



ROYAL AIR FORCE OFFICERS' CLUB

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BRYANSTON 2021

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RAFOC REMINISCENCES AND RAMBLINGS - WEEK 113 3rd JUNE 2022

GREETINGS:

This week will be dominated by Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee... in SA, Welcome back to Wonderland... More pain at the petrol pumps... if your fuel warning light is on and your lights at home are off, know that you are in SA... Shops starting to limit some products as 'price storm' hits South Africa... fuel at catastrophically high levels... outrage at a proposal to rename the Paarl Taal monument... Eskom trapped in the abyss... Eskom accused appear in Court on bail hearing... who shot Senzo Meyiwa?... race against time to save South Africa's freight rail network... Comair suspends Kulula and British Airways flights – runs out of money, airspeed, altitude and attitude... Ukraine – the War of A Hundred Days... major Ukrainian counter-offensive against the Russian invader... Putin notches up the weaponising of oil and gas supplies to Europe... says 'Thank God' some foreign companies have left Russia... Chechen warlord Ramzan Kadyrov accuses Russian state TV of lying... Kremlin accuses Washington of "adding fuel to the fire" by planning to supply advanced missiles to Ukraine... travel chaos on Eurostar... chaotic scenes as football fans teargassed and pepper sprayed at World Cup game at Stade de France... damned Frogs, I say!... USA in self-flagellation over school shootings... Scotland loses to Ukraine in World Cup semi-final... Oh what a lovely war...

The event of the week in UK is Her Majesty's unique Platinum Jubilee... four day holiday and 260 years of Pomp and Circumstance which mark this Gala occasion... Trooping the Colour... "nothing else quite like it"... crowds already forming along Mall... Her Majesty gives an uplifting message of confidence and hope... French gift to the Queen a prize horse... 'Sussex bomb' about to land on Jubilee... tension between Sussex and Cambridge... a flurry of memorabilia, merchandise and souvenirs to mark the Queen's 70th year on the throne... Air Travel chaos as flights cancelled - holidaymakers told "travel with just a rucksack"... Britain one shock away from food crisis... Princess Charlene of Monaco stuns in blue jumpsuit at F1 Grand Prix... Anglophobia banned in Scotland... breaking a tradition hundreds of years old...

BATTLE OF CRETE COMMEMORATED:



Royal Air Force personnel from 30 and 33 Squadrons RAF have joined the British Ambassador to Greece for a commemoration of the Battle of Crete, fought during World War Two. The British led event at the Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery, at Suda Bay, Crete, was one of a series of events being held over the anniversary period of the battle fought from the 20th May to the 1st June 1941. The battle began with the German invasion and lasted till the final evacuation of the island by the Allied troops. The Suda Bay Ceremony included a fly-past by a 30 Squadron Atlas A400M flying from the Squadron's current home base of RAF Brize Norton, in tribute to all the Allied personnel lost in the battle. The 30 Squadron personnel will be remembering, in particular, the 30 members of the squadron who were killed during the initial fighting. This occurred when German Parachute forces captured Malame Airfield on the 20th and 21st May 1941. A memorial to those lost is maintained at Malame which was also visited by the Squadron personnel during their visit to Crete. "We are surrounded by the final resting place of 1,500 men buried in this cemetery, who fought alongside their Greek comrades for this island and for Greece in 1941. They came from every part of the globe: Australia, Canada, India, New Zealand, South Africa, and of course the United Kingdom. During the Battle of Crete and the subsequent occupation, many thousands were killed, and many thousands taken prisoner. We owe them all a debt of gratitude for their sacrifice and for their service. We have been overflown by an A 400M Atlas aircraft, which is flown by members of 30 Squadron of the Royal Air Force, which together with the personnel from 30 and 33 Squadrons here today, represent the same squadrons that were in action here 81 years ago today. We are extremely grateful for their support in Crete this year, both in the air and on the ground." Mr Matthew Lodge, British Ambassador to Greece (*RAF News*)

PLATINUM JUBILEE REHEARSAL:



Aircraft from across the UK Armed Forces soared over RAF College Cranwell today in a rehearsal for the Platinum Jubilee Flypast over Buckingham Palace on Thursday 2 June 2022.

The Royal Air Force, British Army and Royal Navy were all represented in the 22 aircraft that took to the skies to practice the formations which will form part of the Queen's Birthday Parade celebrations next week. The full flypast will see 70 aircraft, including the iconic Red Arrows and historic Battle of Britain Memorial Flight, put on a spectacular show over London.

The formation today flew over RAF Cranwell's iconic College Hall, which stood in for Buckingham Palace. The first aircraft of the Fly-past flew over College Hall at 13:00BST. The display was reviewed by Air Commodore Mike Baulkwill, the Combat Air Force Commander for the RAF's No 1 Group. Air Commodore Baulkwill was standing in for Air Vice-Marshal Ian Duguid, Air Officer Commanding No 1 Group, who is the Senior Responsible Officer for the Fly-past. The fly-past that took place on Thursday 2 June 2022 followed the Queen's Birthday Parade, known as Trooping the Colour, a major display of military pageantry involving 1,500 officers and soldiers and 250 horses from the British Army's Household Division on Horse Guards Parade. The Fly-past will take place subject to weather, serviceability, and operational commitments. *(RAF News)*

FIVE MAKE OR BREAK ISSUES FOR SA:

As we watch the government blundering from crisis to crises, the Zondo Report now completed, their abject failure to tackle any number of issues, and the resultant chaos around us in SA, it's easy to wonder when the Nth thing happens that puts the economy beyond the point of no return... Can the ANC cut the mustard?... Wiser minds have been deliberating and offer this opinion of five key issues:

Land Reform

Reform objective: Allow land restitution and redistribution, including through expropriation without compensation, but spare the economy by focusing on unexploited lands or unrightfully seized lands.

Regulation

Reform objective: Increase competition and remove barriers to entrants, especially in the services sectors (tourism, retail, financial services, and network industries).

Labour market

Reform objective: Boost employment in the public sector and reduce skills mismatch by adapting education and training programmes.

Electricity

Reform objective: Unbundle Eskom, increase efficiency, shift toward greener energies, and procure additional electricity capacity.

Mining

Reform objective: New mining charter.

Corruption

Reform objective: Boost confidence and improve efficiency in the public sector.

OLD TICKEY BOXES:



Not an aviation subject today, but a bit of a blast from the past. Remember our old tickey boxes and the "long tickeys" we used to make?

The last working public pay phone was removed from midtown Manhattan in New York City today, on 7th Avenue and West 50th Street near Times Square. Phone booths were first installed in New

York City in 1905, with numbers rising to 25,000 booths by 1925. The beginning of the end of phone booths came in the mid-1990s as mobile phones became more common and eventually ubiquitous among the population. Pay phone removal began in 2015 across the city, with LinkNYC replacing some of them with free high-speed Wi-Fi from kiosks on New York Streets. It is not clear where Clark Kent will now change into Superman. *(Sent in by Bruce Prescott)*

NEW TRAFFIC LIGHTS:

The City of Cape Town has introduced a new traffic signal system that will be trailed at important intersections over the next six months. These new traffic lights were designed to reduce confusion among motorists and public transport operators in the city, according to a report by Business Tech. The previous system served both private vehicles and MyCiTi buses, which often led to normal cars mistakenly following signals meant for buses and causing easily-avoidable accidents. However, according to the city, the new lights **do not** display red, amber, or green, and are therefore less likely to be confused with normal traffic systems. The city said existing bus and rail-system lights were considered during the design procedure, with the end product being “new directional information signs” combined with the “white single aspect light system” primarily used in the United Kingdom. As a result, the new signals are aligned with international best practices and are being tested in partnership with the National Department of Transport, said the city. If the pilot project meets its goals, these signals will be implemented across the MyCiTi grid and be included in the South African Road Traffic Signs Manual for use by other cities and transport systems in South Africa. Whether South African drivers can cope with the new technology remains an open question... *(BusinessTech)*

ZIMBABWE “CHARADE OF DEMOCRACY”

Speaking to diaspora internet publication, ZimEye, last week, Chief Ndiweni appealed to Zimbabweans in the diaspora to assist people in Zimbabwe fighting for a better Zimbabwe.

Said Ndiweni: “Particularly you folks in the diaspora. I was in the United Kingdom for 25 years so I understand. The time has come, especially in the diaspora, to put your hands in your pocket and assist those who are going to come before you seeking that financial help so that they can do the things that you and I and all of us want so desperately. That is to come out of this difficult situation. This difficult situation is entirely man-made. There’s nothing that the Almighty has given us that has put us in this difficulty. Entirely man-made. It is time for us to stand up and undo the charade of a democracy. And I say a charade of a democracy because at the apex of our difficulty, is that our democracy is dead. The pillars of our democracy which are, an independent judiciary, a free and independent press proper and accountable medical services, civil service that is apolitical, all these institutions that are apolitical have been corrupted.” *(ZimEye)*

CHEERS FOR TODAY:

The (traffic) lights, sadly, may be going out again all over SA as chaos and crisis continues, We continue working with Fourteen, the Wanderers Caterers, in order to streamline lunch proceedings... We have been considering re-introducing Guest Speakers but need to entice some good speakers. The video on Bob Hoover last lunch was well received.

Our next function will be the June lunch, **12h30 for 13h00 this Friday 3 June 2022**, again in the **Cigar Bar**. Cost of the lunch is R250 and we prefer you to pay by EFT to our account - Nedbank - Melrose Arch - Br: 19 66 05 - Account 19 66 278 063.

Look forward to seeing as many as possible on the First Friday in June. In this issue, we feature the re-enactment of a first solo, sixty years to the day later. Watch this space... and so... as Winter cold bites, enjoy the lovely Autumn colours everywhere, keep the home fires burning and the bright side up...

TAILPIECE:

Good Men Do Exist. We’re just: building aeroplanes, buying aeroplanes, thinking about buying aeroplanes, buying parts for fixing aeroplanes, talking about aeroplanes, flying aeroplanes....

OK, pardon my stupidity, but how does one tell the difference between a male and female shark? The male will eat you, the female will argue with you...

If someone in a white coat knocks on your door and says they have to stick a banana up your arse to test for monkey Pox, it's a scam... I feel so stupid now...

Woke Warning! You have violated a rule that we have not made up yet! Because you are a known troublemaker. Banned for 30 Days!

A blonde gets a job as a Physical Education teacher at a boy's senior school. One sports afternoon, she notices a boy standing alone at the end of the field, while all the other kids are running around kicking a ball and having fun. She takes pity on him and goes across to speak to him.

"You OK" she asks gently

"Yes" he says

"You can go and play with the other kids, you know" she says

"Its best I stay here" he replies

"Why's that, Sweetie?" asks the blond.

The boy looks at her incredulously and says:

"Because I'm the f**king goalie, Ma'am!"

When I was a kid, my folks would always say "Excuse my French" after a swear word... I'll never forget my first day at school when my teacher asked if any of us knew any French...

I've decided on a new career. I'm going to be a backwards stripper... I come out on the stage naked and people pay me to put my clothes back on...

I feel bad for parents nowadays... you have to be able to explain the birds and the bees... the bees and the bees... the birds and the birds... the birds that used to be bees... the bees that used to be birds... the birds that look like bees... plus bees that look like birds but still have a stinger...

Gas prices are now so high, it's cheaper to buy cocaine and run everywhere...

So the formation leader shouted "stop ambling",

When in fact we should have been scrambling,

Time to get airborne,

"When you hear the horn,

Depart, and I don't want any stragglings!"

(The Sherriff of Nottingham Road)

MATT



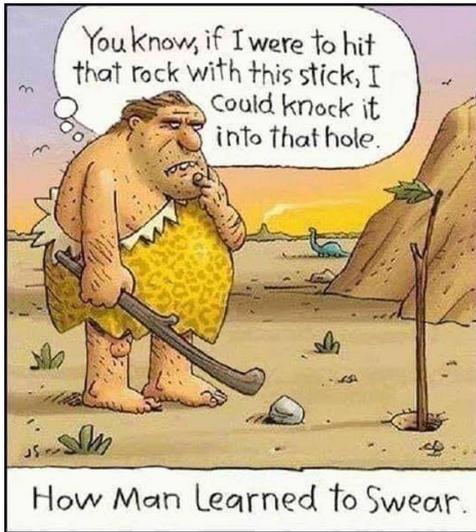
'Don't go mad with your three wishes. I'm not Rishi Sunak'

MATT



'It's a ticketed event, so I'll be in charge of tear gas and Mrs Hill will organise the baton charges'



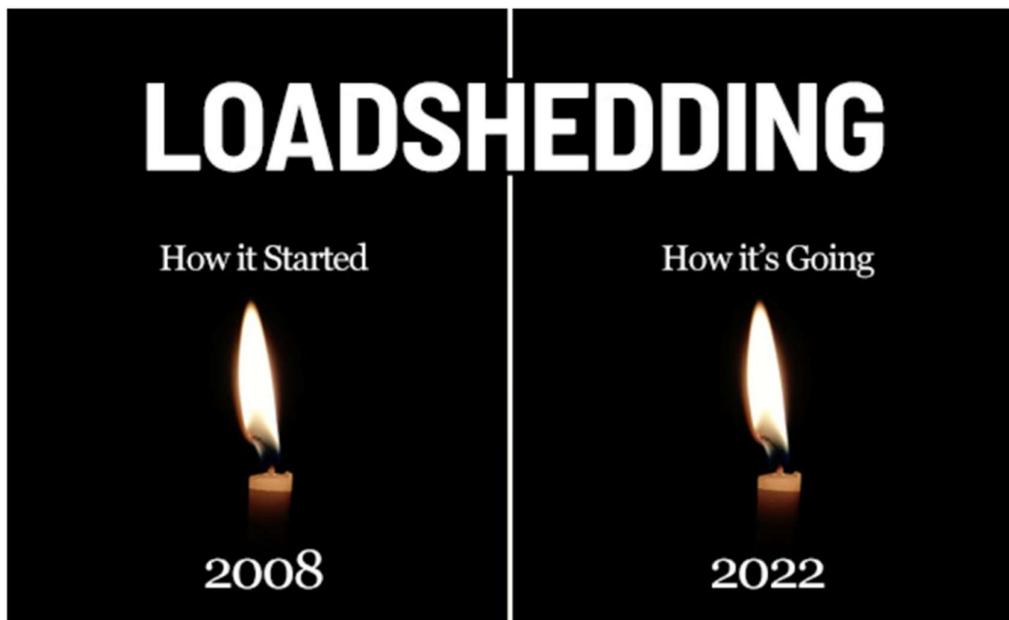


BLACK HOLE OF SOUTH AFRICA:

Wikipedia describes a supermassive black hole as “the largest type of black hole... Black holes are a class of astronomical objects that have undergone gravitational collapse, leaving behind spheroidal regions of space from which nothing can escape, not even light.” The South African word for it is “Eskom”.

One could argue that Eskom is even more powerful than an astrological supermassive black hole because not only does it suck all the light, but it also sucks any glimmer of hope and energy from 59 million citizens daily.

We asked our designer to create a precise, insightful, artistic and yet fully explanatory image of Eskom’s progress since “load shedding” first darkened our days in January 2008. Here it is:



Fourteen spectacular years of failure (power and otherwise) beautifully displayed in one image.

The only thing that has changed is the increasing levels of load shedding. On 5 May, SOE Minister Pravin Gordhan came out to “reassure” South Africans that there would be no need to declare a state of emergency with regard to Eskom because there were “internal plans to manage the power system that will allow the systems operator to implement up to Stage 8 load shedding in order to protect the grid from total collapse”. Cool, cool.

Hold on. STAGE 8 load shedding? Since when did that become the new acceptable norm?

“Intractable problems, both internal to Eskom and imposed from without, are keeping South Africa mired in darkness, and things are not looking up”.

André de Ruyter, the CEO of Eskom, delivered a frank sketch of the dire state of the electricity utility in an interview with David Ansara of the Centre for Risk Analysis. He comes across as composed, competent, and determined, but despairing at the intractability of the problems he is facing. He pulled no punches. There are many reasons why it may be impossible to recover Eskom from the abyss that it is in. Some are massive internal problems, but many can be attributed to government policy decisions, both in the past and today. De Ruyter described the awful state in which he found even the utility’s flagship power station, Lethabo, where there was ‘an extremely serious challenge with basic disciplines like housekeeping, safety observance, managing basic process parameters. He says when he got to Eskom in 2019, he found systemic corruption and fraud amounting to billions of rands, facilitated by ‘I think deliberate neglect of our SAP system.’ The consequence is that Eskom has not caught up, and perhaps cannot ever catch up, with maintenance on its coal-fired plants, which average 43 years old. *(Ivo Vegter)*

THE WAY THINGS WERE...

Jeff Earle and Karl Jensen re-enacting Jeff's First Solo 60 years ago...



Hi all,

See the magnificent video Karl Jensen has produced of this significant occasion. My 60th anniversary of my first solo, in a Harvard aircraft on the 22nd of May 1962. I was able to re-enact this in my present Harvard that I've owned for over 26 years. This all took place from my hangar at Vereeniging

airport, that I've owned for over 30 years. Nostalgia, nostalgia, nostalgia! Save & share this at your pleasure. *Kind regards, Jeff*

Download link

<https://wettransfer.com/downloads/a6d81e4396f2bf378789c84eb700c01720220529105031/1618cd1294525d295021e4a45362699220220529105349/c9041a>

FORTHCOMING ATTRACTIONS IN NEXT ISSUES:

The History of the US Navy's Top Gun School.
Shelagh Anderson and the BSAP Reserve Air Wing.

SAA BACK IN THE DAY:

Bruce Prescott (Howick) sent in this historic pic and document:

"Here is an example of the instructions I used to write for passengers accompanying SAA 747 delivery flights from Everett and Seattle in the early 1970s. This one was for ZS-SAO [our 4th] in August 1972 the 1st time Capt. Pi Pienaar took a 747-200 delivery as shown in the photo. The flight was routed via London to have the remainder of its seats installed. Don Smith told me that he was the FEO on our 1st 707, ZS-CKC, later ZS-SAA, which belly-landed at NBO. He said that was what turned his hair white overnight".



PI PIENAAR, JOHN TROTTER, OTTO CREDER, DON SMITH IN RB074 (ZS-SAO)
PRIOR TO DEPARTURE FROM EVERETT ON DELIVERY FLIGHT. LONDON-
JOHANNESBURG ROUND THE BULGE RECORD BROKEN ON THIS FLIGHT-
11 HRS 25 MINS. 6216 NM, 7160 SM. AUG 9 72

The citation reads: Pi Pienaar, John Trotter, Otto Creder, Don Smith in RB074 (ZS SAO) prior to departure from Everett Field on the delivery flight via London to Johannesburg, "Round the Bulge". The previous flying time record was broken on this flight – 11 Hours 25 Minutes, 6216 Nautical Miles, 7160 Statue Miles.

August 1972

Dear

In order to minimize chances of delay and the corresponding inconvenience to passengers, we wish to advise of the following schedule and procedure to be instituted for the departure of South African Airways Boeing 747 delivery flight SADE 9058:-

1. Passengers are requested to check in at the Delivery Centre located in Building 45-02, at The Boeing Company's Paine Field, Everett facility, by 2:00 p.m. local time on August 9, 1972. Departure is scheduled for 3:00 p.m. local time.
2. In the delivery centre two areas will be set aside, one being marked "London" and the other being marked "Johannesburg". Passengers are requested to ensure that baggage which is not required on the flight but will be required as overnight baggage in London is clearly marked accordingly, since the baggage marked "Johannesburg" will temporarily be placed in bond in London. Baggage checks will be issued by Mr. George Fredrickson. The normal hand baggage will be permitted.
3. After having had their baggage checked in, passengers are requested to proceed to the "ticket counter" where Mrs. Cathy Grondal will attend to the necessary ticket and immigration procedures.
4. Passengers are then requested to remain in the Delivery Centre, where refreshments will be available, until the departure is announced.
5. For information purposes, the following is the proposed schedule for South African Airways delivery flight SADE 9058:-

Depart Everett (Paine Field)	August 9, 1972	2200 hours GMT (3:00 p.m. local time)
Arrive London (Heathrow)	August 10, 1972	0700 hours GMT (8:00 a.m. local time)
Depart London (Heathrow)	August 11, 1972	1800 hours GMT (7:00 p.m. local time)
Arrive Johannesburg (Jan Smuts)	August 12, 1972	0700 hours GMT (9:00 a.m. local time)
6. The flight crew will be comprised of the following members:-
 - Captain S. Pienaar (Chief Pilot)
 - Captain J. R. Trotter (Senior Training Captain)
 - Captain O. Greder (Senior Captain)
 - Mr. D. R. Smith (Senior Flight Engineer Officer, Instructor)
 - Mr. H. Duckworth (Flight Engineer Officer)

Since this is a delivery flight these times and dates are subject to change, whereupon all passengers will be notified accordingly.

We wish to take this opportunity of welcoming you aboard South African Airways' fourth Boeing 747-244B aircraft "Magaliesberg" and we wish you a pleasant journey.

Yours faithfully,

B. H. Prescott
Sen. Resident Representative

SPEED DEMON: 88 YEARS SINCE THE DE HAVILLAND EXPRESS FIRST FLEW:

The de Havilland Express first flew on January 14th, 1934. The four-engined aeroplane, otherwise known as the de Havilland D.H.86, played an important role in the growth of the British passenger aircraft industry.



A De Havilland DH.86 airliner, VH-USC, of Qantas Empire Airways at Croydon Airport, London, 15th November 1934. The aircraft was based at Archerfield Aerodrome in Brisbane and was used on the Brisbane-Singapore route. In 1940 it was requisitioned for use as a transport by the Royal Australian Air Force. It was broken up for parts after being badly damaged in a crash-landing in 1944. (Photo by Fox Photos/Hulton Archive/Getty Images)

The first unit to fly 88 years ago held registration G-ACPL, and it was backed by four Gipsy Six engines. The type was developed to meet the needs of Qantas. However, the flag carrier of Australia rejected the initial single-pilot design. As a result, the aircraft was redesigned to hold two pilots. Three of the original single-pilot units were then delivered to the United Kingdom's Railway Air Services and another went to Australia's Holyman's Airways.

Qantas, nonetheless, deployed the revised version well. It operated its D.H.86 aircraft to Singapore from Brisbane as early as 1935. With this being a long route for its time, Qantas was concerned that if they took a single-pilot edition, there would be increased fatigue.

The preceding de Havilland Dragon was more commercially successful, but the single-pilot plane was smaller and had the capacity for up to 10 passengers. Meanwhile, the de Havilland D.H.86 was a larger unit, allowing up to 16 passengers to hop on board. The plane had a length of 46 ft 1.25 in (14.0526 m), a wingspan of 64 ft 6 in (19.66 m), and a height of 13 ft 0 in (3.96 m).

Quick for its time

Yet, of the aircraft's major pull factors was its speed. It had a maximum speed of 166 mph (267 km/h) and a cruise speed of 42 mph (229 km/h). These figures were greater than the Dragon, which had a maximum speed of 128 mph (206 km/h) and a cruise speed of 109 mph (175 km/h).

Therefore, when the first single-pilot Express production model went into service in October 1934, it broke speed records. Notably, Holyman's Airways' single-pilot D.H.86, Miss Hobart, was the fastest British passenger plane worldwide at the time.

Developments

"The next development was the DH86A, fitted with new undercarriage legs and brakes, a new metal rudder and modified windscreen lines - twenty DH86A in this style were built. The DH86B appeared in 1927, featuring an enlarged tailplane complete with elliptical endplate fins, after which all existing DH86A were modified to this standard," BAE Systems shares.

"Ten new-build DH86Bs were produced, three of which were exported to WR Carpenter Ltd, in Australia. Total production finally comprised of sixty-two aircraft, made up of 32 DH86, 20 DH86A and 10 DH86B with most still flying commercially at the outbreak of World War II. Those operating

for Railway Air Services were seconded into military use as communications and navigational trainers.”

Some units of Railway Air Services entered the military following the rise of World War II. Meanwhile, several others kept operating during and after the conflict. However, the type hasn't been active since 1958.



There were several accidents with the D.H.86, including a series of three incidents in Australia, causing the country's authorities to temporarily suspend the plane's Certificate of Airworthiness, which frustrated the Australian and British aviation industries. Photo: Getty Images

Altogether, 62 D.H.86 Express units were produced between 1934 and 1937. The type could be seen all over the world, with the likes of Gulf Aviation, Tata Airlines, Aer Lingus, Imperial Airways, Western Airways, and the original British Airways all operating the family. The aircraft helped build on de Havilland's increasing popularity as the global aviation industry continued to develop in the 1930s. *By Sumit Singh (Photos: Getty Images)*