

## **Friends of Millbank**

### **February 2023 Newsletter**



#### **Dear Friend of Millbank**

The Royal Army Medical Corps is nearing its 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary on 23 June. And a portentous anniversary is closer still. I feel sure most of us will be following events in the Russia-Ukraine war very closely, with understandable concern, as Ukraine fights for its very existence, and NATO and other countries rally in support of its freedom, albeit belatedly. The war is already the largest in Europe since 1945, and the momentum for a larger European or even global conflict is inexorably gathering pace, with the end to conflict seemingly further away than ever as casualties mount up in their thousands already. Are we on the threshold of World War Three? Many would say it has already started. Will future historians date its start to 24 February 2022, the day Russia invaded Ukraine almost one year ago as I write, just as we commonly date the start of World War Two to Germany's invasion of Poland on 1 September 1939, followed two days later by the UK and France declaring war on Germany when their ultimatum was ignored? What will happen next? Who is qualified to say?

Brigadier (retd) Ben Barry, Senior Fellow for Land Warfare at the world-renowned International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) and visiting professor at the Department of War Studies at King's College London, and a keen Friend of Millbank, previously delivered an excellent talk to us, 'Blood, Metal & Dust - Lessons from Iraq & Afghanistan', in July 2021, the recording is on our Members Area <https://www.friendsofmillbank.org/talks-members/>.



*Brigadier Ben Barry*

Brigadier Barry has now kindly shared the following links to some very recent thought-provoking strategic analyses of the Russia-Ukraine war by himself and colleagues at the IISS, I reckon you will find them of interest. Time will tell how prescient they are:

**1. Russia's War in Ukraine: What are the emerging military lessons?** (Chapter 4, in 'IISS Strategic Survey 2022', dated 5 Dec 2022, see <https://www.iiss.org/blogs/analysis/2023/01/strategic-survey-2022-russias-war-in-ukraine>, pdf attached for your convenience.

You can read more of the IISS Strategic Survey 2022, and download part of this major document, at <https://www.iiss.org/publications/strategic-survey/strategic-survey-2022-the-annual-assessment-of-geopolitics>

**2. The land war in Ukraine as winter takes hold** (Ben Barry, 6 Jan 2023)

<https://www.iiss.org/blogs/military-balance/2023/01/the-land-war-in-ukraine-as-winter-takes-hold>

And this month's piece on the British Army:

**3. Can the British Army still march to the sound of the guns?** (Ben Barry, 6 Feb 2023)

<https://www.iiss.org/blogs/analysis/2023/02/can-the-british-army-still-march-to-the-sound-of-the-guns>

**4. For your information, the IISS Launches its annual survey of military affairs, the 'Military Balance' on Wednesday 15 February, at 1100hrs GMT. It is timely indeed.**

**Friends of Millbank are invited. You can sign up free to the online event at <https://www.iiss.org/events/2023/02/the-military-balance-2023-launch>**

This Newsletter is dedicated to the victims of conflict worldwide, especially in Russia and Ukraine, to their families, and to those who care for them.

Our supported charity this year is again the David Nott Foundation, dedicated to delivering the specialist training that surgeons need to save lives in countries affected by conflict and catastrophe, I need say no more just four days after the earthquakes in Turkey and Syria, see <https://davidnottfoundation.com/>

Thank you for your consideration

In Arduis Fidelis

David Vassallo

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Chairman, Friends of Millbank, 10 February 2023