



ROYAL AIR FORCE OFFICERS' CLUB

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BRYANSTON 2021

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RAFOC REMINISCENCES AND RAMBLINGS - WEEK 196

1st MARCH 2024

GREETINGS:

Splendid full moon over SA this last weekend – but all was not moonlight and roses below... South Africa's upside-down "pyramid of doom"... Oh, what a circus, Oh, what a show at Moses Mabhida... "National budget" an electioneering con... South Africa's secret toll profits... Phala Phala theft case postponed – (watch this space)... 'Gauteng has to give us money': Godongwana questions Lesufi's plans to scrap e-tolls... Decades of promises to eradicate squatter camps exposed as hollow political rhetoric... Ramokgopa admits no end in sight for load-shedding... bailouts will not save Transnet... SAAF evacuates HQ building – my wereld!... Homeless Stellenbosch students sleep on squash court... Huddle Park Golf club's water cut – used city water for over a decade without paying... Scotland wing "Duhan the Destroyer" van der Merwe rewrites history as Scotland beat England and retain Calcutta Cup... Gun pointed at Roodepoort residents' association in debate over electricity (nothing quite like it to focus the mind...)

Trump continues to trounce Haley... Don't blame Biden's dogs for the blood on the White House floors... US leading global alliance to counter foreign government disinformation... Lebanon teeters on the edge of war... more missile strikes against Houthi targets... Belgian farmers spray police – and the EU – with manure... Russia mocks Trident failure... Blow to Putin as Europe breaks free of Russian oil for good... Navalny's body given to mother by Russian authorities... civilians risk wrath of Moscow to reveal truth about life under Russian rule... Russian planes continue to fall - Ukraine claims six more jets shot down... NATO and EU members 'considering sending troops to Ukraine'... Britain living so far beyond our means as to have become entirely detached from reality... Starmer accuses Rishi Sunak of harbouring 'extremists' in Islamophobia row... UK public services "will buckle under planned spending cuts"... Foreign criminals face deportation to free up prisons... 'smart keys' have fueled a new wave of car crime... AI 'dream girls' are coming for porn stars' jobs... Red Bull chief cleared of allegations of inappropriate behaviour... would your marriage survive being shipwrecked together?... Google has drowned the internet in a sea of stupidity...

RAF AND USAF STRENGTHEN GLOBAL COMMS:



Royal Air Force Tactical Communicators have joined their US Air Force counterparts in Germany to hone their skills using HF (high frequency) communications.

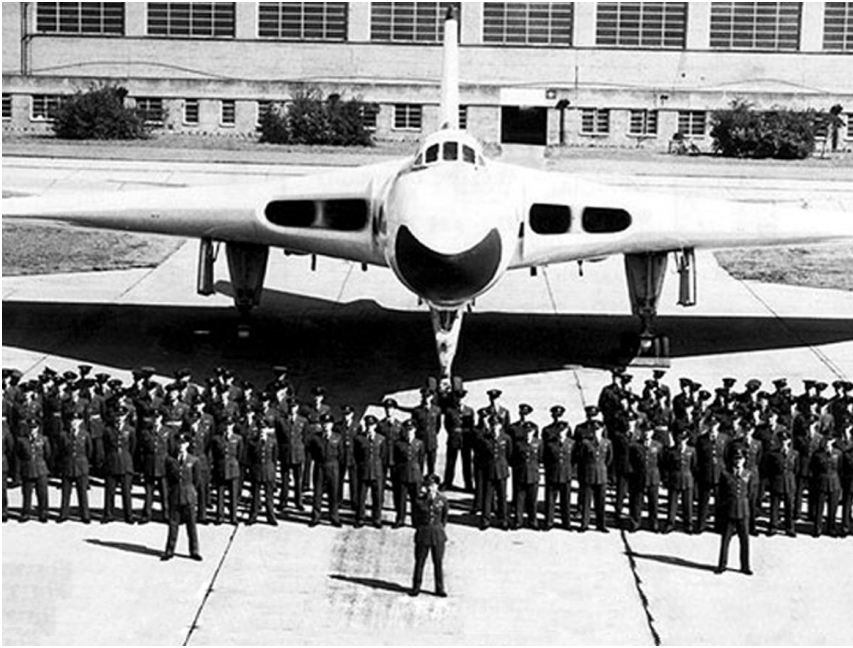
HF communications are a key part of Agile Combat Employment or ACE – the ability to avoid or mitigate attacks from an adversary, by dispersing air assets across a variety of austere locations and continuing to operate effectively with minimal support. Although HF is not new in itself, when combined with modern technology it offers an extremely effective way to communicate globally without having to rely on satellites or data cables under the ground or sea. The training culminated with a combined UK/US team establishing a HF link with Guam, more than 11500km away in the Western Pacific. On the final day of training, led by HF experts from the 1 CBCS, the UK and US signalers collaborated to establish a communications link with 644 CBCS 11500 km away in Guam. This cooperation reinforced both air forces' capability to work together and operate each other's equipment. "It is essential that we stand shoulder-to-shoulder with our allies in NATO as the alliance turns 75. This opportunity to train with our US partners allows us to leverage our combined strengths, enhancing our shared tactics and strong relationships while honing technical skills in HF. This is only one small element of our work delivering on the Combined Vision Statement for Agile Combat Employment." Wing Commander Maisey, OC RAF Tactical Communications Wing, "The best part about this partnership is that it is not just a 'one-off' training opportunity. The longstanding trust and partnership that we have with our RAF counterparts will outlive Ben Maisey and me. As we celebrate the combined accomplishments of the past and present, I am even more excited for the future." Lieutenant Colonel Brown OC 1st Combat Communications Squadron, (1 CBCS) USAF (*RAF News*)

RED FLAG: “AN EVENTFUL DAY” OF TRAINING:



A UK Voyager tanker crew pulled off an emergency landing at a USAF air base after a landing gear tyre burst as they took off for a refuelling mission during high-stakes war games in Nevada. The routine sortie refuelling coalition fighters during Exercise Red Flag turned into a real-life drama as the crew stayed airborne, topping up fighter jets to pump out their 80 tonne load of aviation fuel before landing the stricken aircraft. A tyre on the aircraft's right-side burst as the Voyager neared its 160mph take-off speed at Nellis air base. Once airborne, warning lights alerted the crew who used the tanker's external cameras to assess the damage. The Captain also called in a USAF F-16 pilot taking part in the multi-national air combat training mission to fly alongside to carry out a visual check. After alerting fire rescue teams on the ground, the 101 Sqn Voyager, which was carrying a number of Coalition personnel alongside the five crew, extended its mission to dispense as much of its fuel as possible to reduce the stress on the landing gear during landing. Air Chiefs ordered UK Typhoons and US F-16s and F-35s taking part to land first before clearing the Voyager tanker to make an approach. 101 Sqn cabin supervisor Cpl Jaz Lawton said: "This was my first flight in charge of the cabin with passengers on board. It was a shock to learn that the tyre had burst, but my training kicked in and I worked with the pilots and other crew to keep the passengers updated and reassure them." RAF engineers worked through the night to replace the wheels, ensuring the Voyager could continue refuelling duties the following day. The 101 Sqn Captain added: "It was an eventful day, but it is reassuring to be part of a wider team that operates so effectively under pressure. (RAF News)

No 101 Squadron formed as part of the Royal Flying Corps on 12 July 1917 and was deployed to the Western Front in August as a night bombing unit equipped with F.E.2b aircraft. Its main task was to carry out night attacks on German railheads and airfields. The Squadron flew during the battles of 3rd Ypres in 1917, and throughout the 1918 German Spring offensives on the Somme before supporting the final allied attacks on the Hindenburg Line. No 101 Squadron returned to England in 1919 and disbanded at the end of the year. It was re-formed in 1928. During the Second World War No 101 Squadron served with Bomber Command, equipped initially with Bristol Blenheims, then Vickers Wellingtons and from September 1942 with the Avro Lancaster. In June 1943 the Squadron moved to RAF Ludford Magna and then flew specially equipped Lancasters fitted with "Airborne Cigar" ECM. The Squadron was to fly on more raids than any other RAF Bomber Command unit but paid a heavy price, losing 1176 aircrew killed in action.



101 Sqn RAF when part of the V-Force in the Cold War days...

In 1946 No 101 Squadron moved to RAF Binbrook and flew the Avro Lincoln until 1951 when it became the first RAF unit to equip with the English Electric Canberra jet bomber. The Squadron introduced the Canberra into RAF service, training crews for other units and flying operational missions in Malaya in 1955 and Suez in 1956. In 1957, the Squadron reformed at RAF Finningley with the Avro Vulcan bomber carrying Britain's nuclear deterrent as part of the RAF V-Force. They moved to RAF Waddington in 1962 and became the first Vulcan squadron to use air to air refuelling (AAR), enabling it to make a record-breaking non-stop flight by 3 Vulcans to Australia in 1963, one of which was flown by a recent Chairman of our Squadron Association, Gp. Capt. John Ward. In 1982 a 101 Squadron Vulcan crew carried out the first Operation Blackbuck bombing raid in the Falklands War, succeeding in putting the runway out of action and helping to bring the conflict with Argentina to an end. During 2011, 101 Sqn was heavily involved in NATO air operations over Libya while still providing AAR support over Afghanistan, but in 2012 the Sqn returned to Brize Norton in sad anticipation of its pending disbandment in 2013 when the VC 10 came to the end of its service life. The very good news however, which came in June 2013, was that the Squadron would after all continue in operation after being selected to convert to the new 'Voyager' aircraft – the replacement for the VC10. "101 Squadron can continue to celebrate a proud heritage built on the courage and dedication of all those who served throughout its glorious 100-year history"

SEA FURY "SAWBONES"



Australia will soon have a flying Hawker Sea Fury for the first time in close to a decade as the crowd favourite Reno racer Sawbones has been purchased by warbird and aerobatic pilot Paul Bennet and has arrived "Down Under" for a March airshow debut. One of the batch of Hawker Fury airframes secured by Ed Jurist and David Tallichet from Iraq in 1970, FB.11 325 was restored to flight by George H Baker's American Aero Services with a Wright R-3350 in place of the original

Bristol Centaurus, folding wings and a second seat for a passenger. Registered N71GB and wearing Royal Australian Navy markings the aircraft first flew in 1990 and went on to compete at Reno 18 times, first under the name Sky Fury (as Race #711 and #47) and later as Southern Cross (Race #47 and #71). In 2008 she became Race #71 Sawbones with Royal Canadian Navy roundels over the kangaroos and quickly became a crowd favourite. However, her racing career ended with a canopy failure at the 2019 National Championship Air Races, pilot and former Space Shuttle commander Curt Brown making a safe landing, and later the aircraft went up for sale. The Royal Australian Navy operated the Sea Fury from 1948 until 1962 and the country has periodically been home a handful of privately-owned examples since 1985, but not since the 2010s has the distinctive shape of Hawker's finest been seen over Australia. That will change once this aircraft, which arrived in the country in mid-February and is now on the Australian civil register as VH-HPB, takes to the skies.

COMBATting DISINFORMATION:

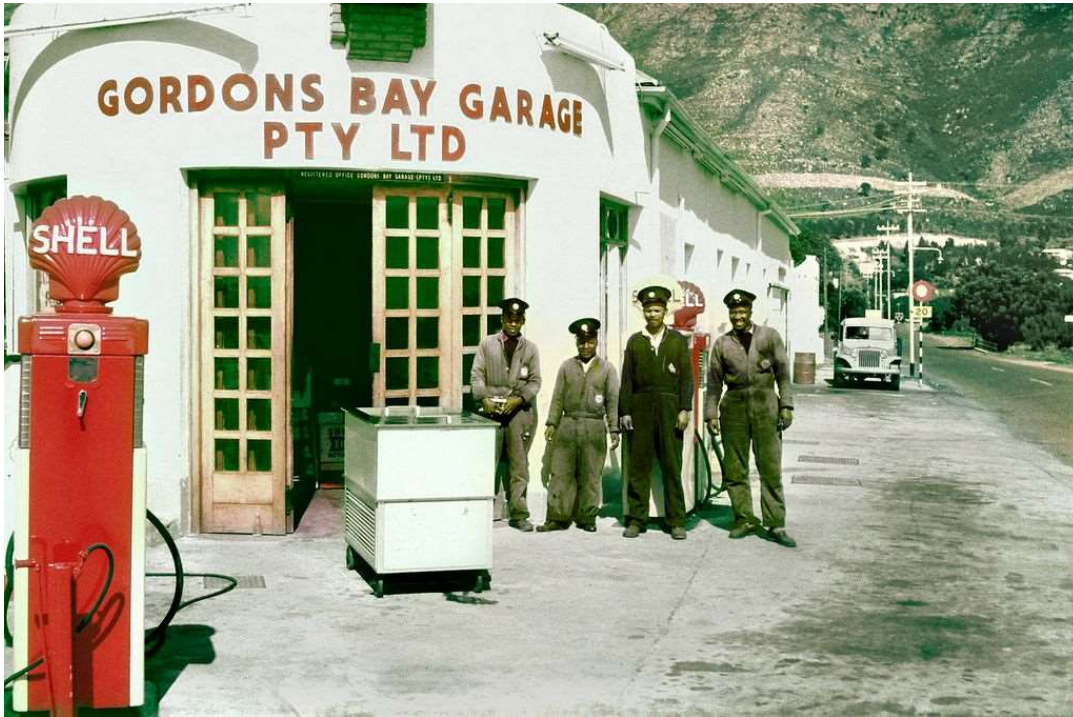
"An advanced group of Chinese hackers taking aim at critical US infrastructure has been active for as long as half a decade, American and allied intelligence agencies said in a joint statement on Wednesday. The US National Security Agency, US cyber watchdog CISA, the FBI and the Transportation Security Administration said that the group known as Volt Typhoon had quietly burrowed into the networks of aviation, rail, mass transit, highway, maritime, pipeline, water and sewage organizations." In the face of mounting cyber-attacks of this nature, and a flood of disinformation on social media, much of it state-sponsored by Russia and China, Western countries are making some attempt at cooperation... A global coalition of democracies is being formed to protect their societies from disinformation campaigns by foreign governments, the US special envoy on the issue has said. James Rubin, the special envoy for non-state propaganda and disinformation efforts at the US state department's global engagement centre (GEC), said the coalition hoped to agree on "definitions for information manipulation versus plain old opinions that other governments are entitled to have even if we disagree with them." The US, UK and Canada have already signed up to a formal framework agreement, and Washington hopes more countries will join. The GEC focuses solely on disinformation by foreign powers. Apart from trying to develop global strategies, it works to expose specific covert disinformation operations, such as a Russian operation in Africa to discredit US health services. The US, UK and Canada signed the framework to counter foreign state manipulation this month with the aim of addressing disinformation as a national security threat that requires coordinated government and civil society responses. "Now is the time for a collective approach to the foreign information manipulation threat that builds a coalition of like-minded countries committed to strengthening resilience and response to information manipulation," the framework says. It also encourages information-sharing and joint data analysis tools to identify covert foreign disinformation. A hugely experienced US official and journalist who has worked with diplomats such as Madeleine Albright in the past, Rubin admitted his first year as special envoy had been one of his most intellectually taxing because of the complex definitions surrounding disinformation. (*The Guardian*)

I AM NOT THE ONE... (TTITH)



The South African Police Service (SAPS) has explained that Police Minister Bheki Cele's use of its chopper at the African National Congress (ANC) election manifesto at the Moses Mabhida stadium on Saturday was not for his personal use. A video circulating on social media shows the police minister arriving at the event in the chopper, sparking criticism from South Africans who accuse the minister of abusing state resources. The Democratic Alliance (DA) has called for Cele to be billed in his personal capacity. "Cele's helicopter stunt was a gross abuse of state resources, and he should be made to pay for every flight minute that the helicopter was in the air," said Andrew Whitfield, DA shadow minister of police. The party has also called for a full SAPS internal investigation to review the process that authorised the use of the helicopter by Cele. "All the SAPS officers across the chain of command who signed off on this irregular use of a police asset should be subjected to a disciplinary process. State resources, including SAPS assets, should never be used for party political events. By commandeering a helicopter from the SAPS Air Wing Unit, Cele displayed an arrogant sense of entitlement that has become the hallmark of ANC politicians across the government system. He would rather divert SAPS' crime-fighting resources for his personal use than protect South Africans who are being terrorized by a crime wave that has become a national crisis." However, according to Brigadier Athlenda Mathe, the SAPS chopper was deployed to the ANC manifesto launch to monitor the large crowds. "The Natjoints as the operational arm of the JCPS cluster are responsible for the safety and security of all major events in the country according to the SASREA ACT," explained Mathe. "At all major events, various law enforcement agencies led by the SAPS pull resources together to ensure all events are incident and crime-free.

THE WAY IT WAS...1962:



It's still there, but in a modern guise. Now BP Gordons Bay

CHEERS FOR NOW:

Our next lunch today will be followed by the AGM of which notice has been duly given. Friday 1 March 2024 12h30 for 13h00 at Wanderers. Come and support RAFOC. Bookings are now closed and we will have a quorum attending or sending in a proxy vote, in need. A good attendance of 24 at the AGM, this is your Club and you have your say in how the Club is run. Lunch Cost is now R300pp and payment to our bank account would be appreciated. See you at the AGM!

Next Month's function will be the "Ännual Dinner" (now lunch) on Saturday 6 April, 12h30 for 13h00 at Wanderers.

TAILPIECE:

'Marksmen' in the firing line in RAF cadets woke rebrand... Campaigners accuse organisation of being 'over-sensitive' as shooting badges are given gender-neutral makeover... whatever next?

'The decimal point is older than historians previously thought. They believe it is 150 years older, tracing it back to an Italian mathematician from the 1440s.' Now, what isn't mentioned is: in the 1440s, a Scottish mathematician visited this Italian mathematician, and it is now known that in the Scotsman's luggage was a gift to the Italian - - a decimal point. *(Sent in by Rob Tannahill)*

MATT

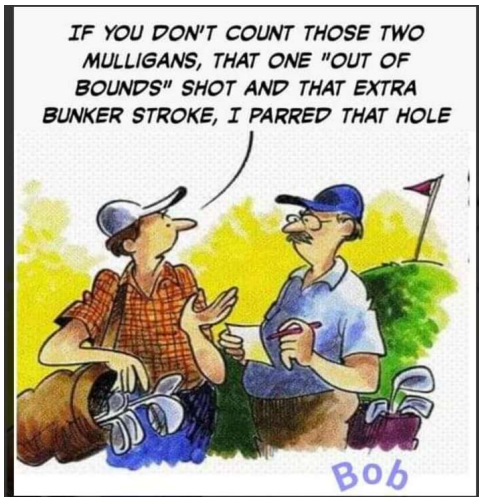


'It looks like our Trident missile has decided to work from home'

MATT



'I'm from the Conservative party and I'd rather not discuss politics'

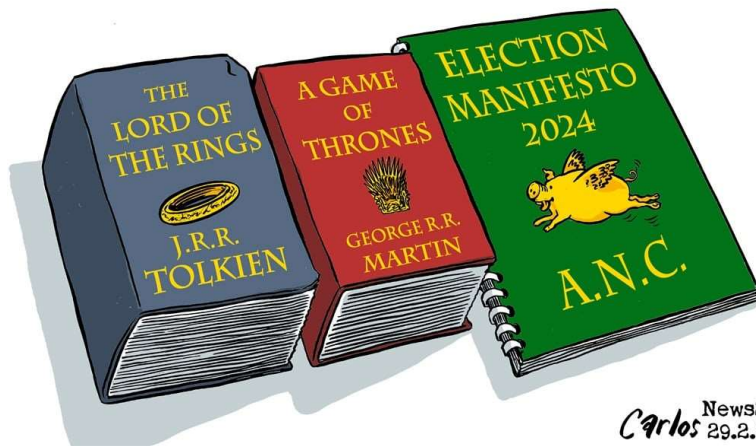


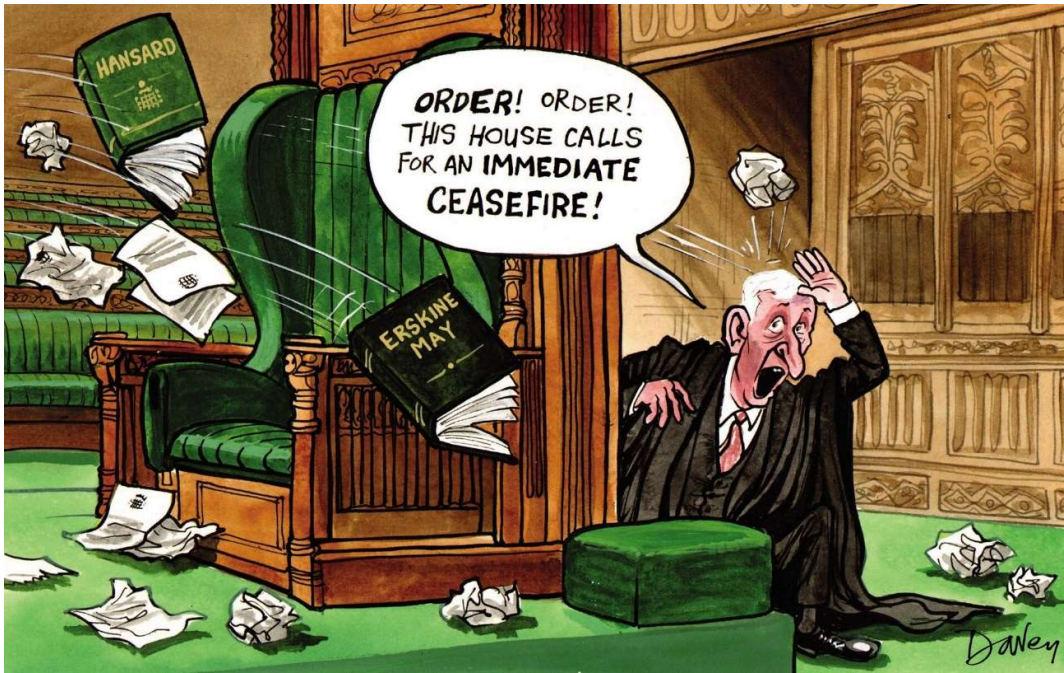
Potatoes make French fries, chips, and vodka. It's like the other vegetables aren't even trying.

hello lovely studio



EPIC WORKS OF FANTASY





IS UK READY FOR WAR?

A recent YouGov survey has revealed in detail the real reasons why Brits would refuse to fight or be called up to serve. It comes after a poll last month which shows that more than a third of under-40s would refuse conscription in the event of a world war. The data revealed that 38% (1,156) of under-40s say they would refuse to serve in the Armed Forces and 30% (913) say they would not serve even if Britain was facing imminent invasion. The latest YouGov survey gave respondents the chance to give their reasons for why they would refuse to serve with the British military in the event of war. It revealed that the most common reason people gave was that they are "unwilling to fight for the rich and powerful – who they see as profiteers or otherwise unfairly able to avoid the

consequences of conflict themselves." The poll surveyed 3,044 people and one in five (19% or 578) respondents said they were against war, or that they thought war does not solve anything. One person wrote: "I'm not interested in anything to do with war. It's pointless and destructive I don't want any part of it." Another person said: "War does not solve the world's problems, instead makes it worse." "I do not believe in humans killing other humans. Political leaders should reach agreements," someone else said. Nine per cent of respondents (274) said that the fear of death is the reason for not wanting to fight, with one person saying: "I don't have a death wish." One person gave their reason for not wanting to join as being unable to shoot straight. "I would be terrible at war. I am physically unfit and I do not perform well under traumatic conditions (e.g. war). I freeze as a response to trauma/threat, I am clumsy and my aim is poor. I would be a liability to whichever army I joined. "I do not wish to shoot/kill anyone. I also have a moral objection to joining the Armed Forces."

(ForcesNet)