

What is it with Europe?

by BRIAN LOCKHART

Are we really headed for another war in Europe?

Already, in Sweden, the government has called on its population to prepare for a future war.

Really? Sweden? If a peaceful, successful nation like Sweden is preparing for war, then something is seriously wrong on the European continent.

The Chairman of the NATO Military Committee has now declared that an all-out war between the West and Russia is inevitable.

The news story reporting this said, 'Western countries should also be prepared for a conflict that will require significant changes in their lives.'

Significant changes? Like what? Death? Mutilation? Bombings? Artillery shells landing on retirement homes and schools? Having your home destroyed, your family killed, and fighting with the guy next to you for a potato because you're starving and living waste-deep in mud in some refugee camp?

Yeah, I think you should consider those to be 'significant changes' in your lifestyle.

Again, it is war in Europe.

How can one continent be so entrenched in destruction all the time?

The entire history of Europe has been one of constant conflict. They didn't build all those castles for leisure and recreation purposes.

Some historians claim that we've already had three world wars, as the Napoleonic Wars should be considered World War number one.

After the period of 1914 to 1918, that war was called 'The War to End All Wars.' That period was the first modern war that caused mass destruction and a huge loss of life.

Yes, it should have been an experience you don't want to repeat.

Did Europe learn a lesson from this?

No, apparently not, because just 21 years later, they were at it again.

By the end of 1945, Germany was destroyed. Belgium and the Netherlands were in ruins. Most of Europe was in rubble. Poland had almost six million deaths. Russia lost a staggering 20 million-plus people.

You would think that experience would teach them that having a war with your neighbours is not a good thing.

There have been several smaller wars in Europe over the past few decades, with entire countries disappearing - remember Yugoslavia?

At the time, Canada was drawn into both European wars, first as a duty to King and Country, and because of our close ties to the

United Kingdom.

If we had not gone to war in Europe, would the outcome have been different? Probably not. All those dead Europeans would still be dead, and all those countries would have still been left in ruins.

This time, if a war does occur, we will again be drawn into another European conflict because of our obligations to NATO. Do you really want to see more names etched on the cenotaphs around the country because of yet another foreign war?

While we are relatively safe in Canada due to our location and size, which makes any type of invasion almost impossible, the difference between past wars and current conflicts is the danger of long-range missiles.

I'm not sure what Russia's plans are. In the time they have been warring with Ukraine, they have lost more tanks, support vehicles, artillery pieces, weapons systems, aircraft, and personnel than most countries have in their entire arsenal.

They can't have that much left, and Russia does not have the resources to start building new war machines.

Reports have said that prisoners serving time in prison, including very dangerous people, have been released, handed a rifle and sent to the front line.

That is the mark of a very desperate regime that is trying to raise bodies to act as cannon fodder because the prisoners are not well trained and are poorly equipped, but they can stop a bullet.

Another war in Europe would be an absolute disaster. Russia cannot win a war against NATO in the conventional sense. It would no doubt resort to the use of nuclear weapons.

Even then, that may not be something to be overly concerned about.

Russia can't even manage to maintain the playgrounds in its cities and towns, let alone a nuclear arsenal.

Their system is so corrupt that the plutonium cores in their bombs have probably already been scavenged and sold, and the missiles are covered in cobwebs.

I've heard the question before: if you could go back in time and meet Hitler before his rise to power, would you do something about it?

I don't think time travel is the answer, but I do know you don't kill a rabid dog by cutting off its tail.