



## ROYAL AIR FORCE OFFICERS' CLUB

Johannesburg  
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BRYANSTON 2021

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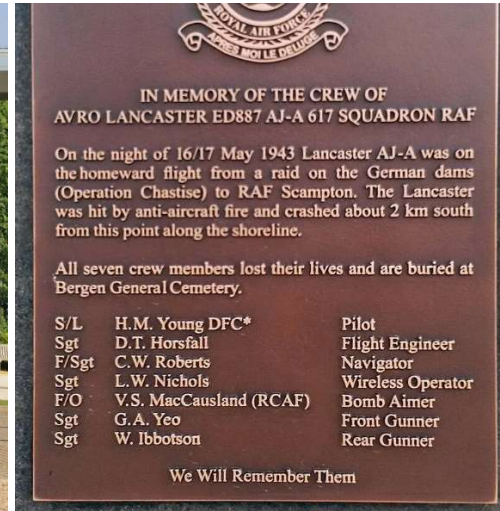
## RAFOC REMINISCENCES AND RAMBLINGS - WEEK 207 17<sup>th</sup> MAY 2024

### GREETINGS:

'Capture of medical aid funds': "Calamitous" NHI Bill signed into law... 'Rushed through': Medical community rejects NHI Bill... Zuma back in Court-yet again... another infant gunned down in hijacking in Shoshanguve... more grandstanding by the Mad Hatter... George building collapse rescue continues: death toll at 33... Fiks Mbalula R3 million armoured vehicle Inanda jaunt... Murray murders, Singhs, Porsches and McLaren's – toxic mix... Anglo American rejects new £34bn offer from mining rival BHP... MTN takes a beating in Nigeria... Cape Town multi-million rand losses to persistent infrastructure vandalism and theft... Eskom "rising from the ashes"?... Frankfort wins right to use own power... SA-led SADC force is leaving Mozambique – job not done...

Orcas attack and sink another yacht in Strait of Gibraltar... new Russian defence minister preparing for confrontation with the West... Vladimir Putin is preparing for a forever war... Biden signs bipartisan bill banning imports of Russian uranium... Russians try to stretch Ukraine defenders thin outside Kharkiv... Russian snipers halt evacuation of civilians... Georgia, Mass demonstrations against Russian influence... growing tensions over illegal immigration in Ireland... UK Civil Service trying to cover up the true scale of migrant crime... Three men in UK court accused of spying for Hong Kong – China furious... Mexico's cartels pick candidates, kill rivals... The Falklands become the most valuable piece of real estate on earth (see article at end)... Jeremy Clarkson hits the headlines yet again... Christians are now the most despised minority in Britain... Grant Shapps, "the lighthearted defence secretary with a gag for every warhead"... Yes, Britain is at a crossroads, but all directions currently lead to disaster ...

## CYCLING FOR COMMEMORATION:



In a feat of athleticism, seven RAF cyclists have set off this morning to cycle 300-miles from RAF Digby via the International Bomber Command Centre (IBCC) in Lincoln to a memorial near Amsterdam.

This challenge is being undertaken to commemorate the nineteen Lancaster aircraft from RAF's 617 Squadron who undertook a daring attack at the heart of German's industrial complex on May 16th 1943. Whilst a successful attack, of the 133 men who took part, 53 sacrificed their lives. As part of this trip, Dinghy Young and his crew's silhouettes will be travelling with the cyclists and installed at the Dutch memorial. The trip will culminate in a service at Castricum-an-Zee in Holland with their living relatives in attendance, where a memorial stands to identify the location their bodies were recovered from after washing up on the shore.

Nicky van der Drift, chief executive of the International Bomber Command Centre, said: "On 16 May 1943, nineteen Lancaster aircraft from RAF's 617 Squadron undertook a daring attack at the heart of German's industrial complex. While it was a successful operation, 53 individuals had to sacrifice their lives in its completion. Last year, to remember and recognise those sacrifices, we installed the 'Men of the Dams' silhouettes at our centre which included Dinghy Young and his crew centrally as they were the first ones to breach the Möhne Dam. Their likenesses were developed from real photographs to be as accurate to those they represent as possible. Now, to continue their legacy, those silhouettes will be able to stand proudly at the Castricum-an-Zee memorial. The cyclists taking on this challenge are doing a remarkable thing to add to and appreciate the Dambusters' memories, recognising their organisations, heritage and history, and we're very proud to be working with them." (RAF News)

## FRANK HARDY RAF:



*Frank at his 100<sup>th</sup> in 2021.*

Royal Air Force (RAF) veteran Frank Hardy, who has died aged 102, received a final salute at St Mary's Collegiate Church on Tuesday after dying peacefully at his Park Drive home at the age of 102. It was a fitting send-off for the World War 2 stalwart as his zest for life was celebrated by about 100 of his family members, friends and colleagues. Frank celebrated his 100th birthday on March 21, 2021. He was born in Middleton, Lancashire in England in 1922, where he was the eldest of six children. His parents owned a fish and chips shop in London, and from a very young age he had to work in the shop, in harsh conditions.

According to his son, Graham, Frank was taken out of school, aged 12, to work in the shop full time, and so when he had a chance to join the Royal Air Force, at the start of World War 2, he jumped at it and signed up on his 18th birthday. In June 1941, Frank was posted to Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and served out the war years there. In December 1945, Frank returned to England, but he did not stay long, and went back to Rhodesia and worked in the fish trade. On his next visit to England, he met his future wife, Winifred, at a dance in Manchester. They were married, and went to live in Rhodesia. Frank worked at Kingston's Bookshop in Gwelo (Gweru today) and Bulawayo, and he and Win had four children. In 1965, after Rhodesia declared independence from the Commonwealth, the family moved to Port Elizabeth, now Gqeberha, where Frank was manager of the Central News Agency (CNA) store in Main Street. Frank's secret to long life is a healthy diet, daily exercise and positive thinking. In addition to his children, Frank has 11 grandchildren and eight great grandchildren, with a ninth on the way. He was a devout parishioner at St Mary's Cathedral for 56 years, including eight years as churchwarden.

"With his ever-positive mindset, Dad has set a new goal of 105 years as the number to aim for. We think he might just get there!" Graham said, "Dad remains very mobile, enjoys walks, and works on his computer every day. He loves photography – he has over 200 000 photos on his computer, and enjoys reading. Above all, Dad is an inspirational man who lived his life to provide for his family, and to always be there as a person who you could turn to for anything." In the event, Frank made it to 102 – a jolly good innings, Sir!

We salute his memory, and We Will Remember Him. (*EP Herald, Various*)

## GRAND OLD GOONEY BIRD GOES WEST:



After 81 years of military service in South Africa, the C-47 Dakota is finally being withdrawn from the South African Air Force (SAAF). The C-47 Dakota entered SAAF service in 1943. At one stage in the 1980s, the SAAF had the distinction of operating the largest fleet of Dakotas in the world. The Dakota carried out yeoman service during the Border War from the 1960s through to the end of hostilities in 1988, performing such roles as troop transport, resupply, medical evacuation, paratrooping and other ancillary activities. AFB Ysterplaat-based 35 Squadron,

which operates the type, was this week told that the aircraft will be phased out. This is hardly surprising as they have not flown for about two years. In September last year Armscor told Parliament's Portfolio Committee on Defence and Military Veterans (PCDMV) that all eight C-47TPs in the SAAF's inventory were grounded, with the prospect of them never flying again due to challenges finding a maintenance provider. A request for maintenance last year elicited no valid bids, and Armscor was forced to cancel the process for the second time. "The Dakota C-47TP is a very old aircraft, thus the support for this aircraft is very limited in South Africa and the world," Armscor stated. "Due to the age of the aircraft, it is no longer supported by the OEM [original equipment manufacturer]. There are no AMOs [aircraft maintenance organisations] with a Dakota C-47TP stipulated on the Operational Specification." (*DefenceWeb*)

## OBITUARY: PETER BADCOCK:

Peter Badcock is a Southern African, conceived in the Protectorate of Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) and born in Pretoria in 1949. He grew up and was educated in the Colony of Southern Rhodesia, later Rhodesia before its transition to Zimbabwe. In 1978, Peter cut short a career in public relations and advertising to produce his first book, *Shadows of War*. By then a Territorial Officer in the Rhodesian Security Forces he followed this with *Faces of War* in 1980 before leaving Zimbabwe for South West Africa (Namibia), to write and draw his third book, *Images of War*, published in 1981. He also drew the iconic images of Oom Schalk Lourens and other characters for *The Illustrated Bosman*.



Peter subsequently practiced internationally as a development specialist and researcher in education, HIV management, information systems and policy but has remained first and foremost an artist and writer. Peter and his wife Toni were resident in Clarens for a number of years, where he ran Art Galleries, and had interests in several local businesses. A BSAP colleague wrote "It is with a heavy heart, I have to advise that Peter Badcock passed away yesterday. He had been receiving treatment at hospital in Durban for over a year for cancer. I retained contact with Peter on WhatsApp, the last comms being on the 18th April. He was in hospital in Durban and not once in our correspondence did he lose his sense of humour and I quote: "Back in hospital ironically. A dysfunctional liver result of antibiotic poisoning but not booze which seems a waste. Best to you" Unquote.

## DRONE SPRINT VELOCE 330:



There could soon be something new in the skies over Ukraine this summer - and it's bad news for Russian invasion forces. The Veloce 330 is a French jet-powered loitering munition that in tests has already reached almost 250mph, covering 30 miles in just 16 minutes on only half a tank of fuel. It's equipped with a core generating charge - a modified version of a regular shaped charge that can be remotely operated to defeat the active defences of armoured vehicles and a navigation system without GPS – making it insensitive to jamming. It mirrors the Iranian Shahed 238 drone, the



unwanted newcomer used in Ukraine by Russia that has now also appeared in Israel. However, the Veloce also has vertical take-off and landing capability and three hours of autonomous flight. Thanks to its optronic ball sensor array, the drone can detect a vehicle more than nine miles away by day and almost two miles away at night. A tranche of prototypes is expected to be delivered to Kyiv for testing this summer. (*ForcesNet*)

## **AFRICAN AEROSPACE AND DEFENCE 2024:**

The twelfth edition of the Africa Aerospace and Defence (AAD) exhibition in September this year will host several hubs to showcase the latest innovations in energy, general aviation, and drone/counter-drone technologies. Giving an update on the 18-22 September exhibition, the organisers said that more than half of the available exhibition Space at Air Force Base Waterkloof has already been booked out and confirmed.

“As organisers, we want to position the country as the global pinnacle of innovation, excellence, and a preferred investment destination,” said Nakedi Phasha, Exhibition Director at AAD. “We anticipate that more than 30 000 trade visitors will engage with over 300 exhibitors. Visitors can also attend our maiden conference edition to hear thought leaders in the industry, academia, and the defence sector provide insights into topical issues that directly impact the industry. Furthermore, we project at least 60 000 visitors will attend the public air show days to witness the exhilarating aerobatics spectacle.”



The projected figures are up significantly from 2022, when 203 exhibitors from 24 countries attended the show, down from 486 exhibitors from 40 countries in 2018 and 532 exhibitors from 34 countries in 2016. Trade visitors in 2022 amounted to 23 000 people from 76 countries, versus 32 538 in 2018 (112 countries) and 33 862 in 2016 (105 countries). The drop in numbers in 2022 was due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the fact that the 2020 edition did not take place because of it.

“Looking to the future, our focus will be on further increasing international participation, fostering collaborations, and exploring new sponsorship and partnership opportunities to grow the event’s footprint into Africa. We want to provide our partners with a premier event that contributes to the global aerospace and defence market,” said Phasha.

## **BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU...**

Auditors from the U.S. Transportation Department’s Office of Inspector General (OIG) will evaluate the FAA’s surveillance of United Airlines maintenance activity, flagging “recent safety events” as a



catalyst for the move. "Our objective will be to assess FAA's oversight of United Airlines' "Specifically, we will evaluate FAA's actions to address maintenance non-compliances and violations at the air carrier." United's front-line operators are already under stepped-up FAA surveillance following a series of incidents. The agency is ensuring the events, which ranged from a runway excursion to losing a wheel, are not linked to fundamental weaknesses in the airline's safety and quality systems. The OIG audit will examine how effective the FAA has been at making sure United's systems meet regulatory standards.

The DOT OIG, fulfilling a 2015 request from members of the House aviation subcommittee, launched a series of audits on airline maintenance oversight. It has produced reports on FAA's surveillance of Allegiant Air, American Airlines, and Southwest Airlines, and is looking into SkyWest Airlines.

### **DIDDLY SQUAT: WHATEVER NEXT?**

Jeremy Clarkson makes huge move away from Diddly Squat Farm in surprise announcement: Former Top Gear host Jeremy Clarkson has set his sights on taking over The Coach and Horses pub, which is located opposite his Hawkstone Brewery. Jeremy Clarkson has made a shock move away from Diddly Squat, as he reportedly plans to take over the nearby pub. The motor enthusiast, who lives in the Cotswolds, hopes to "champion British farming". Earlier this year the Cotswold District Council approved a new premises licence for The Coach and Horses. The rural country pub is located just over the road from Clarkson's Hawkstone Brewery. The licence also grants live music to be allowed outside until 9pm and sells alcohol seven days a week from 11am until 11pm.

According to the BBC, the pub is in need of an investment of £750,000 due to its "poor state." It is understood that there is a "hole in the roof" and the pub's agent said in a licencing meeting in February that they would like a new tenant. They said: "It would have a really good food offer to encourage people to visit. There would have to be significant investment."

### **MACH LOOP' DRONE OPERATOR WARNING:**



Some of our regular followers will have noticed that we have had to place new warning signs around the Machynlleth Loop area. This, we are sorry to say, is now a necessity, as there have been two

reported near misses in recent weeks that could have had catastrophic consequences. Most drone pilots know to behave with appropriate caution – but it only takes the action of one reckless individual to cause a fatality.

Military aircraft from both the UK and our NATO Allies have made valuable use of the Machynlleth Loop area for decades – in order to practise the vital skills of safe low flying in a designated area, that permits our aircraft to go below 400 ft and drones used in such a location present an obvious hazard.

The legal position is very clear: namely, that “a person must not recklessly or negligently cause or permit an aircraft (drones included) to endanger any person or property.”

We will be replacing and updating similar warning signs around RAF Valley and RAF Mona in the near future.

Finally, a thank you to those drone pilots who fly their drones safely in safe locations – and an especial thanks to those individuals amongst our many followers – who have on occasions stepped in and firmly and politely asked others to desist from dangerous behaviour on those occasions they have witnessed it. It is very much appreciated by us all. ‘Mach Loop’ Drone operator warning – sUAS News – The Business of Drones (*sUAS News*)

## **MONTY’S MOTOR CAR...**



Former Top Gear presenter Richard Hammond has returned the Rolls-Royce belonging to Field Marshal Montgomery to the Royal Logistic Corps Museum. The celebrity car fanatic drove the Rolls-Royce, previously used by the famed wartime Field Marshal, to the museum in Worthy Down from his Smallest Cog workshop where the vehicle had been restored. Collections manager Sam Jolley said the museum was delighted with the result. “It has been quite a daunting process to watch a museum object being stripped back to bare metal,” said Mr Jolley, “however, it has also been extremely interesting to see the history underneath the 1970s paintwork. We are absolutely delighted with the finish and grateful for the work that the Smallest Cog have put into the restoration, ensuring the preservation of the Rolls for decades to come.

The car was returned to the museum ahead of the D-Day commemorations, which will mark 80 years since the operation. Troops greeted the vehicle as Mr Hammond parked it outside of the museum and he presented it to museum director Simon Walmsley and Brigadier Mike Caldicott. The Rolls-Royce was made in 1939 and served as Field Marshal Montgomery’s staff car in France and

Germany. It was also the first civilian vehicle to disembark in Normandy after D-Day, landing on Juno Beach.

There's a wartime story concerning this remarkable Rolls-Royce Phantom III that bears repeating. Its long-term chauffeur Percy Parker was flagged down by a policeman in London's East End and accused of exceeding the speed limit. The constable was reaching for his notebook when the rear window was wound down and a Kansan voice sharply informed the policeman: 'Nobody ever won a war at 30mph.' It was Five-Star General Dwight D Eisenhower, Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Forces in Europe, for once not being driven by the delicious Kay Summersby. Suitably chastised, the constable waved the Phantom on its way. Eisenhower was not to be this Rolls- Royce's only famous wartime associate. (*ForcesNet and others*)

## **CHEERS FOR NOW:**

Many years ago, in 1919, after the "War to end all Wars", Churchill said these prescient words: "The Bolsheviks robbed Russia at one stroke of two most precious things, peace and victory - the victory that was within her grasp and the peace which was her dearest desire... her life ever since has been one long struggle of agonizing war." Even as we celebrate the 80th Anniversary of D Day, and the liberation of occupied Europe, we look at European history since, the enslavement of many states by the USSR until 1991, now today again European nations are threatened by a Bolshevik inspired war, as is raging in Ukraine. First Crimea, now Ukraine, next Georgia and then - Europe at large, as the Putin regime openly threatens...

For the next lunch on 7th June we will have another aviation subject. This will focus on the disposal of the Atlas Cheetah and the Mirage F1 aircraft withdrawn from SAAF service. Vic Zazeraj, now of Paramount, accompanied by Cobus Toerien, (SAAF Retd) will be the presenters. Vic was in the SA Diplomatic service for a good number of years and Cobus is a flight safety specialist and former Mirage pilot. Both are well qualified to talk on this topic, and this should be another not to be missed lunch... You can book and pay at any time before the lunch, R300pp. [booking@rafoc.org](mailto:booking@rafoc.org).

Looking further ahead, Colonel Thornton "TC" Schultz, retired USAF F111 pilot and former US Defense Attaché to SA, will talk to us at the next Ladies Lunch on 5th July. Be sure it again will be a 'not to be missed' lunch.

## **TAILPIECE:**

Last Monday Red Bull Skydivers Marco Fürst and Marco Waltenspiel became the first people to wingsuit fly through London's iconic Tower Bridge. The two wingsuiters reached a top speed of 246 km/h in their dive over the river Thames before performing a complex aerial maneuver known as a flare to fly upwards after the close proximity of Tower Bridge to safely open their parachutes, and land on a raft.

Watch the action on YouTube.com: *Flying Through London's Tower Bridge (World First)*



MATT



Jeremy Corbyn is joining the Conservatives. He says he wouldn't want to be in a Labour party that had Natalie Elphicke in it'

MATT



I suppose I wouldn't object if Stormy Daniels wanted to become a member'



Ash @adult\_mom

I turned off the TV today and made my kids play board games like it was 1955 and now I know why all of our grandparents were alcoholics

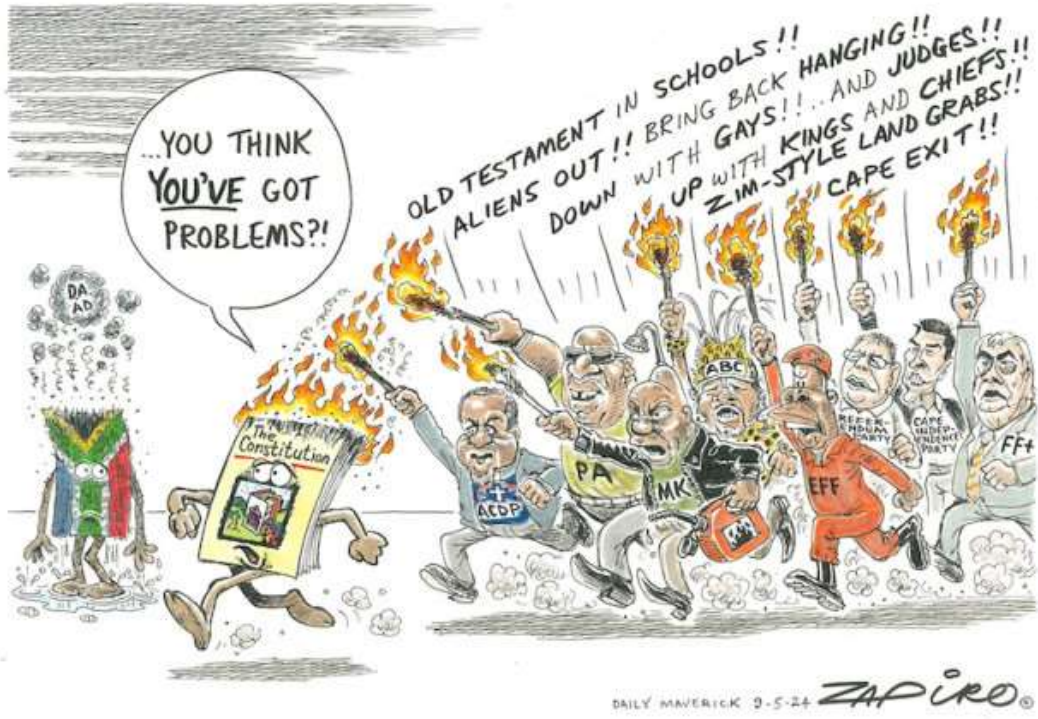
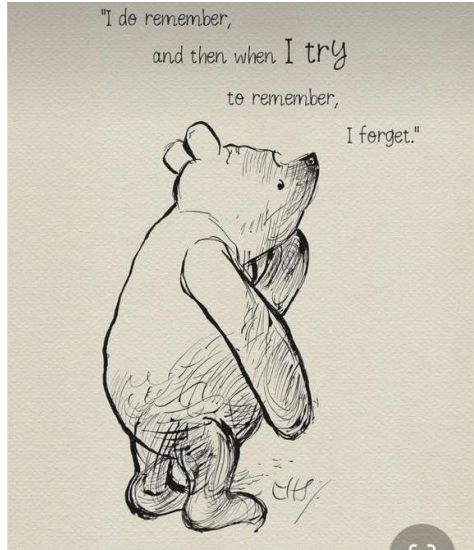
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AS A BOY,  
I COULD CLIMB ANY  
TREE I COULD FIND  
AND RUN FOR MILES  
ON END.

THESE DAYS I  
STEADY MYSELF  
BEFORE I FART.







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## WHY THE FALKLANDS IS IMPORTANT:

According to evidence given to the Commons Environment Audit Committee (EAC) last week, Russia has discovered an oil field in Antarctica roughly ten times the size of the North Sea's entire 50 year output. Much of the field is believed to be in the Weddell sea, just to the east of the Antarctic peninsula and very much in the middle of the UK's "cheese slice" down there – the British Antarctic Territory. In Antarctica, boundaries are just "claims" rather than solidly "owned", but it is of note that Britain's claims in the region overlap with those of Chile and Argentina. It's a perfect chance for Vladimir Putin to start causing trouble – and it may have made the Falklands islands the most valuable real estate on earth.

Understanding why means understanding what it's like in Antarctica. In my experience, operating down there is a mix of wonderment at the vast bleakness of it and having to be on top of your game as the weather does its best to catch you out. The trope that "you get all four seasons in a day" is not quite correct. You get three – the bad ones. Occasionally the sun comes out, presenting a fleeting opportunity for the most perfect photos, but that is invariably just a tease – freezing gales are imminent.

Having said that, the location of these oil fields in the Weddell Sea is not the hardest place to work. You are protected to an extent from the oceanic swell that endlessly circles the continent by the Antarctic Peninsula, and also by the sea ice that further dampens it. But the further south you go, the thicker that ice becomes, and by the time you get to the UK base in Halley, you need to be on your ice game. The irony of working down there in HMS Endurance, named after Shackleton's ship that got stuck in thick ice and crushed in that exact sea, was not lost on us. The point is, working down there is ultimately demanding and to a large extent, the reason the non-exploitative component of the Antarctic treaty – which which works to maintain the region as a natural reserve devoted to peace and science – has been upheld. Until now.

In addition to invading Ukraine, Russia is involved in any number of maritime grey zone activities around the world. Smuggling oil through the Baltic and elsewhere using the uninsured and poorly maintained “dark fleet” tankers is one. Ongoing submarine activity around the undersea cables on which the functioning of our economy depends is another. Blockading the Black Sea is another, although this has been beaten back for now. The Russian presence in western Yemen around the time the undersea cables were cut is another, as is the military installation building with China in the High North, and on, and on, and on.

These activities are all designed to be hard to (legally) counter and, should you decide to counter them, produce “with what?” as a swift response. In the case of its activities in Antarctica, Russia, of course, claims to be conducting scientific research rather than prospecting for oil. As Klaus Dodds put it, “Russia’s activities need to be understood as a decision to undermine the norms associated with seismic survey research, and ultimately a precursor for forthcoming resource extraction.”

Saying they are looking to extract resources is a world away from actually doing so, but the direction of travel is clear.

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The next step in the Russian grey zone playbook will surely be to involve Argentina. With their “cheese slice” of territory overlapping ours, collaboration down there is all but a given and on a diplomatic level will bear fruit more quickly than the oil itself. The ebb and flow of Argentinian rhetoric professing an interest in retaking the Falklands has been steady since 1982 although a combination of our defences there and their ageing military stops most people from taking it seriously. But were they to be emboldened by Russian diplomatic and possibly military assistance, with the added temptation of having “las Malvinas” available as a forward base for the new oil in Antarctica, it’s not hard to imagine them having another go.

At which point, if we have to defend them, the “with what” issue comes back. The Royal Navy is at a low point, with both hull and personnel numbers creating tension at every turn. Whatever form the Defence Review takes after the election, this issue should be higher up the list than it has been in recent years.

Promises of 2.5% of GDP by 2030 or whenever “conditions suit” need to be shelved for cold, hard cash now. *(Tom Sharpe, in The Telegraph)*