a very important issue.

I would also like to say thanks to both Alex and Robert for their initiative, because our students at the University of Calgary have participated at one point or another in various such undertakings, and we very much appreciate it.

I have three major comments I wish to share with the committee that ultimately lead to the core issue of my talk, which of a course is Canada, NATO, and pax Atlantic. The fact that we have been going through one of the most successful, peaceful eras that we've seen, along with countries of like-minded institutions, from an international perspective, is a thought that is both mind-boggling in its understanding and also mind-boggling in the fact that so few people seem to fully appreciate and understand it.

The three points that I want to address within my time are, first and foremost, why NATO is of central importance to Canadian security, not sort of a byline, not sort of a third issue on our defence policy, but why it is probably one of the central elements of our defence and international security.

The second point I wish to address is the evolving nature of NATO in the Arctic, and why this is going to become one of the most critical elements that Canada is going to be facing very soon, rather than in the medium or long term.

The third point I wish to address and conclude on is the very significant dangers we now face because of changes within Russian policy and why in fact that is probably a much more dangerous international system than I think is properly appreciated.

Let's begin with what I see as the major importance of NATO.

First and foremost, of course, NATO acts as a deterrent. We see the manner in which collective security has been very successfully utilized, and I think to a very large degree our understanding of the ultimate successful outcome and completion of the Cold War in fact was of course at the very heart of the success of NATO.

There's a second element that has also been completely missed by many Canadians. NATO has also been a major success story in the Canadian efforts to ensure that when the alliance was being formed it was also creating a new security community. We often forget that it was Canadian insistence and Canadian diplomats and policy leaders who insisted that NATO not only be formed as a military alliance against the rising threat of the Soviet Union, but it also be created as a means to ensure that only liberal democracies were welcomed into its auspices. I think this is a thought that is often forgotten; many of these states, which had been former enemies for so long, now in fact have their institutions protected by the fact that they are members of NATO.

I think the fact that we're seeing in many parts of southeastern Europe former belligerents, former locations where Canadian troops had to be deployed, now reforming their entire governance system along with their defensive system is a major testament to how successful NATO is about resolving the various conflicts that had existed within Europe.

The third element, and this is part of our own narrative, which I think is widely misunderstood in Canada, is Canada's role within NATO has also been a major part of ensuring that our allies, through NATO, actually keep good relations. We've used the peacekeeping mythology that is one of the core narratives of Canadian international relations to say that it's all about peacekeeping, but if we're being honest with ourselves when we look back to our really significant efforts in peacekeeping—the Suez Crisis, Cyprus—often these are much more. They have a humanitarian element, but they are much more about keeping the alliance members functioning on a co-operative basis. In many ways it's much more about keeping the Americans, French, and British together, keeping the Turks and the Greeks together, and focused on the common challenge and adversary.

Let me turn to NATO in the Arctic.

One of the things that has often made many observers of NATO in the Arctic quite curious is the way that Canada, for the longest time, has had opposition to any involvement or expansion of NATO duties into the Arctic region.

• (1600)

Often these reasons are not understood. However, whatever they have happened to be in the past, one of the clear indications that has emerged from the current Liberal defence policy—recently announced—is that we are now ready to start talking to NATO about precisely the point that Alex touched upon in his third point. That is, of course, the protection of the Arctic approaches and the North Atlantic approaches. I think this is entirely something that we need to be looking at very seriously.

Canada and Norway should be working as closely as possible to ensure that this somewhat open flank is in fact closed. Canada, for its core security interests, has to be a major participant. It can't simply be, "Yes, Norway, whatever you do, we think is great." Canada must be actively working within the NATO alliance to ensure, first and foremost, that this increasingly dangerous theatre is covered and that Canada is at the forefront.

Within the context of NATO in the Arctic, though, Canadian officials also have to be aware that we are heading into an increasingly complex, and I would argue, dangerous environment. Open literature and open discussions within Sweden and Finland suggest that both countries are seriously looking at whether they should continue their association with NATO through the partnership for peace program, or seek full membership. We should be prepared, should one or both countries opt for joining NATO, to accept these countries as quickly as possible, but we need to recognize that this will have obvious push-back from the Russians, and it will have obvious impacts on some of our other multilateral efforts in regard to the Arctic.

I seriously doubt that should either country decide to try to pursue membership within NATO that the current success rate within the Arctic Council can be sustained. This may be an unfortunate casualty. I would very much regret seeing the many successes scaled back, but we need to be preparing for this eventuality.

The third and final point, which I want to conclude on, is the great danger that we now face with a very changing international system. At the heart is the classic security dilemma. The Russians, even prior to the arrival of Putin, have always said a major security requirement was their fear of the expansion of NATO. However, by the same token, the reason NATO has expanded, as Alex very eloquently brought forward, is that the former Warsaw Pact members, the other former parts of the Soviet Union, and the southern European states, all see joining NATO as intrinsic to their own security.

We can see and understand as academics, of course, the security dilemma. As partners in the pursuit of international peace and security, from a liberal institutional perspective, we can also understand why so many countries, such as Poland, Bulgaria, and others, saw in the long term that NATO was their security. Where the true security dilemma has arisen, and now faces Canada, is that starting in 2008, Russia was able to make the policy decision that it was going to begin to use military force to stop NATO expansion. Remember that in the Russian intervention in Georgia in 2008, to a very large degree, we can time it to the Bush administration's suggestion that perhaps Georgia should join NATO. Remember that in 2014, prior to the Crimean intervention, one of the few public statements that Putin made was that the Crimea would never be a NATO military base.

I think we've moved into a very dangerous environment, in which following 2008, the Russians have discovered that they will in fact use military force as a push-back for those countries that wish to join NATO. To make this even more complicated, we have the election of an American president who, quite frankly, does not seem to understand the long-term impacts and benefits that NATO has provided for pax Atlantic. The fact that there are suggestions that there might be obvious Russian intervention in terms of the election and that we have seen him musing whether or not NATO should subsume are very troubling, when we take into consideration what the Russians have started doing vis-à-vis NATO.

In conclusion, I would argue that we are indeed in a very dangerous environment. The Russian change of policy in 2008 to meet NATO expansion with military force, combined with the fact that we have an American president who does not seem to fully understand and appreciate the true linchpin that NATO has been for our peace and security, is very troubling.

• (1605)

I think Canadians need to understand that we must maintain this security, and NATO is at the heart of it.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Professor Huebert.

The first formal seven-minute question will go to Mark Gerretsen.

You have the floor.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

I have a question for each witness, so I apologize in advance if I cut someone off. I'm just trying to get my questions out there.

First, Mr. Moens, I have a question for you about the 2% GDP that the Americans and NATO seem to be focusing on in terms of national spending on military. It seems to miss a couple of things. For starters, Canada always shows up. We might not be spending the most, but we always show up when NATO is looking for allies.

Another example is that of the four brigades currently deployed by NATO, one is being led by Canada, and it's the brigade that has the most other nations that are signing up with it. When we were in Latvia to talk about NATO, one of the responses we got from an official was that when Canada shows up, other countries show up. It

seems as though the 2% thing doesn't really include those other values that Canada might be contributing. Can you comment on that and on whether you think the formula that NATO is using to come to the 2% is adequate?

Dr. Alexander Moens: I think we first have to recognize the two extremes, the two easiest positions in this debate. On the one hand there is NATO, which is trying to set the benchmark, so it has decided to say 2% of GDP. On the other hand there is the Canadian government, which has often said, "Look at all we are contributing. Look at all we can do."

We know that our actual defence expenditure is about 1%. I would say that if you look at the current large equipment we have in the Canadian military—ships and planes—and if you study the procurement history of those, those procurements, those investments, constituted at the time about 1.6% or 1.7% of GDP. You have to think about that amount of equipment.

• (1610)

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: I was trying to focus more on whether you think there is value in those other contributions that Canada is making.

Dr. Alexander Moens: There is great value in there, but all of us, including those in NATO, know that every year we stretch our equipment just a little bit further because we are so imaginative and flexible in how we use it, but what cannot go on eventually doesn't go on.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Thank you.

Mr. Baines, I think your discussion was extremely timely given that Remembrance Day is only a few days away. I'm reminded of an example from when I had just become a city councillor and in the district that I represented those from the military base in Kingston were performing an exercise, and it had not been properly discussed through the media. A number of constituents called me, irate, saying, "How dare they do this? I don't want my kids to be exposed to these guns and to see these men running around in military gear."

I don't know if the problem is just millennials. As Mr. Moens said, I think the problem might be bigger than that. It's this idea—and I think you hit the nail on the head—that my generation and a few generations before haven't seen war first-hand as my father did as a child in Holland. Are you sure that what you're suggesting as a strategy is going to accomplish what you're looking for? Is the problem not bigger than that?

Mr. Robert Baines: Sure it is, of course. I think there are many different ways to solve the problem, but the fundamental point that Canadians have to understand is how foundational NATO and international security are to our own peace and prosperity. It's a multi-planned battlefield here. The reserves have always tried to show the Canadian Forces in urban centres. It's one of their main goals now.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Is there value in there being more to the story about NATO, such as, for example, preserving our economic interests? Should we be focusing on more than just why it's great for Canada to be part of NATO?

Mr. Robert Baines: The economic aspect obviously is in our favour, and article 2, of course, has always been about building the economic security that we allow in terms of being able to traverse the seas, of goods and peoples, and of freedom of movement. That is a huge boon for Canada in itself.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Thank you.

Mr. Huebert, you've said that NATO is central to our defence. Would you say that NATO is a requirement for our sovereignty? To say that it's central for our defence implies that it is what our sovereignty rests on. Would you agree with that?

Dr. Robert Huebert: You need the sovereignty to have the defence, because you have to recognize what sovereignty ultimately is—the right to govern yourself. You want to do that for a purpose—

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: I guess what I'm getting at is that countries like... I wouldn't say that NATO is essential for U.S. sovereignty. I wouldn't say that for Russia and I wouldn't say that for the U.K, but I'm curious to know if you think that having NATO is central to our ability to remain a sovereign nation.

Dr. Robert Huebert: It remains a sovereign nation in that the truest threats to the existence of the Canadian state are being deterred by NATO and by Canadian participation. By extension, our sovereignty is defended by being a member of NATO.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Okay.

Am I out of time?

The Chair: You have 30 seconds for a question and a response.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: I would like to go further, but it will take longer than that. Thank you.

The Chair: Mr. Bezan.

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC) : Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I want to thank Professor Moens, Professor Huebert, and Mr. Baines for joining us. It's great to see all three of you again. Your testimony was very interesting.

The same as Mr. Gerretsen, I have one question for each of you that I want to concentrate on.

First of all, Professor Huebert, you talked about Arctic specialization, something that Canada and Norway could do and something that I've heard from other people over the years as well. With our new capabilities with Arctic offshore patrol vessels and what we have as a training centre up at Resolute Bay, are you envisioning that those types of facilities and kit provide us with that opportunity to work with countries like Norway?

Also, what about the other NATO members that have Arctic capabilities, such as the United States and Denmark?

•(1615)

Dr. Robert Huebert: Absolutely, and in terms of the AOPS, of course, they're being designed more for a constabulary role, which is something that I confess I've been critical of, but for the next

surface combatant, one of the major things they will need to do is to have an anti-submarine capability, an area capability. Also, we can take certain lessons from both the Norwegians and the Danes about possibly giving some form of Arctic capability to these vessels, so that in fact we can push them further north.

In terms of other co-operation with the Danes, the Icelanders, and the Norwegians—and, I would suspect, the Swedes and the Finns in the long term—we can also talk about improved co-operation in aerospace. Keep in mind that the Norwegians yesterday took ownership of their first three F-35s, so once again, it illustrates part of the dilemma we have in Canada in being so far behind in our decision. Nevertheless, with them, we have in fact participated already in the defence of Iceland's aerospace when the Americans pulled out.

You have the operational side, of course, but I also think that NATO has announced that it is going to look at the possibility of a new command for the northern region. In terms of the strategic perspective, it's critical that Canada be at the front with the type of knowledge we have, so that if NATO makes a decision to go in that direction, that is Canadian leadership. I suspect the Norwegians will be there in spades. It's critical that we are there so that as a new policy is designed we're the ones who are sharing our expertise in terms of how to do it.

Mr. James Bezan: When we're talking about expertise, we talk about the centres of excellence that NATO has set up all over Europe. Should we be proposing that we have a centre of excellence on Arctic security here in Canada?

Dr. Robert Huebert: It seems to follow on what both the Conservatives and Liberals have said in terms of the importance of maintaining our leadership, and with the individuals we have, absolutely I would agree with that idea.

Mr. James Bezan: Thank you.

Professor Moens, you also specialize in the Asian growth and the security issues in that area. How does the northern Atlantic alliance fit with the new security threats coming from Asia, particularly from North Korea at this point in time, but also in terms of China's interest in the trading routes through the Northwest Passage?

Dr. Alexander Moens: As I mentioned in my comments, NATO is one representation of liberal democracies working together. We have liberal democracies in Asia with whom we need to strengthen our ties. I'm not saying that a kind of NATO has to be formed in the Asia-Pacific. It's a different domain. But I would suggest that the hub-and-spoke system that is typical of Asia is not as advantageous to the common effort as the NATO structure is in the North Atlantic.

Canada can play a role because it is a Pacific power. Canada can play a role in having those two regions talk to each other and can facilitate co-operation, but I want to underline that ultimately more robust Canadian blue water capability, submarine capability, and air capability are absolutely necessary conditions to be taken seriously in Asia. They are increasingly necessary conditions in Europe, but they certainly are also in Asia. The Pacific is a much larger piece of water.

Mr. James Bezan: Thank you.

I probably have time for one more question.

The Chair: You have two and a half minutes.

Mr. James Bezan: I'm doing pretty well. I appreciate everybody being so concise.

I applaud all three of you for the work that you do in educating our next generation on the importance of defence and security issues and the importance of NATO. I was very interested in the survey that you've done at U of T a number of years in a row now, and the need for us to expand the horizons of so many young Canadians regarding the importance of our defence relationships.

What would you recommend that we, as parliamentarians, do to increase people's understanding of the importance of NATO?

• (1620)

Mr. Robert Baines: There are obviously many different ways that can happen, but we've always wanted a centralized message about why Canada's involvement in NATO is good. Essentially in the messages and themes that the #WeAreNATO campaign already has, it's all there. It explains everything. All we have to do is utilize it. It can be the Department of National Defence. It can be the Department of Foreign Affairs. It can be independent MPPs, MPs, or city councillors. Anybody who is in the democratic process should be able to understand these issues and utilize them. It just has to be a directive.

In the same way that a lot of other social media campaigns are supported by the government, I think this one really has to be adopted. I know it hasn't really been launched here yet, but I want to make sure that this does get ingrained in your minds, because this is a very important way. Short of, say, making sure that every Canadian, when they turn 18, has to pass a citizenship test or something like that—which is not a terrible idea—how else are they going to find this out? It has to be through bombardment on many different levels, I think.

Mr. James Bezan: Nine million Canadians already use Facebook as their number one source of news. It's not the TV. It's not print media. It's not the news clipping service. It's Facebook. As well, Twitter has really been reinvented because of the obsession of President Trump.

Other than just retweeting and reposting stuff that's coming from NATO itself, what should we as parliamentarians be doing?

Mr. Robert Baines: Sorry, I wasn't explaining myself well enough. I would be happy to give you all a copy of this campaign. It's about creating your own message within the framework. Because we have so many local stories, and we have so much history, including on the Pearsonian foundations of NATO, all sorts of different ideas can be subsumed within this message, even on a local level, even with reserve regiments in your own communities, such as remembering the fallen or celebrating the different economic links we have. All of this can be put into this campaign, which is why I think it's really quite good.

Mr. James Bezan: Thank you.

The Chair: Mr. Garrison.

Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP): Thanks very much, Mr. Chair.

I want to echo the call from Mr. Baines to actually take his presentation and make it part of the records of the committee.

If you could formally give that to us, I think that would be very good as part of our deliberations and our future actions.

I'm going to go in a bit of a different direction on the role of Canada in NATO. We heard about the importance that Canada placed on making the alliance more than just a military alliance, on making it a security community. Canada played another role in the early days of NATO, and that was in leading the efforts toward nuclear disarmament. This issue hit me quite forcefully when our committee was in Brussels on the day NATO issued its statement on the nuclear prohibition treaty.

I guess I'm really asking—and I'll ask all three of you—whether there is a stronger role for Canada to play in returning NATO to its own stated goals of trying to create the conditions for the reduction and eventual elimination of nuclear weapons.

Maybe I'll start with Mr. Huebert.

Dr. Robert Huebert: Absolutely. This is something my students always have difficulty accepting, but even with the end of the Cold War, up to 2017, nuclear deterrence still remains the core security policy of the eight nuclear powers. Having said that, if you're going try to talk about disarmament, the problem you face when you have the countries increasingly coming at odds with each other is that you're going to be in a circumstance where all the eight nuclear states are simply going to refuse considerations of disarmament.

I think on one level it's something that we ultimately have to be able to figure out. How we are going to rid ourselves of the scourge of nuclear weapons? On the other hand, given the current situation that we're facing with the changing environment with the Russians, I think the effort is better spent trying to develop ways to ensure that the Russians understand our commitment to the ongoing issue of deterrence.

I'm not trying to skirt the issue, but I don't think this is the time that we would see any effort to push for disarmament along the NATO lines, as its not going to take any traction.

• (1625)

Mr. Randall Garrison: Could you respond, Professor Moens?

Dr. Alexander Moens: Thank you for the questions.

I would say that conditions for nuclear disarmament are very poor. As you know, there are concerns of the Russians walking away from the INF accord of 1987. The North Korea situation is very visible. It's a very big concern.

After the very successful round of negotiations and the result of New START, the political relationship between the United States and Russia has deteriorated a great deal.

I would be highly concerned to put Canadian political capital in the middle of that very difficult environment and I would say we are far better off to wait for the right conditions or to specialize in an area where we can make a genuine difference.

Mr. Randall Garrison: Last, we have Mr. Baines.

Mr. Robert Baines: I would echo what both Robert and Alex said, but just from the official NATO standpoint in their 2010 strategic concept, the last one that was created, it was mentioned explicitly that, as long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO shall be a nuclear alliance. They have continued to mention that.

Of course, since it is a consensus organization, there's always a lot of opportunity for discussion, but as they have already created consensus on that issue, I think it would be rather challenging to get around it at this point.

Mr. Randall Garrison: That same statement says that NATO, by consensus, agrees to work to create the conditions for reduction and elimination of nuclear weapons, so it's holding those two ideas at the same time.

Mr. Robert Baines: It's a snake eating its own tail.

Mr. Randall Garrison: A snake eating its own tail, but....

I guess my concern would be that, if you're trying to convince younger Canadians that NATO is important, then Canada has to be seen to be playing an important role. I think that's true with the troops in Latvia certainly, but if we were playing a big role in trying to return the discussion to the second part of all those statements, it might be more inspirational for young Canadians to understand that NATO could play such a positive role.

Certainly, there was a lot of enthusiasm for people individually signing onto the Prohibition Treaty and a big social media campaign. I guess my concern is that we sometimes state it as an anti-NATO campaign. I would like to see maybe more ground where it's not a contradiction, but I've heard what all three of you had to say today. It's not very encouraging, given that we're probably at the greatest danger for the use of nuclear weapons we've ever been at.

If I have just—

The Chair: You have about a minute and a half.

Mr. Randall Garrison: I'm going to ask this of both Professors Huebert and Moens. What do you think the impact of the creation of this category of tactical nuclear weapons, the idea that battlefield commanders might be making decisions about the use of nuclear weapons, is on the traditional policy of nuclear deterrence?

Dr. Robert Huebert: There is your assumption within that question. Look at what both the Russians and the Americans immediately got rid of as relationships got better in 1988. The classification that the Russians first got rid of were their oldest nuclear strategic weapons, of course, but the next category was their tactical weapons.

The Americans in terms of START I, START II, and START III that Alex already alluded to was, of course, focused on the older weapon systems, but also on the tactical weapons. I think people understand that those are the slippery slopes that are so dangerous.

Mr. Randall Garrison: Professor Moens.

Dr. Alexander Moens: I would like to emphasize that NATO, after the end of the Soviet Union, and in its early agreements with Russia, kept an enormously light conventional footprint in eastern Europe. It's only after the crisis in Ukraine that the concept of moving conventional forces into eastern Europe has taken place. I am hoping, and I think many in NATO are hoping, that if the Russians realize there is a significant serious [*Technical difficulty—Editor*] that new conditions for negotiations can emerge.

The Chair: Thank you for that.

Ms. Alleslev.

Ms. Leona Alleslev (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, Lib.): First and foremost, I'd like to thank all the witnesses. I think you've done an exceptional job of defining what this current situation is, and therefore, what we need to do about it, not only from a military perspective but from a broader perspective.

I also wonder if, for the record, we could ask for the tabling of some of the reports that were highlighted—the “NATO and Asia-Pacific” study that Dr. Moens has prepared, “Canadian Defence Review Depicts Russia as an Arctic Adversary”, and “Why a Defence Review is Necessary and Why it will be Easy to Get it Wrong in the Arctic”—so that we can use those if we so require in our deliberations.

When we talk about commitment to defence spending, I'm wondering if that also ties to education. Essentially we need the political will, but political will is in fact a reflection of the society that it represents. If we, in society, don't believe or understand that something is at risk, then we obviously don't feel that we need to change our current approach.

What I've heard today is that we are facing unprecedented instability globally, and that it jeopardizes not only our defence and security but our economic security as well. Therefore, educating the public to support a commitment to a change in approach is probably what we're going to need the most.

How do we communicate that NATO matters to Canada, and that Canada matters to NATO? Who is responsible for making that communication? How do we effectively execute on that mission, and, of course, where's the money?

I'd like to ask each one of you how we communicate. What are those key 10-second sound-bite communication mechanisms? Everyone here has had 10 minutes. We don't have that 10 minutes, so we have to boil it down to that essence. Who's responsible, and how do we execute on it? Where's the money?

•(1630)

Mr. Robert Baines: First of all, on how we communicate and what exactly we are communicating, I do have a bit of a cheat sheet here. I can give you some of the main messages that NATO thinks we should know, and that all Canadians should know.

NATO members are committed to supporting and protecting each other. That is the main and simplest foundation of NATO. NATO members are stronger because of membership. NATO acts as a guarantor of security and safety for its members. NATO is effective because of the daily collaboration and interoperability of its members through a range of diplomatic and military means. NATO is addressing today's security challenges through diplomacy, consensus, and co-operation. NATO is addressing tomorrow's security challenges by investing, adapting, and innovating. Then, NATO is more than a military organization; it is political and diplomatic.

These are really key messages.

Ms. Leona Alleslev: Do we think that will resonate with the broader public?

I didn't mean it quite like that.

Mr. Robert Baines: I don't necessarily think it will, just stated baldly like that, but if they are whipped into narratives.... If you think of the box office hit right now, it's an Avengers movie. These are superheroes. These are people trying to make the world better.

I'm not sure if any of you saw the SickKids hospital campaign. It's the same thing, trying to make these kids look like they are superheroes and that they are changing the world.

We have an organization that's actually doing this. If we can be a little more creative about it—I'm not saying copy those, necessarily, but adding that aspect that this is something quite miraculous that we have right here—I think something as simple as using creativity to sell these ideas to make sure that Canadians understand them is the way to go.

Dr. Robert Huebert: I'd like to interject at this point, too. In my view, one of the most important impacts, or the educational basis, has to be a bipartisan or tripartisan understanding of the core security threats facing Canada. The education and leadership that our political elites provide direct the way a lot of Canadians get their understanding. We can talk about Facebook and all the rest, but consider these two things.

From a conservative perspective, remember when we had the four casualties in Afghanistan, and rather than hiding.... To a certain degree, there was a bipartisan agreement: if you died on peacekeeping, that was kept secret. The 176 or 177 Canadians who gave their lives on peacekeeping were never talked about. We never had ceremonies. When that was changed after the four individuals were killed in Afghanistan, look at how the Canadian public changed. When we hear Chrystia Freeland, Minister of Foreign Affairs talking about the Russian threat just before the defence policy comes forward, we see Canadians getting up and paying attention.

This is one thing a lot of us on the academic side get frustrated with. Ultimately we know you guys understand what the core threat is, and we know there is agreement, but because of our parliamentary

system, each of you always has to show how the other is either not getting it or is opposed. On the crucial, core issues, if we could hear tripartisan or at least bipartisan agreement saying this is a real problem and we actually want to put aside partisan disagreements, that would get Canadians' attention.

You can't do it on all things, obviously, but if you can highlight the importance that when in fact there are these existential threats—and I would argue we've been facing that since 2008—we can get agreement on it.... You guys agree on it. If we could get you coming forward and saying you agree on it, that would be very significant from an educational perspective.

•(1635)

Ms. Leona Alleslev: Mr. Moens.

Dr. Alexander Moens: What we are doing is building on what Robert Baines is doing, but it's difficult, on Facebook, to compete with the big brands. It's very important for Canadian students to have a real experience. We started a new method of training, called "engagement". These four young people behind me have met our Canadian ambassador to NATO, our national military rep. They've been briefed by eight officers at SHAPE and guided by three officers at the NATO Defense College on how to crisis manage between NATO, the UN, and NGOs. They have tasted it. They have learned it. They have experienced it. There is now a multiplier effect as they spread this message throughout Canada.

There are various strategies here, but the direct strategy of bringing young people, who will be the decision-makers 20 or 30 years from now, to actually experience this kind of international dynamic is what my mission and commitment is.

Ms. Leona Alleslev: Thank you very much. Perhaps the NATO Parliamentary Assembly in Halifax in November 2018 might be a good opportunity.

The Chair: We're going to go for a five-minute question round. Mr. Robillard, you have the floor.

[Translation]

Mr. Yves Robillard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'll be asking Mr. Huebert my questions in French.

Could you elaborate on NATO's role in the Arctic?

How is the situation in the Arctic likely to evolve, given the gradual militarization by Russia, in particular?

How will it affect international co-operation in the region?

[English]

Dr. Robert Huebert: I'm going to have to confess a bit of ignorance here, and it's something I'm quite ashamed of. I'm afraid your French went faster than I could understand, and the translation didn't come through, unfortunately. I didn't quite get the gist of your question. I'm very sorry, sir.

Mr. Yves Robillard: Can you tell us more about NATO's role in the context of the Arctic? How will the Arctic situation evolve, given its progressive militarization, notably by Russia? What will happen to international co-operation in the region?

Dr. Robert Huebert: The major issue is, first—and you've nailed it, sir—the situational awareness piece. I think there's been a growing recognition that we do not have the type of intelligence sharing for the high north that is ultimately needed in this context. We've seen, since 2007, the Russians resuming their long-range bomber controls in the region. Since 2008, their long-range submarines have returned to the region. In this context, we need to have better sharing for underwater surveillance capabilities and above-air surveillance capabilities.

The other part that needs to be addressed is, of course, when we had the Americans pull out of Iceland, we lost an entire capability of responding to the Russian extension of their bomber incursions. We've had to work closely with the Norwegians, the Danes, and unofficially, the Swedes and the Finns in this regard. It's at an operational level, and it's at a situational level, and it's combined with the fact that the Arctic is an environment that many of the other NATO nations don't fully appreciate just how difficult it is to operate in.

Let me end with this. The Russians have emerged as the regional hegemon in that region, and that is what we're responding to.

• (1640)

Mr. Yves Robillard: You published in 2016 an article entitled, “Why a Defence Review is Necessary and Why it will be Easy to Get it Wrong in the Arctic”. A year later, you published “Canadian Defence Review Depicts Russia as an Arctic Adversary”.

Can you tell us how our government's defence policy review has adapted to the changing context in the Arctic? What should Canada be doing in the near future on that topic?

Dr. Robert Huebert: Absolutely. Thank you, sir, for the very good question.

I would like to make it very clear, I do appreciate what the government came up with in terms of Arctic recognition. They recognized that Russia has moved away from a rules-based international system, but more specifically, we saw—I believe it was on page 79—where the report highlighted the fact that there are, in fact, states that are becoming increasingly dangerous in the Arctic region with ballistic and cruise missiles. Now, this is a direct reference to the Russians, because the only other country that has ballistic and cruise missiles are the Americans, so unless we were really referring to Trump at the time, it is the Russians we see as the threat.

What we are moving towards in this context is, of course, improving our surveillance. What the defence review makes very clear is that we absolutely have to improve our ability to know what is happening in the Arctic and the response capability, which means new fighter aircraft and an Arctic capability for both the AOPS and, I suspect, sort of a little bit more hidden, our next surface combatant.

Mr. Yves Robillard: Thank you.

The Chair: Given the very little time left for that round, I'm going to move on to the next question.

Randy Hoback.

Mr. Randy Hoback (Prince Albert, CPC): Thank you, Chair.

I want to thank all the witnesses here this afternoon.

You know, when I used to think about the Arctic, I used to think that, if there was anything happening there, it would be Canada-U.S., and just Canada and the U.S. defending the Arctic. I never thought of it in the NATO context, and what that would mean. I guess, maybe because I'm from Saskatchewan, part of the reason for that thought process is that I've never heard of NATO doing any exercises in the Arctic or any NATO involvement in northern Canada per se.

Does this feed into what you're saying, Mr. Baines, that we need to change and reshape how NATO should operate and function in the Arctic? Is that one example where we need to see some presence from NATO? It's not just Europe; it's northern Canada.

Mr. Robert Baines: I'm not as much of an expert as Mr. Huebert, but I do know that Operation Nanook has always had many international partners associated with it, certainly in the naval aspect.

Canada has been involved in almost every single NATO exercise that has ever taken place. The continual demonstration of interoperability is one of the jewels of NATO. The fact is that we have 29 nations speaking different languages, utilizing different measurement systems, very often dealing with traditionally different epaulets and symbols for their military who have all come together and can now logistically make things happen, move items from one side of the earth to another, and be able to work cohesively, like with ISAF, for instance, in Afghanistan. That has always been one of the real show horses of NATO, and being able to show that more in the Arctic would be tremendous.

Mr. Randy Hoback: It shows it in the Arctic, but it also puts a Canadian flavour to it.

Mr. Robert Baines: Quite.

Mr. Randy Hoback: Mr. Huebert, you talked about working in the north. In my former life, I used to work in the patch a bit, once in a while, and I know what it's like when it's -40°C, and you're trying to hook up a water line. There is that type of expertise and knowledge sharing with other NATO partners. The only real way to do that is to actually go and do it, so would you propose we do more of that type of training in the Arctic in Canada?

Dr. Robert Huebert: This is what I'm reading into the Liberal defence policy, because up until its announcement, Canada has always had an official policy that even when we invite NATO allies to have exercises with us in the Arctic, they are always under Canadian sovereign control. We never call it a NATO operation. I suspect that with the release of the defence policy, and what I see as a change in government policy, we probably will be seeing that.

You should be aware that NATO does do extensive Arctic operations. The Norwegians, starting in 2006, in response to what they saw in Russia, started Exercise Cold Response. Usually in the middle of February or March, they'll have up to 15,000 troops doing exercises in northern Norway. Canada has now started sending troops to participate in that, so we started doing it in that context, and as a good Saskatchewan boy and as a prairie boy, part of the reason why you never saw much of NATO in the Arctic is that so much of what was happening was underwater.

When we look at the Arctic Ocean, it was the second most dangerous frontier during the Cold War, and we know the French, the British, and the Americans worked on underwater co-operation schemes to respond to the Soviets. We now know that Canada co-operated completely with the Americans for underwater ice operations in our waters.

Just because we're not aware of it, and it gets to that whole educational piece, doesn't take away from the fact that this was a central front next to the western front for deterring the Russians.

• (1645)

Mr. Randy Hoback: That's unreal, interesting.

One of the new things that's emerging, of course, is cybersecurity and cyber-threats. There's a centre of excellence that NATO's put in place. I'll open the floor to all three of you, because all three of you can answer this.

Is this something where Canada really needs to play more of a major role? Can you give us a bit of an overview on how you view NATO's Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence? How should it be functioning with Canada, and how should we be interacting with that?

I'll start off with you, Mr. Baines, and work right down through the witnesses.

Mr. Robert Baines: My team, and I have 10 interns in my office every four months, is always looking at what's next. What could we do? Creating more of a cyber command integration in NATO is certainly something that is of great interest. It would probably be a nightmare to try to make happen, but NATO's always been good at that.

The report I have here is called "Robotrolling". It's by the NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence. This is the kind of report that can really move mountains as far as integration is concerned, because it gets everybody under the same flag, as it were, and reminds them how they can cohere together.

Mr. Randy Hoback: Mr. Moens.

The Chair: We're going to have to leave it there, and move on to the next questioner. I'm looking at the clock, but there will be more time, and Mr. Hoback will have another opportunity.

Mr. Spengemann.

Mr. Sven Spengemann (Mississauga—Lakeshore, Lib.): Thank you very much, and thank you all for being here.

I'd like to focus my questions on the presentation made by Mr. Baines. Thank you for the very provocative and stimulating framework you gave us.

We need to not take the conversation away from foreign policy elites; that's wrong. We need to broaden the conversation significantly beyond the ambit of foreign policy elites, and by foreign policy and international relations elites, I mean no disrespect. It's not entitlement. It's simply the choice of working in that field. It's a very esoteric and specialized field. If we want to get Canadians engaged, the Canadians you described in your survey as walking on the streets of Toronto, as part of a broader university community, we need to come at it differently.

I'd like to suggest to you that NATO, in part, has a branding problem. Would you have any information on what would have happened, or maybe it did happen, had you asked folks the same questions about the UN?

The United Nations owns the diversity and inclusion agenda. It owns the economic development agenda, the peacekeeping agenda, and also the human rights agenda. People are familiar with the UN, because it's in the household increasingly. It's dealing with refugees, economic displacement, and climate-induced displacement. We need to look at NATO in terms of relevance and brand.

The other worrying phenomenon now, in the decline of U.S. moral and value leadership inside the United Nations, and the ascent of Russia and China, we're really moving into very different turf, even in UN circles. You started your presentation, if I heard you right, in terms of looking at the shared values that NATO allies represent.

Could you speak a bit more about that? How do we drill down? How do we engage millennials on the value of democracy, democratization, good governance, and representative, transparent, and inclusive government? Is that something that NATO should do more of, and if so, how do we coordinate our work with what's already being done in UN circles?

Mr. Robert Baines: That's an outstanding question because this is the very foundation of the NATO treaty.

I'm not sure if you've all had a chance to actually read it. It's two pages, double-sided.

The preamble and the first article are all about establishing NATO under the aegis of the United Nations. It's supposed to be working hand in glove. It's supposed to be making sure that whenever hostilities are started and NATO is able to end those hostilities, NATO hands the situation back to the United Nations Security Council to ensure that the situation is resolved peacefully.

I think that mentioning that coupling, that theoretical framework for NATO, is something that has been missed. They've always, or almost always, been seen in opposition—certainly in the situation in Yugoslavia in the nineties when NATO went in without UN agreement, without a resolution. It was a huge problem, a crisis of legitimacy. NATO has learned since then. Certainly in Libya it bent over backwards to make sure it had legitimacy from those people on the ground. Despite the fact that the outcome wasn't very good in the end, it still made sure that it had legitimacy and that it was working within the UN framework. That, I think, is something that can be used as an advantage.

• (1650)

Mr. Sven Spengemann: Is it your sense that it should be...? Or maybe already there are the beginnings of a business line within NATO that looks at democratization, that looks at questions like the democratic control of armed forces, civilian-military relationships in a post-conflict or peacekeeping context.

Mr. Robert Baines: I'm sure you've heard about NATO's new interest in projected security. That is what a lot of our operations, as far as training police forces and militaries are concerned, are really under. It's a rubric. The idea is that without nations that are on NATO's borders that are strong and healthy, it's going to be more difficult for us in the future.

In the same way, article 2 has always tried to shore up good governance: the ideas of a good justice system, of making sure that there's a media worthy of the name, and that there are a lot of different supports for government institutions that have always led to stability.

Mr. Sven Spengemann: My final question is on representation of gender in NATO. What's your current assessment of the extent to which allies are engaged in the question of bringing not only women into the armed forces of their respective states, making them part of the structure of NATO, but also participants of minority gender identity and expression?

Mr. Robert Baines: They've made it, certainly, a priority. They now have an ambassadorial representative at NATO for women in security. United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 is a very big topic at NATO at the moment. They are trying to push... One of their three constituencies that they're trying to get a message out to is women, generally.

Canada has been at the forefront of this. On Wednesday, you're going to hear from Stefanie von Hlatky, who is an absolute expert on this. She has actually gone to NATO headquarters. She was there in December. She is trying to bring the Canadian Forces' experience with this to NATO, which is another advantage of interoperability. It's the sharing of how we've experimented, what's worked, and what hasn't. I'm sure you'll get a lot more from her on Wednesday.

Mr. Sven Spengemann: Thanks very much.

I think that's my time, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Yes, that is your time.

I'm going to move over to Mr. Yurdiga.

Mr. David Yurdiga (Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'd like to thank the witnesses for sharing with us today.

Over the past number of years, we have witnessed an ever-increasing number of terror attacks, including a number on Canadian soil. The NATO response was the action plan, which has been characterized as a symbol of unity—nothing more, just a symbol of unity. How can NATO step up its fight against terrorism in a meaningful way over and above the action plan?

I'll go to Mr. Baines first.

Mr. Robert Baines: The NATO Association of Canada just had an event that looked at the responses to terrorism that are possible through NATO. It is an extremely important issue. With regard to our friends to the south, Mr. Trump has specifically highlighted this as something NATO should be considering as an existential threat to all democracies and to NATO itself. It's a challenging thing for NATO to take on. Most of the experts I have spoken to, and who have been part of the NATO Association, consider terrorism and management of terrorism to be a much more local jurisdiction, and that this is very often the best way it can be counteracted.

If we're talking about intelligence sharing, that's a horse of a different colour. NATO has always been good at that, despite the several different layers of intelligence networks within NATO.

I think that's where the real two situations of terrorism are shown in NATO. One is intelligence, which NATO should be trying to make sure runs much more smoothly through the alliance. The other is actual deterrents, whether deradicalization or counterterrorism, which are usually much more usefully dealt with at the local level.

• (1655)

Mr. David Yurdiga: Mr. Moens, do you have a comment on this?

Dr. Alexander Moens: NATO's strength is in counterterrorist operations, if they are appropriate. Look, for example, at the operation that the French are leading in Mali.

If NATO has a capacity to create consensus around a military operation in the context of countering terrorist threats, then it is a better vehicle than an ad hoc coalition. Therefore, the capacity for Canada to be flexible and involved in such operations, and to translate that into a NATO discussion, would be good for our own particular interests, but it would also make us a valued partner in executing what the Americans have in mind vis-à-vis using NATO in the counterterrorist realm.

Mr. David Yurdiga: Thank you.

Mr. Huebert, do you have a comment?

Dr. Robert Huebert: Yes, I do.

The first thing, of course—I'll just echo—is the intelligence sharing. In other words, we are not going to hear about what they are really doing well in terms of giving the briefing.

What has proven to be one of the more challenging issues for NATO is dealing with one of the most dangerous types of terrorism, and that is state-sponsored. It's bad enough with the lone wolves, who are indeed a unique problem unto themselves. They almost drape themselves as terrorists, when in fact there are other probable causal factors. However, when it is state-sponsored terrorism—as we saw clearly with al Qaeda and the link to the Taliban—then, of course, NATO's responsibility comes in, first of all, acting as a deterrent to that type of state support, and also actually going in and removing the threat.

Remember, Canada's involvement in Afghanistan was a response to an attack on a NATO ally, so when we went into Afghanistan in November 2001, it was part of NATO. Now, that's something we haven't managed well. It's an educational issue and a difficult one, but it's probably something that NATO is going to have to deal with in the longer term—how to deter the states that sponsor it and how to respond when we catch them full-blooded with it.

Mr. David Yurdiga: Thank you.

How much time do I have left?

The Chair: You have about 50 seconds.

Mr. David Yurdiga: It will have to be a quick one.

Mr. Baines, many of our NATO members have decided to purchase F-35s. How important is it that Canada have something that's compatible with the F-35? Obviously, when we are working together we want something that will mesh quite easily.

Can I have your opinion on that, please?

Mr. Robert Baines: Interoperability is an essential hallmark of NATO. I've already mentioned this. The air communication systems that I understand the F-35 is kitted with are quite unique and do require some very special technology to make sure they can communicate. If you are going to be working on an objective and you need to have two different air fleets working together, it would be very complex, from what I understand, for them to work together if not everybody has an F-35. That was one of the reasons that the fighter was created jointly.

That isn't to say there isn't another technological answer to that communication.

The Chair: Mr. Fisher, go ahead.

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

Thank you, folks, for being here today.

I kind of hoped that we would hear from some of the folks behind Professor Moens. Perhaps one of your students may want to answer this. There was a comment you made that intrigued me. I've asked folks this question a lot of times, and a lot of times I've thought about it myself. I thought about Putin looking for a legacy and empire building. A lot of the aggression he has is because of that.

I've had some folks testifying here and some folks I've talked to on the side say that he was really hoping to have a buffer against NATO countries in the EU. When they were seeking NATO membership, he felt that they would lose that buffer.

You said something that I thought was really interesting. You said that it's not NATO that threatens Russia; it's liberal democracy. Putin has a fear that the Russians may think, "Well, why not us? Why can't we have a liberal democracy?" It's the first time I've heard that.

It's more a comment than a question. I don't know if you have something you want to add to that, but that struck me as kind of interesting.

Dr. Alexander Moens: I'll say something very briefly, and then I'll turn to one of my students.

This is the threat of the west for Russia. There is no geographical threat. There is no geographical interest in conquering Russia. There is no military threat. Nobody in NATO or in eastern Europe is interested in taking on Russia. The actual threat felt by the regime is to have a revolution, a democratic revolution, from within. Therefore, you see the regime arguing that NATO is a threat.

Think of being a Romanian or a Bulgarian or a Hungarian when the Russians say, "You are our buffer zone." How would we feel if we were a buffer? Why can't these countries have their own control?

● (1700)

Ms. Jazlyn Melnychuk (Student, Simon Fraser University, As an Individual): Hi. My name is Jazlyn Melnychuk, and I'm a political science student here at SFU.

Just on that note, it is a very interesting point, and I think an important point because if this weren't the case, then Russia wouldn't be spending so much effort on actually countering allies within...and the west in terms of its foundation and its values.

That brings me to a point about strategic communications, which actually hasn't been raised yet. I think that's a key aspect, especially with Canadian troops that are deployed in Latvia. There is a great effort on Russia's part to spread misinformation about what NATO allies are doing there, and in particular what Canada is doing there, what the forces are doing.

I actually see RT sources coming up on my Facebook feed, even though I have no mention of that whatsoever. You actually [*Technical difficulty—Editor*] the smallest aspects of Canadian students. It may start with something relatable, like a viral video, and then goes on to spreading misinformation once you've caught their attention.

I think it's important that Canada actually puts some focus on [*Technical difficulty—Editor*].

Mr. Darren Fisher: Thank you for that.

Professor Moens, you mentioned that after the fall of the U.S.S.R., NATO continued. But did they continue, or were they merely a shell of...? There was a shrinking of NATO spending by all the countries, for the most part, with the exception of maybe the Americans.

Did they really continue, or did they continue in name only?

Dr. Alexander Moens: They continued in their political dimension. They continued in their political will, but they ended up doing what NATO calls “crisis management” operations—problems outside of Europe, often, for which the United Nations was looking for capability and a group of experienced countries to work together.

That's how you have NATO coming alongside the United Nations to help resolve problems. For example, for NATO officers in Rome, this is what is trained in their major exercise: how to learn to work with the United Nations and to merge the objectives of the United Nations with the capabilities of the alliance.

Mr. Darren Fisher: Thank you very much.

Mr. Chair, if I have any time left, I'll pass it on to Ms. Alleslev.

The Chair: Ms. Alleslev can have a little more than 30 seconds.

Ms. Leona Alleslev: I just want to ask the students, when you tell your friends that you're studying NATO, what do they say? Do they go, “Oh, yeah, cool, we know exactly what that is”, or not so much?

Mr. Peter James Mckenzie Rautenbach (Student, Simon Fraser University, As an Individual): My name is Peter. I'm also a political science student here at SFU.

They tend to know what it is, but there's this sort of... It's not apathy with NATO, but there's just a general feeling, because there's this military and political aspect to it and Canada has sort of a peacekeeping mantra—which is a great thing to have—it just has this negative vibe. There's not even necessarily a real thought on it; it's just an initial rapprochement to the topic.

Now, everyone does think it's very cool that we have this great field school. It's a great thing to do and everyone wants to be part of it. But as far as NATO goes as an institution, there's just a push-back because of the military aspect.

Ms. Jazlyn Melnychuk: I can't overemphasize how important it is to have that direct contact. I have students coming to me actually advocating, “We're threatening Russia's buffer zone. That's their sphere of influence.” That would be shocking, coming from us, so I think it's really important to spread the message to students.

The Chair: Rachel Blaney, welcome.

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Thank you.

I thank you all for being here today.

Mr. Baines, perhaps I could have a bit of a conversation with you. I have the honour of representing 19 Wing Comox in my riding. I have had some very close-up experiences understanding the work done by the people I represent, but I find it a very big challenge to talk to a lot of everyday Canadians in my riding about the purpose of NATO and what our military is about. I find myself explaining things that I never thought I would have to explain.

The other thing I am happy to do is be part of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly. I find that I've learned a lot more that I get to come back and share with my constituents, but that's one constituency. From your perspective, is the NATO Parliamentary Assembly being used well? What else could we do to educate Canadians?

● (1705)

Mr. Robert Baines: I've had the pleasure in the past seven months of working very closely with the parliamentary association. Specifically, Leona Alleslev has been very supportive. I think there is a lot of room to make this into a very impressive and almost catalytic organization, especially with the 2018 Halifax summit or parliamentary meeting, as I guess it is.

If we're going to be bringing students from all over the alliance to this meeting in Halifax in November of 2018, it's a great opportunity for us to use the field school at SFU. I know that Calgary has a lot of interested students. Carleton University has some, and so does Université de Montréal. Getting all of these students to come here, perhaps with some kind of a remit to spread the message of the NATO Parliamentary Association and NATO generally, is how you utilize and leverage social media.

I'm not sure if any of you have been involved with the ice bucket challenge or anything like that. You create content, and you get the people who are involved with it to start creating messages for you. That's one of the things the NATO association really wants to do moving forward.

I'm hoping to—

Ms. Rachel Blaney: I appreciate bringing in students. I think that's really important, but when you spoke, you talked about the biggest gap being with women, young people under 30, and people who are not university educated. How are we going to use this tool to reach out to those communities?

Mr. Robert Baines: By getting them to understand that we can associate NATO with peace as opposed to bombs. Honestly, it's the simplest message. I've seen, all over Toronto in the past 20 years, posters every once in a while that say NATO equals bombs, which is the strangest thing, but I think it's a legacy of the Yugoslavia campaign. Advertising works. If you see something enough, it starts to sink in.

Really, all we have to do is turn it around to at least begin to have a conversation. “Oh, but I thought it wasn't. I thought it was all about war, and I thought it was about military.” If you can actually start explaining it in *The Three Musketeers* way, “One for all, all for one”—just those simple messages—that's how you're going to raise consciousness about security.

Ms. Rachel Blaney: Thank you.

The Chair: That was our formal round of questioning. We have time left, and very predictably, I will divide that time equally amongst the three parties. We will go for five-minute questions with the Liberals, Conservatives, and NDP.

I'm going to give the floor to Mr. Robillard.

You have the floor for the first question.

[Translation]

Mr. Yves Robillard: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'd like you, as president and chief executive officer of the NATO Association of Canada, to tell us more about NATO's role in the Middle East.

What is the extent of NATO's involvement in the region, including North Africa?

Also, what measures has NATO taken to support anti-terrorism efforts by the Global Coalition against Daesh? How does Canada's contribution stack up against that of our other NATO partners?

Lastly, how do we communicate that information to our youth?
[English]

Mr. Robert Baines: There are a couple of points here.

Number one, I am not an expert on the disposition of NATO forces. Perhaps one of the other professors might be able to give a hand on that as far as troop numbers are concerned, but the Middle East and north Africa are very important to NATO. They are part of what's called the Mediterranean dialogue. They have always had representation at the NATO table. This is one of the tremendous values of NATO. It sees itself as a hub for discussion and for collaboration, no matter if participants are official members of the club, as it were, or not. NATO has always kept the lines of communication open—since 1994, I believe—specifically for some of the Middle Eastern dialogue countries.

You heard me mention projected security a few moments ago. What NATO is really trying to do at this point is to take a look at the migration crisis that is occurring all around the Mediterranean. They are taking a look at some of the regimes that are having a lot of trouble maintaining simple civil society through their security services, and they are trying to see how they can make sure that these do not escalate.

This could be an absolute tragedy. It already has been in Syria, but it could be very easily a tragedy in many of the other Mediterranean dialogue countries. I think that is what NATO is trying to do there.

How we can communicate that is a much more tricky situation as far as what our impact is. We won't be able to tell for some time. We could be training hundreds and hundreds of security personnel such as police or emergency services in Iraq, for instance, and things can still go south. It's very difficult.

We can show how we are participating with, say, individual stories of what we're doing and the individuals we have helped, but in the long run, showing how that's going to impact global peace is always a much more challenging situation.

• (1710)

[Translation]

Mr. Yves Robillard: Thank you.

[English]

The Chair: There are still a couple of minutes left, Ms. Alleslev, if you wanted to jump in.

Ms. Leona Alleslev: I'd like to talk about money. I'd like to talk about how this communication mechanism can be funded. Do you currently receive funding for these education...? Talk to me about that.

Dr. Alexander Moens: I would like to say something about that. I believe it's very important for the Government of Canada to be involved, particularly the Department of National Defence to be involved, in creating opportunities for young Canadians, and diverse Canadians, to learn what this alliance means and its co-operation with United Nations. I think there is a fantastic opportunity for those branches within the Department of National Defence to assist in these programs so that Canadians have an opportunity, because the costs are enormous, to go through this learning experience.

Ms. Leona Alleslev: Dr. Huebert.

Dr. Robert Huebert: One of the programs that used to have tremendous impact in allowing us to reach students was called the security and defence forum. It was created under the Pierre Trudeau administration and subsequently supported on a bipartisan basis. This was a five-year program from DND, with relatively small amounts of money from their perspective, big from our perspective, and this allowed the 13 to 14 universities across Canada to maintain programs that were dealing with this. It was reduced to the point that it was effectively cut. The new Liberal policy says that it's going to be somehow reinstated.

I'd like to follow with what Alex was saying and make a plea saying it's relatively small amounts of money, but if monies can be provided, we are one of the sources that can actually engage and provide for that education.

The Chair: That's our time. I'm going to give the floor to Mr. Bezan.

Mr. James Bezan: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'm going to pass my time on down to Ms. Gallant.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC): These questions are for Dr. Huebert.

First of all, as you know, in Warsaw, the alliance agreed to include cyber in its domain and include that article 5 could be triggered by a cyber-attack. We know there are different types of cyber-attacks: ransomware, denial of service, and so on.

Assuming there is attribution, what would be the trigger point where we would actually become involved militarily in invoking article 5 in a cyber-attack?

Dr. Robert Huebert: You answered part of the answer I was going to give. It's at the attribution issue.

The big challenge that we're facing in terms of cyber-attacks is that they are becoming increasingly sophisticated in hiding their footprint. We see, once again, that this is part of the methodology that those who attack through cyber are utilizing. You use small attacks, you see how quickly people are able to respond, and then you basically improve upon it. It's attack, learn, attack, learn. The attribution issue is going to be the problem.

I think that the way we would see a triggering of article 5 would be if we could somehow catch an attribution where it's clearly coming from a peer competitor—and I'm talking about the Russians in this particular context—and when it's something done to threaten the actual security system, in other words, bringing down the defence systems or intelligence systems, say, of the nuclear weapons of the United States or Britain or other parts of NATO. It would have to be very high. It would have to be a direct security threat and we would have to be in the stage where we already know how to respond to that cyber-attack before we can respond, because that's the added problem we face.

• (1715)

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: As Russia and other countries change the focus of their attacks from kinetic to cyber and information warfare, what can the government do to educate Canadians on this use of misinformation, fake news, or whatever you wish to call it?

Dr. Robert Huebert: Trump, to a certain degree, is making it a little bit easier for us. It's the one positive thing I might say about the Trump administration, because people can see how information can simply be lied about or repeated, and I think there's a greater willingness within Canada since Trump's been elected to accept, in fact, that there is this danger of mis-shared information.

I think the government has to be very forthright when it catches these elements of these cyber-attacks. They must make sure that they are publicized at the highest level, so that when we start catching, as Alex and Robert referred to, the robot attacks in terms of some of the op-eds that appear in *The Globe and Mail* or the RT or whatever, there's the clear indication that, yes, we're catching the attacks and we are making it clear that there are, in fact, foreign powers that are bringing it forward in that context.

Be prepared. They're going to lie and push-back as soon as we catch them and we need to be ready for the counterpunch.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: We do have our centres of excellence on this hybrid warfare, but how can the alliance function together to better protect the countries, especially those bordering Russia right now? How can we better co-operate?

Dr. Robert Huebert: One of the things we have to recognize is that it's not going to be cyberwarfare and conventional. The big danger we're now entering into, and we're seeing this very much in the Baltic and in eastern Ukraine, is that the Russians are starting to manoeuvre on how to make a cyber-attack look as though someone else is doing it and are then using kinetic force. I think this is something we're pretending isn't out there, and we need to be more forthright and say that this is the future for the types of threats we are facing. I think this is where, of course, government plays a critical role.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Where we are in different theatres with Operation Reassurance, should we have Canadian officers in the command centres where they are integrating the kinetics plus the cyberwarfare or the hybrid warfare?

Dr. Robert Huebert: Traditionally, the major Canadian contribution, and often it goes unnoticed, is in fact that type of expertise. If we just refer to the gender issue, for example, how many Canadians know that the NATO war college in Rome is headed by a woman,

and that she happens to be Canadian? This is the stuff we need to talk about.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Very good. Thank you.

The Chair: Mr. Garrison.

Mr. Randall Garrison: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

I want to try to do two things quickly. Given that we've seen the U.S. withdrawal from the leadership role in NATO at the presidential level, I guess I would say, and given that NATO functions on consensus, who's really in charge? Who's really leading NATO in responding to the changing threat theatre we've seen?

I would ask Professor Moens and then Professor Huebert.

Dr. Alexander Moens: When you study the American position in NATO, it has been an enormously discouraging scene for both the Americans and the allies for a long time. But it appears that General Mattis, General Kelly, and General McMaster are in fact stabilizing the actual relationship between the United States and NATO. I see a bit of encouragement and a bit of optimism coming back.

I think it's important for us to realize that after President Trump, the Americans are likely going to try to correct this period of significantly poor relations in NATO. Usually, when the Americans do that, they're always going to look at key allies to work with them. We've talked, for example, about cyber, and we've talked about creating centres of excellence. I think it's smart for Canada, for example, to join Latvia's centre of strategic communications rather than creating a new one, to be involved and to expand it into a multilateral affair. But the Americans are still in charge.

Mr. Randall Garrison: Professor Huebert

Dr. Robert Huebert: I think one of the important things to notice, which supports what Alex is saying, is what the Americans have been doing in the last three months in Ukraine and the Baltic states, because you can see clearly that they've been increasing their presence in western Ukraine and, I suspect, in other parts of that region. They've also been supporting the involvement in the Baltic states. In other words, I firmly agree that when Trump opens his mouth on it, first and foremost, he doesn't understand, but the three generals seem to have a very clear understanding of maintaining American involvement in that context. I think that's the one reassuring point we can take from that.

• (1720)

Mr. Randall Garrison: Great. Thanks.

There's one last thing I'd like to do. We've talked a lot about youth, and we have two students we haven't heard from, so I'd like to put those two on the spot and ask them what they think we've missed, and what we have not really asked that we should have been asking, or what they think we should have given more emphasis to.

Ms. Elisha Evelyn Louise Cooper (Student, Simon Fraser University, As an Individual): Hi. My name is Elisha Cooper, and I'm a linguistics student here at SFU, so I'm not in political science.

I think education is probably the most important to me, because you can't really care about something that you don't know about, and you can't support it if you don't know that it's important. It was touched on here, but I just wanted to reiterate the importance of making sure that young people know what's happening, that they know that Canada's involved, and that what we're doing is important.

Mr. Randall Garrison: Thank you.

Mr. Samuel Thiak (Student, Simon Fraser University, As an Individual): My name is Samuel, and I'm a political science student at Simon Fraser University.

I think everything has been talked about exhaustively, and that letting students on campus, especially on our campus, know has been a very important step for us. A good number of students are being informed about NATO and its activities and those of the Canadian Armed Forces. If we go ahead with what we're doing, I'm sure it will be a good step.

The Chair: Thanks very much.

We have a couple of extra minutes left, if any of the other students wanted to speak a bit more. I can probably give another two minutes if either of you wanted to say a few more words.

Peter.

Mr. Peter James Mckenzie Rautenbach: Yes. My specialization is actually nuclear disarmament and nuclear strategy. This is what I've ended up studying, for whatever reason. I have no idea how I got into that.

When we were discussing what we can do, everyone was right in saying that the conditions for disarmament are not there. There eventually has to be a relationship with some degree of trust with Russia, China, or any of the other nuclear powers, because it's a security dilemma. If you reduce your numbers, there's the fear that someone else will take advantage. Even if there's no actual threat here, neither side can necessarily just jump the gun.

Working on smaller projects, whether in the Baltics or the Ukraine, can eventually allow step-by-step reduction. If Canada were to not necessarily take a lead but find a way forward with Russia, diplomatically speaking, eventually, that's what Canada could actually do as a non-nuclear power. That's what I hope to see in the future. That's the role Canada can play.

Dr. Alexander Moens: You have the last word.

Ms. Jazlyn Melnychuk: On behalf of all of us, thank you so much for giving us this opportunity. We're really glad to have been included. It's very inspiring to hear that a lot of the conversation is actually about engaging young Canadians and how to create the policy-makers of the future. We're happy to help you do that in any way we can.

The Chair: Ladies and gentlemen, I'd like to thank you all for your time today, engaging with us on this very important conversation. This conversation is very timely. There are a lot of things happening on this planet right now, and NATO is a big part of our collective future, so this conversation is timely and very important.

A big shout-out to Professor Moens for including your students. That's supercool and I'd encourage others to do the same next time we meet, because I'm sure we'll see many of you again in the future.

Could I get a motion to adjourn? Stand by, we have a motion.

Mr. Randy Hoback: It's a really simple motion. I apologize, first of all, to the members of the Liberal Party and NDP. I should have sat down and talked with you first, but we gave notice last week.

The motion is pretty simple. It's that the committee undertake a study of no fewer than three meetings on the state of Canada's defensive capabilities against cyber-attacks and the Government of Canada's offensive cyberwarfare capabilities, and that the committee report its findings to the House.

I think it's self-explanatory. We're hearing threats of cyber-attacks coming up in every meeting we have. It doesn't matter what witnesses you talk to. They bring it up. This last year I spent a lot of time in the U.S. and went to a variety of different governors' conferences. At every governor's conference, cybersecurity was one of the top topics they were discussing. It's a topic that is front and centre on the minds of American governors. It's something that's front and centre with a lot of the witnesses who are coming here.

After finishing the Ukraine study, we heard a lot about fake news, cybersecurity, cyber-threats, and what's going on in the Ukraine, so I think it's prudent for us to get a good understanding of what we're capable of doing and what we see as our strengths and weaknesses in cyber, to get a better understanding there. That's the reason for the motion.

• (1725)

The Chair: Before I open it to debate, this is just a reminder to the committee that we have a panel. I know that's not what you're asking about, but in this particular study we have one panel dedicated to cybersecurity. It's different from what you're asking for, but I just wanted to remind the committee.

We'll have Mark Gerretsen and then Randall Garrison.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Chair, it's important that whenever we set to undertake another study, we do it in the context of realizing what the competing interests are. I know in the past we've made a concerted effort to line up exactly how we're going to do what.

It would probably be more appropriate to discuss this at the pre-committee, to try to sort out where that would be. I am not in favour of voting on this right now, because I want to understand its context in terms of where it lies with everything else. Therefore, I move adjournment on this debate.

Mr. Randy Hoback: Are you serious, Mark?

The Chair: It's dilatory. All in favour of adjourning debate on this issue?

(Motion agreed to)

Mr. Randy Hoback: Why would you do that?

The Chair: That's our democracy in action, folks.

Mr. James Bezan: Can we get a recorded vote on that, please?

The Chair: It's done. I'm sorry. You should have asked for it before. Nice to see you, folks.

Thank you very much. Can I get a motion to adjourn?

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