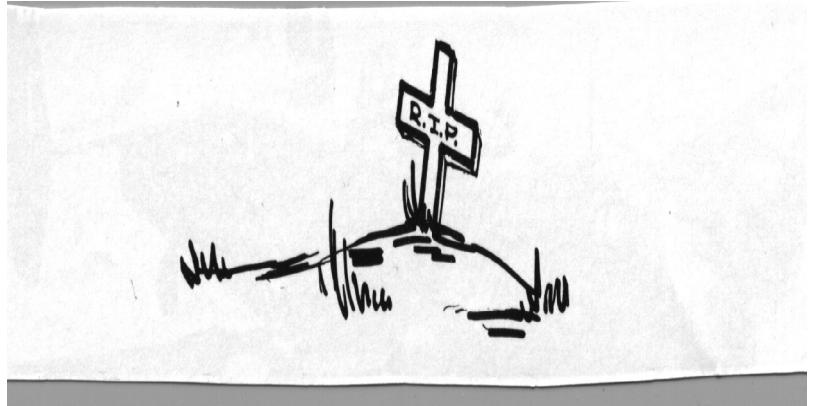


971 RCAF AIR MARSHAL SLEMON WING

Air Force Association Newsletter November 07



I am a statistic. Some of you think of me briefly every 11 November. If you really want me to rest in peace, then do everything in your power to eliminate the root causes of war. You can start by using your bicycle more and your car less.

Social Calendar

- Aug 18 Our annual feast at Charlene and Bill Champions's ranch was made all the more cozy when the 56 of us had to take refuge inside from a passing shower.
- Sep 16 We had a packed house for the Battle of Britain ceremonies and brunch at the Retired Enlisted Association hall. Over 20 retired members of the Association attended plus a large Regular Force contingent and RAF representatives from Denver. LGen Bouchard, S/L Mullen, RAF, Bill Edwards, Miles McMillan, and Padre Greenwood all shared the podium with Darrell Levitt as master of ceremonies.
- Oct 06 39 of us enjoyed the always-great party at Joan and Jim Peterson's. During the course of the evening six people promised inputs for the January newsletter. I could use a little advice on what fertilizer to use to prompt these promises to grow into healthy reality.
- Nov 11 Armistice/Memorial/Veterans Day: Your Wing expects another large turnout, so we will see you there.
Sunday Ceremonies start in Memorial Park at 1100, but for ease of parking be there by 1030.
- Nov 04 1730 Annual 971 Wing Game and Dinner. Game time 5:30 pm at the Air Force Academy Field House.
Sunday Dinner to follow after (approx 7:30 pm) at the OverTime Sports Bar & Grill, Southeast Corner of Dublin and Union. Game and meal included for \$10/person. Guests welcome. RSVP to Gary.
- Nov 25 Grey Cup, 3 pm. OverTime Sports Bar & Grill. Food and Drink Specials. Open to all. Details TBA.
Sunday

CHANGING OF THE GUARD: Unlike some presidential campaigns, ours is free of rancor, speeches, annoying TV ads, and candidates. No donations are needed for electioneering. Others might benefit from copying us.

It is with relief and thanks that we welcome Paul Ellis, who succumbed to pushing, as our next president. So, you multitudes out there who wish to contact this Wing should address: Paul Ellis, Box 187, 408 West Bowman Avenue, Woodland Park, Colorado, 80866 or rcafret@aol.com

We are indebted to Art Nielsen for 8 years of excellent service as vice president then president.

Now, where are those candidates to replace, or at least help, the newsletter editor? It appears you are still stuck with Ye Olde Scribe, gswenar@pcisys.net, so flood him with inputs.

The Editor's Corner

NANISIVIK - CAREFUL NOW!

One of the crimes perpetrated by us southerners is penetrating the North to bring a strange religion with opposing factions, southern education, fur-trading posts, rifles, ski-doo's, and employment in mines or at military bases built for passing threats. When the mines are exhausted or the military situation changes we depart, leaving the natives stranded, but having to cope with our litter. Nanisivik is 21 kilometres along a gravel road from Arctic Bay (Ikpiarjuk, "the pocket"). We had a weather station in Arctic Bay from 1942 to 1952 employing a number of Inuit. In Nanisivik we had a lead-zinc mine until 2003 then abandoned it and the Inuit employees. Now, it has dawned on us that Nanisivik, sheltered on Adams Sound off Admiralty Inlet (the world's longest fjord), off Lancaster Sound, the entrance to the Northwest Passage, is the ideal spot for a deep-water port and facilities to supervise traffic that will come with global warming.

Arctic Bay has a population of 646, 92% Inuit. There was an Anglican mission there 1937-1946, then a Catholic mission that also closed. The Hudson Bay Company that populated posts across the North with Scots who have been most generous with genetic donations, arrived in Arctic Bay in the 1920s. Today, few caribou are seen in the area but polar bears, walrus, and narwhal are common.

Nanisivik is a wise choice for a site to safeguard the Northwest Passage from those gluttons out there who see only monetary returns and have no regard for the natives or for the environment. We do not need increased population in the North. We do need well-placed permanent locations which, even if operated without profit, are vital to a nation's stability. Civilizations come and go and can be compared to houses built of cards. They are easily destroyed, often from within, and it takes generations and much suffering to create new societies out of the ruins of the old.

A viable nation needs a strong agricultural, environmental, research, manufacturing, and scientific base. Outsourcing any of these completely is a recipe for immediate gain but ultimate disaster. It is like the history of lighthouses. Automation saves us money but we lose the search and rescue capabilities they once provided.

A tribute to the human brain, the Inuit have leaped from the stone to the computer age with agility. We need to work with them for a slow, steady, permanent improvement of our North without the ups and downs of previous actions.

WASTE

Uneasy at watching today's waste with its piles of garbage and the swamping of grandchildren with a rain of gifts they can never adequately use or appreciate, I cannot help but think back as we oldies are prone to do. In 1930, during the Great Depression, my father was fortunate enough to keep his job with reduced pay. Even so, the desire of my brother, sister, and myself to attend the Saturday matinees with their adventure series had to be restrained. The fare was a whopping ten cents so we had to take turns and relate to the other two how the hero and heroine escaped from the mess they were in only to find themselves in another mess at the end of the current episode. This, actually, was good training for us in remembering and relating. One hot summer day in 1944, I was walking across our sandy POW compound with Lufwaffe Hauptmann Hans Pieber who spotted a snotty handkerchief discarded on the sand. Criticizing such waste, he picked it up, remarking that, if none of us wanted it, he could wash it and use it. In 1979, while taking a group of students to the Model United Nations meet at the University of Northern Colorado, I arranged for the students to be served a lunch composed only of the healthy, but bland, UN once-daily mixture provided to refugees, and to donate to the UN what they would otherwise have spent on lunch. About half of the students bravely accepted this as their only meal of the day. I did notice the others sneaking off to a nearby fast-food outlet, unable to give more than lip service to the destitute of this world. In 1994 we had our roof recovered. Discovering the roofers had left behind a roll of tar paper, a roll of bitumen, and a bag of roofing nails, I phoned them to remind them they had forgotten expensive items. It was not worth their while to come back and retrieve them. Of course all this pales to the staggering waste of electioneering or to the millions of large cars carrying only one occupant. Our excesses, I fear, will present a disastrous world to our grandchildren whose love for us will vanish.

ARMISTICE, VETERANS', REMEMBRANCE DAY

Let us forget the Hollywood version of wars being limited to the major players and remember all those millions of innocents caught up in the mistakes of power-hungry demons who believe military force is the way to go. Swept up in the maelstrom, the sufferings and sacrifices of Algerians, Armenians, Askaris, Bulgarians, Estonians, Fijians, Finns, Mongolians, Rhodesians, Senegalese, and so many others are forgotten. The substantial contributions of countries such as Australia, Canada, China, New Zealand, and South Africa are remembered mainly in their own countries. In the English-speaking world the media is dominated by the US and UK. Very few publications, excellent as they may be, from other countries find their way into the mainstream book shelves.

Our world is a frightening arena of eat or be eaten but humans, with superior brains, have been around for 50,000 years. If, in all that time, we have not organized ourselves so that one human need not fear another, we do not deserve to remain the dominant world species. We should give way to Bonobos who use sex, not aggression, to solve differences.

BUT, WHO OR WHAT IS IN CHARGE?

As our bodies contain ten times more bacterial than human cells, we must examine the harmony within us in order to chart a course to make this a more livable world. This internal harmony can, and does, erupt at times and for reasons not fully understood, into conflict that harms the body just as humans harm our world. If you were to read this newsletter out loud you would release 10,000 bacteria-laden droplets into the air. Now, that is extreme waste even if those bacteria are, as far as we know, free-loaders. **Unless, of course, those bacteria carry the wisdom found in the newsletter.**

VISITING ROME? If you were doing this 2,000 years ago, it would be preferable (like today) to cultivate friends living there so that you could reciprocate on accommodating them when they visited your town. Rome is expensive and noisy. A town house costs 500,000 denarii. If you are a soldier your monthly pay is 37 denarii, augmented of course by your plunder of enemy towns and farms. A pair of boots will cost you 20 denarii while one denarii will get you 4 pints of wine or 4 loafs of bread.

If you have to find your own accommodation in Rome, select a place near the baths because the water from these will flush the long rows of circular holes that make up the communal toilets where you can sit and gossip or discuss world events. Do watch out for teenagers. Their favourite prank is to light a wad of cloth and set it sailing down the flushing stream which will give you a scorched bottom and ruin your day.

MIKHAIL KALASHNIKOV would, in this country, be afloat in money from royalties. In Russia he is afloat in esteem. Outgunned by superior German weaponry in WWII, he developed, while a Soviet general, his AK-47 that has now passed 100 million copies in sales. It is cheap, rugged, reliable under all battle conditions, and a current favourite of revolutionaries. He is now 87 and, this July, was feted with fireworks and a canon salute. He blames politicians for its continued misuse and claims he would have much rather developed farm machinery to improve the lot of peasants.

ISRAELI SCHOOL TEXTS: This scribe, who has been criticized for criticising Israel, now applauds them for finally replacing one-sided school history texts with ones that include the oppression of, and plight of, Palestinians forced from their homes to allow the building of the Israeli state.

WORKING TOO HARD? France has 30, Germany 24, the UK and Canada 28, and the US zero legislated paid holidays per year. The average person in the US takes 12 days off and works 150 hours per year longer than in the 1970s, just to keep up with the Jones while sacrificing quality time with families.

My nomination for the biggest cut back is Canada Post that reduced the Royal Mail that used to provide fast trans-continental service with 11 deliveries per week to households for 2 cents per letter and turned it into a 52-cents per letter, 5 deliveries a week service, at a pace that gave rise to the term "snail mail".

THE BOEING 787 DREAMLINER, due to commence commercial service in 2008 with 200-300 seats and a range of 8,500 miles, will use 20% less fuel than current jets. Flying at 35,000 feet it will be pressurized for 6,000 feet and will be less dry than the current pressurization which is restricted to 8,200 feet because of metal fatigue and moisture causing corrosion. Built of lighter, and stronger, composites, the 787 will be friendlier to the environment, nullified, of course, by the steady increase in the number of jets crowding our skies.

Those tiny winglets you now see on the tip of aircraft wings give a fuel saving of 3% by improving aerodynamic efficiency.

PETER STUBBS - Yet another of my dwindling number of WWII friends has flown on.

On 11 May 1940, Peter was the observer of a 3-man Fairey Battle crew of 218 Squadron that had 12 well camouflaged aircraft scattered among the trees of a grass strip in Auberive-sur-Suippes, France. They took off in pairs to fly at tree-top level to bomb German tank concentrations in Luxembourg. Almost immediately they encountered a continuous hail of lead from German troops that were advancing much faster than anticipated, followed by numerous horse-drawn supply trains. Peter, with his front gun, did considerable damage but their accompanying aircraft crashed in flames, soon to be followed by Peter's blazing aircraft. Struggling out of the wreckage they were fired upon by approaching army troops but were saved by a Luftwaffe officer who rushed to intervene. Peter and the NZ pilot, P/O Murray, were wounded and were carried off along with the wireless air gunner. Their bombs then exploded, killing many of the German troops who had surrounded the blazing wreckage. Days later he reached a hospital where 4 men and a female nurse held him rigid while a doctor, without anaesthetic, removed shrapnel from his wrist and sewed back on a sliced-off finger Peter had carried. He was then sent to a POW camp in Lamsdorf, then to Barth on the Baltic.

With parts stolen while on work parties and with others home made, Peter and two others constructed a radio capable of receiving BBC news. Suspecting this radio and knowing the BBC broadcast at 2100 and 2359 the Germans cut off power to the camps at those times. Peter developed a long pole and clip that, at midnight, they would push out a window to clip onto an overhead wire that remained live.

Peter also described mingling with numerous Soviet prisoners dying of malnutrition and German doctors removing body parts for study.

Taken to Memel with appendicitis, Peter was operated on by an orderly as no doctor was available. The operation was botched and a nurse, furious at RAF gangsters, forced him out, as he tried to hold his stomach in. Peter was on the point of dying when a surgeon-general happened by on a tour, saw Peter's condition, dropped everything, reopened the long incision, and put things right.

While in Stalag Luft III Peter manufactured items to help the British doctor such as reflectors from tins cans for the 100-watt light bulb used in operations, and a pneumothorax machine for collapsing lungs of TB patients,

In the closing days of the war when Peter was among 300 prisoners marching west, 4 RAF/RCAF Typhoons strafed them, killing 30, and missing Peter by millimetres.

After the war Peter and his wife, Audrey, emigrated to Western Australia where he remained active in the POW Association.

His eulogy was given by Alex Kerr, a 115 Sqn Wellington pilot, shot down on Hamburg, 11 May 1941, acquiring wounds that took many months of hospitalization to heal.

IT PAYS TO BE YOUR OWN HISTORIAN:

Julius Caesar needed the publicity that military victories bring in order to advance his political ambitions in Rome. In 60 BC he started his 8-year campaign to subdue Celtic Gaul by destroying Celtic farming communities, the first being the Helvetii of Switzerland, taking advantage of the fact that the Celts, in spite of having a great civilization with equal rights for women and formidable male and female warriors, were scattered tribes with no overall unity. These 9,000 Helvetii were migrating westward when Caesar pounced, slaughtering 6,000 of them. With good command of clear, concise Latin, he sent dispatches to Rome of courageous hard-fought victories and packed off thousands of prisoners to serve Rome as slaves. In 8 years in Gaul he killed 1,192,000 men, women, and children, most of whom were peaceful farmers, but made out to be formidable opponents of Rome, harkening back to 390 BC when Celts had conquered Rome. It was Caesar, then, who brought sweet revenge, so should be rewarded!

IT IS ALL OUR FAULT! People in poor countries are dying from heart and cancer diseases at five times the rate of those in affluent countries. We had to go and raise their average life expectancy from 47 to 65 over the past 40 years thus forcing them to live long enough to fall victim to what kills us. We have failed to also provide the costly medical care that goes along with this.

BREHON LAW: Under this Celtic system, wrongdoing was not a civil offense but a violation of human rights. Anyone found guilty had to make restitution not to the state but to the victim or to his/her family. The law also covered hospitals that could not turn away any individual in need of help. Before the 1800s, Irish medical documents were the world's largest source of medical knowledge.

THE BRITISH ARMY contains soldiers from 57 countries including 3,500 Gurkhas from Nepal, 2,000 Fijians, and 975 Jamaicans.

HALLOWE'EN & ALL SAINTS DAY: These date back well over 2,000 years to the Celtic festival, *Samain*, dedicated to all from the other world. Spirits of the dead came back to sit with their descendants, so it was customary to set food out for them. Christianity converted these to All Hallows' Eve and All Saints Day.

ANCIENT EGYPT: No worry about your clothes being out of style. Fashions changed little in 3,000 years. No health insurance premiums as health care was universal and paid for by the state. Doctors all specialized in various parts of the body. Among the pharaoh's many doctors was one with the exalted title "Keeper of the King's Rectum". Food was plentiful. Women had equal legal status although considered somewhat lower than men in overall status. No Christian-Hebrew-Islamic quarrels as there was a tolerant attitude towards all gods. The building blocks of all creation were originally in Nun, a watery chaos of darkness from which Khepre put himself together and arose to create other gods to assist him: Shu, the

god of air and Tefnut, the goddess of rain. They married to produce Geb, god of the earth and Nut, goddess of the sky. Geb and Nut had 5 children, all gods. Common people arose from tears shed by Khepre who became the sun god, Ra who ruled for 992 years before passing on and leaving responsibilities to pharaohs. Originally the gods lived among the people to organize them into society. Most were benign, but there were some that represented human failings. At death you enter the Grand Hall of Justice to face the gods of the universe. Your heart is weighed against a feather. If you have lived a good life your conscience is light and you pass into the Elysian Fields. If not your conscience is heavy and your soul is devoured by Ammut, the crocodile god. This is the fate of all those who brought terror to others during their lives.

Khepre was depicted as a Scarab (Dung) beetle as it was obvious they also sprang spontaneously from inanimate balls of dung. As they rolled balls of dung across the ground, Khepre, or Ra, rolled the sun across the sky.

Nut stretches her nude body across the night sky. She swallows the sun each evening and gives birth to it each morning. Her four limbs mark the four cardinal points and the stars are jewels shining from her arched body.

BEAVER APPRECIATION: As a symbol of Canada the Beaver has not been as prominent as it used to be. Some argue it is because Canadians are not as industrious or as helpful to the environment as they used to be. Europe, however, is welcoming beavers back to repair the damage done by humans over centuries. Beavers restore wetlands, provide habitats for dozens of species, and level the extremes of droughts and wet cycles. And, they do all this great work for us without pay, medical insurance, or pensions. In Europe the UK has been the last holdout under the false assumption that beavers would destroy salmon stocks. Beavers do not eat fish. Norwegians are the most accommodating with beaver lodges next to golf courses.

NOVA SCOTIA: In 1611, Sir William Alexander, a Scot and a poet, helped to translate the psalms of David for the King James version of the Bible. In 1622 James granted him some land to start a Scottish colony. It included present day NS, NB, PEI, eastern Quebec, and northern Maine. The ship *Planter* was hired from the same firm that provided the *Mayflower*. Storms forced the offloading of colonists in Newfoundland. Four years later his son did establish a Scottish colony at Annapolis Royal, NS, which all went to France in the peace treaty of 1632. A generation later Nova Scotia finally became the most important destination for the Scottish diaspora.

FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH? A team, headed by a Danish scientist, has found in NW Canada permafrost a 500,000-year-old bacteria still with active and living DNA.

TRY AGAIN: Before the current try, the UK launched 47 major thrusts into Afghanistan. All were futile. Most from Pakistan, long before the Taliban.

AFRICA and MEA CULPA: Much of Africa, with 38 authoritarian regimes and 2 flawed democracies, is a mess. Corruption is endemic, AIDS is a cruel exterminator, deserts still grow, but the population continues to explode. And, some say, it is all our fault, so we forgive debts and pour billions of dollars into the continent to salve our guilty feelings. Do we deserve this blame? We know we are all Africans, most of us 50,000 years ago but some only a few hundred years ago. So, we would like to help.

Romans, Arabs, Portugese, Dutch, British, French, Belgians, Italians, and Germans have all colonized parts of Africa.. This occupation has varied from subjugation to enlightened imperialism interpreted as responsibility. Now, newer powers have encroached on the scene: Russia, China, and the United States. Africa is rich in what others want: diamonds, copper, gold, oil, not to mention cannon fodder.

Millions of Africans have died in European wars. The Romans bestowed Roman citizenship on African soldiers after 25 years of loyal service. The French respected the graves of dead African soldiers with crosses inscribed "Mort pour la France". Askaris in East Africa, under German leadership, were the last to surrender in WWI.

GUINEA-BISSAU: Wars and dictatorships have plagued this former Portugese colony. It is now a narco state with politicians and military officers supporting the flow of South American drugs into Europe.

KENYA: A pleasant country of 8 million when the British left in 1963, it is now approaching 40 million in spite of the ravages of AIDS. Nairobi, that had 500,000 in 1963, now has 6 million in huge slums and urban sprawl. We pour money into family planning but negate it by insisting on abstinence rather than condoms. Government services are failing with police often guilty of crimes. Corruption is rife and politicians have secreted hundreds of millions of dollars of foreign aid in foreign bank accounts. No politician has ever been prosecuted. The official minimum wage is \$700 per year, but many earn less than \$200, while politicians can pocket \$120,000. British-built roads are deteriorating. The drive from Nairobi to Mombasa that used to take 4 hours now takes 8. There are 100,000 illegal guns and bandits terrorize the people. Yes, there is some progress and hope, but from individual groups often led by women such as Wangari Muta Maathai, former political prisoner, now a PhD, 2004 Nobel Peace Prize winner, a member of parliament, and leader of the Green Belt movement. A free press and 47 private radio stations help, but there are still inequalities and frictions among tribes.

ZIMBABWE: This once proud, prosperous, and progressive country of Rhodesia under Ian Smith (WWII Spitfire pilot) has become, under Robert Mugabe, a failed state. He confiscated white farms, the backbone of the economy, and distributed them among his cronies who have let them go to ruin. Inflation is the world's highest and opposition activists are routinely beaten and jailed. Millions are trying to flee but many are forcibly returned.

CONGO: A war that involved 7 other African countries ended in 2003, but armed militias still roam the country pillaging and raping some 45,000 women per year, not only by foreign militias but also by the Congo army and police.

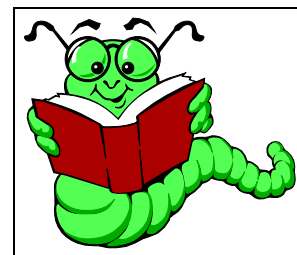
NIGERIA: Only 17 of the 79 power stations built for Nigeria in the 1970-1980s are still working. With 1 billion people, a sixth of world population, Africa generates only 4% of global electricity and 75% of that is by countries like South Africa and Egypt. Dictators have plundered power stations for parts and fuel.

MORE? Many other examples have been cited in previous newsletters - enough to urge us to channel our money carefully - perhaps to those groups of African women who are courageous, capable, and deserving. It would also do Africa more good if we replaced the dollars we shower on it with condoms.

MORE FACTS:

1. Armadillos, that can dig 25-foot burrows in a matter of minutes, are quite willing to share these with opossums, skunks, and burrowing owls.
2. The 2,252-year War: The 3 Punic wars between Rome and Carthage started in 264 BC with Carthage being defeated in the end, but a final peace treaty was not signed until 1988 when the mayors of Carthage and Rome got around to signing a treaty of friendship and co-operation.
3. It is estimated that, by 2002, 106 billion humans have been born (since 50,000 BC) of which 6.2 billion were alive in 2002.
4. The average US household owes \$9,659 to credit card companies who made \$145 billion in interest and fees in 2006.
5. 1.8 million people who live in the desert community of Las Vegas consume 870 litres of water each per day. Arguing water is a continental resource, they expect to continue their highest in N. America usage rate, what with 60 golf courses, backyard swimming pools, green lawns, and washing cars with other peoples' water.
6. The US Army fired 1 billion bullets in the last 12 months.
7. The QE2 moves 6 inches for each gallon of diesel it burns.
8. Winston Churchill was born in a ladies' room during a dance.
9. A snail can sleep for 3 years.

Book Review



IT'S THE CRUDE, DUDE

Linda McQuaig, Doubleday, Toronto, 2004, 346 pages

Award-winning Linda McQuaig has published several books on politics and economics. This book is highly recommended by Avram Noam Chomsky, professor emeritus of linguistics at MIT and a political activist. He describes it as a wake-up call that must be acted upon to avoid disaster. It is also strongly recommended by this scribe as it contains more facts, figures, and references than I can possibly condense into a 1-page review.

Basically, McQuaig was arguing in 2004 what Alan Greenspan is admitting today - that the invasion on Iraq was primarily to establish western control of Iraqi oil, and by extension the entire Middle East.

McQuaig takes a parallel track (1) with maps and a 1820-2004 timeline of the search and struggle for control of oil, and (2) the warnings of Global Warming from Svante August Arrhenius in Sweden in 1894 to warnings from current scientists and from the Pentagon of our over-addiction which fosters disastrous global warming and, according to the Oct 2003 Pentagon report, will force humanity into constant warfare for dwindling resources.

The rise of the John D. Rockefeller family and Standard oil is told with all its ruthless skullduggery, including the takeover of Canada's Imperial Oil, and retention of power in spite of Theodore Roosevelt's 8-year court case which managed to affect cosmetic changes: Standard Oil companies became: (1) of New Jersey, Exxon, (2) of New York, Mobil, (3) of California, Chevron, (4) of Ohio, BP (US branch), (5) of Indiana, Amoco, (6) Continental Oil became Conoco, and (7) Atlantic, became Arco. The Rockefeller family continued to amass fortunes.

She traces the changing reasons for military actions in Iraq from Weapons of Mass Destruction to links to Al Qaida to bringing democracy all of which mask the real reason: guaranteed control of Middle East oil. All this in spite of the fact that there are alternatives to our dependence on oil - a dependence which has sparked a virulent anti-US "terrorist" movement. We condemn the terrorists while remaining silent on the cause - our greed.

McQuaig relates the story of the Luddites in the UK and their vicious onslaughts on all new inventions in the cotton-weaving business to current politicians and multi-national organizations in resisting acknowledgment of current problems and alternate strategies. She describes "the God-pod" of Exxon Mobil that strives to keep the company at the very top by ever expanding its oil empire to keep rivals at bay and producers impotent. This is troubled by doubts about the reliability of Saudi Arabian oil. The regime is brutal and pays off the Wahhabist Islamic fundamentalist opposition with bribes that permits it to grow and become an even greater threat. Iraq, with its huge reserves, was also a problem with Saddam Hussein monopolizing Iraqi oil for his own purposes. In 1997 Donald Rumsfeld, Dick Cheney, Paul Wolfowitz, and Richard Perle, along with 18 others, formed the Project for the New American Century (PNAC). Perle in particular was keen to ensure Israel's ability to take over the entire West Bank and Gaza. They were unsuccessful in trying to get the Clinton administration to be aggressive towards Iraq but were able to do so with the Bush administration that appointed Perle Chairman of the Defense Policy Board.

The attacks on US embassies, New York, and Washington were master-minded by Bin Laden, a wealthy Saudi Arabian, as retaliation for US military support of the Saudi regime, and 15 of the 19 hijackers on 11 Sep 01 were Saudi Arabian with links to Al Qaeda in Afghanistan. The invasion of Afghanistan was a sideshow compared to the necessity to control the future of Middle East oil so every excuse, short of admitting the oil imperative, was used to justify the invasion of Iraq.

The story is well told of Abdullah Tariki of Saudi Arabia and Pérez Alfonso in Venezuela: their long struggle, and eventual defeat, in trying to establish OPEC and some control by 11 oil producing countries over their own oil. McQuaig paints Hugo Chávez as the saviour of Venezuela's poor who compose 80% of the population. The Venezuelan elite, in co-operation with multi-national Big Oil, kept oil wealth to themselves. In 2000 Chávez re-vitalized OPEC, attacked and dying from assaults by Big Oil. He visited all 11 OPEC countries, including Iraq and Iran and managed to infuse some unity. In Venezuela he increased schooling for the poor from half a day to a full day, brought in 1,000 Cuban doctors to serve poor areas, and funded private radio stations to promote democracy.

She also relates how Mu'ammar al Qaddafi wrested control of Libyan oil from Armand Hammer and Occidental Oil of California. Our media is at fault in going along with Big Oil's description of vile Middle East and Latin American opponents, so McQuaig praises such investigators as Bob Woodward.

Heck! There is so much more and I am out of room. Go find the book and read it for yourself.

QUOTES

“An anti-something movement displays a purely negative attitude. It has no chance whatever to succeed. Its passionate diatribes virtually advertise the program they attack. People must fight for something that they want to achieve, not simply reject an evil, however bad it may be.”
Economist Ludwig von Mises, Austria, 1881-1973.

“We use 30% of the world’s energy. That isn’t bad; that is good. It means that we are the richest, strongest people in the world and that we have the highest standard of living in the world. That is why we need so much energy, and may it always be that way.”
President Richard Nixon, USA, 26 Nov 1973

“Conservation is not the Republican ethic.”
John Ehrlichman, Nixon administration

“There is a remedy in human nature against tyranny that will keep us safe under every form of government.”
Samuel Johnson, UK, 1709-1784

(1) “Water, like religion and ideology, has the power to move millions. Since the very birth of human civilization, people have moved to settle close to it. People move when there is too little of it. People move when there is too much of it. People journey down it; people write, sing, and dance about it. People fight over it. And all people, everywhere and every day, need it!”

(2) “Communism is man exploiting man. Capitalism is the reverse.”
Michael Gorbachev, President of Green Cross International and ex USSR President

“Deserts produce men and faiths that are fierce, austere, and uncompromising.”
Lawrence of Arabia

“General Rick Hillier does not walk on water. He does not have to. Water makes sure it gets out of his way!”
Scott Taylor, Esprit de Corps Magazine

A ROSE BY ANY OTHER NAME WILL SMELL AS SWEET? - PERHAPS NOT!

The Board of the Trenton RCAF Memorial Museum is changing its name to the National Air Force Museum. This will probably go unnoticed by many today, but it makes this scribe, who has donated substantially to the museum, feel old, unwanted, and wounded once again. My first wounds were by the enemy and were to be expected. Too many subsequent wounds have been inflicted by my own side. We are all products of our experiences. To me, the Royal Canadian Air Force meant membership in a family of equals, including Australians, Britons, Canadians, Jamaicans, New Zealanders, Rhodesians, South Africans and all those Europe and US aircrew who flew with us. This brotherhood was very evident in my POW Alma Mater with its great mix, all with the knowledge that we were fortunate to be among the 17% who survived being shot down. We even began to include our Luftwaffe foes who were risking their lives to protect us from the SS and Gestapo. It has been painful for me to watch us drift apart. The wounds inflicted by the Canadian government still hurt. They took away our flag and removed the “Royal”. The argument is made that the term “Royal” is not popular in Quebec, forgetting that Canada has also had French monarchs, including 16 French Governor Generals compared to 22 British,. The term “Royal” is more a Unifier than a reference to a royal family that long ago gave up its base in England to serve a world-wide club. Even our US members called the RCAF “The Royal Confederate Air Force”. Film makers belittled us in *The Valour and the Horror*. The National War Museum cast slurs on our Bomber Command, ignoring its essential contributions and its 73,741 casualties. This Trenton move is the Last Straw, and has prompted much protest. I feel I have joined the millions of veterans who, over the ages, have served their countries only to be discarded and forgotten as the world moves on. I know, and appreciate, the fact that we veterans have been treated immeasurably better than previous generations, but . . .

Yes, there is something in a name, particularly when it refers to a world-wide comradery that has benefited mankind. Casting the name to the dust of history leaves an aimless and painful void.

At least, when the RCAF Association became the Air Force Association, this wing insisted on the retention of RCAF in its official name - 971 RCAF Air Marshal Slemmon Wing. If that goes then so does this scribe.

GOVERNMENTS

Using numerous factors, the *Economist* Magazine rates the world’s countries into 4 groups:

1. 28 full democracies with 13% of the world’s population. Scandinavia, Netherlands, Luxembourg and Iceland take the top 7 slots. Australia ranks 8th, Canada 9th, Germany 13th, the USA 17th, the UK 23rd, and France 24th.
2. 54 flawed democracies including South Africa, Italy, India, Brazil, Israel, and Palestine.
3. 30 hybrids, including Albania, Singapore, Lebanon, Turkey, Russia,
4. 55 authoritarian with 38% of the world’s population, including Pakistan, Jordan, Egypt, Cuba, China, Syria, Iran.

Full details at: www.economist.com/rankings

THE RAF CONTINUES TO ATTRACT US

Chinook pilot , Flight Lieutenant Christopher Hasler of Halifax, has been awarded the DFC by Queen Elizabeth for outstanding courage in Afghanistan.

Nov 2007

TOM AND KATE KUPECZ REPORT IN FROM TRENTON: “Our apologies for being too occupied with personal affairs here to keep up any sort of correspondence. Retirement was not as traumatic as I had feared - the administration went smoothly, the CF was gracious in handing me over to VA, the retirement dinner was a grand bash with much ceremony, and we didn't have to move out of town afterwards.

As I told a friend who asked what retirement is like: Strangely anticlimactic. I have had a few weeks off (just like leave), a couple of contract jobs as a trainer for military courses (just like temporary duty trips) and several rounds of golf (just like work). So no change.

Kate and I are keeping busy. With family that we haven't seen in years visiting, and friends dropping in we might as well be operating a B&B, and that suits us just fine. We had wondered if retirement would mean isolation; happily it does not.

It has been very good to get your newsletters. Your digests of past and current affairs are always insightful and thought-provoking, and we enjoy hearing how the 971 Wing folks are doing. We would be very happy to receive the epistles by e-mail and print them ourselves, and thereby save you the printing and mailing costs.

Let us know if there is anything we can do from the Mother Country for you expatriates.”

WEST JET CREWS keep making fun of themselves for the amusement of passengers. Making the rounds are samples of their humour and here are just 4 of 21:

(1): “Thank you for flying West Jet. We hope you enjoyed giving us the business as much as we enjoyed taking you for a ride.”

(2) “There may be 50 ways to leave your lover, but there are only 4 ways out of this airplane.”

(3) “Ladies and Gentlemen, this is your captain. Welcome to Flight 293 from Winnipeg to Montreal. The weather is good so sit back and relax . . . Oh, My God!” There was silence for a few minutes until the captain spoke. “Sorry if I scared you. The flight attendant spilled a cup of hot coffee on my lap and you should see the front of my pants.”

A passenger yelled: “That’s nothing. You should see the back of mine!”

(4) After a rough landing: “We ask you to remain seated as Captain Kangaroo bounces us to the terminal.”

NAVAL NEWS: The submarine HMCS Corner Brook performed well in Baltic exercises as well as in the 7-17 August “Nanook” exercise when 600 Canadian military personnel cavorted about waters near Iqualuit, Baffin Island, in the deep south. Well, it is 1,000 miles south of Nanisivik. In addition this year Canadian navy ships have been enjoying waters (and ports) in the Baltic, Caribbean, Panama, west coast of South America, South Africa, and are planning to make the 12,500 nautical miles circumnavigation of Africa. A little late - the Phoenicians did it 2,600 years ago. But, on 01 October, HMCS Toronto did find and save a survivor of the volcano that destroyed much of the tiny Red Sea Island of Jabal al-Tair. Eight Yemini soldiers went missing at sea. Other NATO warships found 3 alive, HMCS Toronto found one alive and two bodies.

“CHANGING OF THE GUARD” - As George noted, Art and I have completed our handover. Some may wonder what changes this might bring about; frankly, I would like to see little or no significant alteration from the current path we are following. My taking the reins from Art followed an apprenticeship where, I not only watched the “master” at work, but was pleased to be included in the processes of piloting the wing through a number of decisions and events. Part of my acceptance included Art’s willingness to continue to participate actively in wing leadership as “Past President” where his specific area of interest will be to concentrate on the aims and goals set forth in “Our Plan” wherever possible and appropriate. Art authored “Our Plan”, (a copy of the plan is on the web site), to help us identify the direction we should pursue if we were to continue to embrace the spirit of being a part of the Air Force Association of Canada.

Having said the above, it still remains to say a proper thank you to Art Nielsen for his eight years of participation in the leadership of 971 Wing. His two years as Vice President followed by six years as President speak volumes to his selfless dedication. Art saw his role as president as a task to be exercised rather than “a position to be held.” How does one. . . or more particularly a group like ours . . . find the words of appreciation for a special person like Art Nielsen.

Many of us became very laid back as he piloted us through our beginning of the 21st century. His extraordinary six years of leadership as Wing President and his approach to the challenges seemed to be just the natural way for the Wing to go. Many times he accepted those challenges only to find getting it done fell right back into his lap. That’s not to say he didn’t get help; or that he minded; but inevitably, he usually wound up providing the lion’s share of the thought and action necessary for our Wing’s significant accomplishments of the last six years.

On behalf of the Wing Executives and the Wing members over those years we extend our heartfelt “Thank you” for a job well done! Paul Ellis.