



Van Arty Association and RUSI Van Members News Dec 15, 2015

Newsletter on line. This newsletter, and previous editions, are available on the RUSI Vancouver website at: <http://www.rusivancouver.ca/newsletter.html>

Wednesday Lunches The Armoury will shut down completely for the winter break so our lunches are now finished for 2015. The first lunch of 2016 will be on **Jan 6**.

New Year's Levée – 1 Jan 2016

15 Fd Artillery Regiment is holding their annual Levée. The Messes will open for visitors at 1100hrs. A light lunch will be served starting around noon. The only other Unit we have heard from is the Seaforths. They will hold their Levée at the Jericho Mess.

World War 2 - 1940

John Thompson Strategic analyst quotes from his book "Spirit Over Steel"

Dec 16th: The Royal Navy begins an audacious series of strikes on the Italians in the Aegean and Adriatic. The RAF sends 134 bombers out over Mannheim to use similar tactics to those used by the Luftwaffe on Coventry.

Dec 17th: Roosevelt outlines his "lend-lease" policy in a press conference. The British occupy Sollum, Capuzzo and some other Italian border forts.

Dec 18th: Hitler issues Directive 21, stating that the invasion of the USSR is the "new priority. He dislikes the Army's emphasis on Moscow and decides to be "flexible".

Dec 19th: Dr. Kallio dies in office as President of Finland, and is replaced by Risto Ryti. The British place \$750 million in orders for armaments with the US.

Dec 20th: The Bulgarians adopt strict new laws against Jews and Freemasons.

Dec 23rd: Anthony Eden becomes Foreign Secretary and Lord Halifax is dispatched to Washington as the new ambassador.

A 'Leaner' Military? Uh Oh

If the Liberals want a more efficient fighting force, that's fine. If they want a small (thus cheaper) one, we're in trouble. The Forces are too small already.

Matt Gurney National Post 7 Dec 2015

It's just 36 words, out of a speech that totalled, as written, almost 1,700. But they were the ones that jumped out at me in the new Liberal Government's Speech from the Throne. The words were, "To keep Canadians safe and be ready to respond when needed, the government will

launch an open and transparent process to review existing defence capabilities, and will invest in building a leaner, more agile, better-equipped military.”

Fair enough. But what, pray tell, does “leaner” mean? Leaner could, one supposes, be good news. Even under the last government, the Armed Forces were looking at ways of getting more bang from the buck. In 2011, one of the Army’s most prominent and respected Afghan War veterans, a general no less, undertook a major report into streamlining our top-heavy military, in shaking personnel and resources out of desk jobs and functions that could perhaps be better handled by non- military personnel. The report ran into bureaucratic resistance from the military — no kidding — and didn’t really go anywhere. Its author was Lt Gen Andrew Leslie. If that name sounds familiar, it may be because of his wartime military service ... or it may be because Prime Minister Trudeau just made him the Liberal House Whip. If the Liberals intend to reform the military along Leslie’s proposed lines, that could be genuinely good news. But there’s every chance it won’t mean that at all. And that leaner will simply mean smaller and less capable ... and therefore cheaper. For a government that was just elected with a slate of costly promises and an already softening economy, that has to be appealing. The problem, of course is that there’s only so small a military can be before it is no longer really effective. Since the Second World War, Canada has generally tried to retain the ability to project and sustain meaningful military power abroad. Good equipment and good training is a huge part of that. But you just can’t get it done without old- fashioned mass. Quality cannot totally replace for quantity.

One can quibble over where precisely the balance should be struck. In the context of North American military history, we’ve generally leaned more toward quality, as it’s easier and usually cheaper to train and equip someone well than it is to send a greater number of less well trained and equipped troops halfway around the world, and then keep them there. There’s no magical “right” number for how many planes, ships and troops you want to be able to sustain abroad. But whatever your number is — we’ll unimaginatively call it X — you need roughly three times X. For every soldier and ship we want to be able to commit to military operations on a sustainable basis, you need one more ready to take over and one more that just finished and is resting up. When Canada sent 3,000 troops to Kandahar, that really meant about 10,000 were needed, because 3,000 would always be getting ready to deploy and 3,000 had just come back and needed time off (the number is larger even than that, since there were troops here at home involved in the war effort in a support role, but the 3X rule is approximate and works well enough here for our purposes). Likewise, if Canada decides to commit a ship to a NATO or UN operation on an indefinite basis, that’s really a three- ship commitment — one deployed, one just returned, one getting ready to leave.

Right now, we don’t have the mass to sustain those kinds of operations, even modestly. As I’ve noted in prior columns and editorials here, when you factor in how many of our CF-18 jets are down for long-term overhaul, short-term repairs or simply not currently assigned to an operational unit, we’ve got less than three dozen planes, total, we can use on any given day. The Navy is actually in even worse shape. We have precisely one (1) destroyer, and she’s so old

she's probably basically done her career. We have four submarines, but they're just finally coming online now, so we can maybe deploy one abroad at a time. We have 12 frigates, and that's good, but half of them are in the middle of a major mid- life overhaul and refit. We no longer have any supply ships to sustain them on their missions, anyway, and the Liberals recently deferred a key decision on a proposal to replace them with converted civilian vessels, on an interim basis, until replacements arrive sometime next decade. Canada has been sending small Kingston- class coastal patrol ships far overseas to participate in international missions and exercises in place of larger frigates and destroyers. The Kingston class ships aren't cut out for those missions, but we're out of frigates and destroyers, which form the backbone of a modern fleet. So out go the Kingstons.

The long and short of it is this: a "leaner" military may be a good thing, but overall, it's already too small. The Army should have more brigade groups, but so long as they're kept fully staffed and properly trained and equipped, we can probably get by with three for now. But the Navy and the Air Force must absolutely be larger than they are now if they're going to be worth keeping at all. And there's no sign that any political party with a decent shot at forming government next election — the Liberals, Tories and, one supposes, still the NDP — gets that. Up until recent years, our Navy had 15 heavy warships — 12 frigates and 3 destroyers. In theory, the government was planning to replace those ships on a one- to- one basis, with 15 new, Canadian- built vessels. Delays and cost overruns now threaten to force cuts to that total, and that will be bad, since 15 ships is really about the right number for either the Atlantic or Pacific Coasts, not both. The former government also planned on replacing our current fleet of 65 active CF-18s (which actually mean having the three dozens operational planes I referenced above) with the same number of F-35s — 65 jets. But that's not enough. Whatever fighter we get next needs to be purchased in sufficient quantity to not just replace our threadbare, too- tiny squadrons, but to actually add some bulk back to the Air Force.

It probably won't happen. Canadian military history is replete with examples of replacing weapons with a smaller number of new ones, and touting the sophistication of the new weapon as enough to make up the gap. But even advanced new military gear needs repairs, downtime and will sometimes simply break down. In an actual war, God forbid, you've got to count on the bad guys destroying some of your stuff, too. That's why you need sheer quantity sometimes, too. So I hope "leaner" means more efficient, not smaller. But I have a bad feeling about what's to come.

Latest Russian Navy Operational Surge Could be Unsustainable

By: Sam LaGrone __December 9, 2015

The Russian Navy has operated more and further afield in the last year than it has in decades, but the current high operational tempo maybe difficult for the Russian's to sustain over the long term. According to a report from the *TASS* wire service, there are about 70 Russian ships operating around the world, quoting Russian Rear Adm. Viktor Kochemazov – the head of the navy's training warfare said this week. The Russian Navy is "now present almost everywhere,"

he said. “Some 70 warships of the Russian Navy are practically constantly present in the world ocean to designate and fulfill the tasks set by the command.”



ST. PETERSBURG, Russian sailors march in formation during the opening ceremony of the 65th anniversary of the Victory in Europe Day parade in 2010. US Navy Photo.

Those deployments include “the Mediterranean basin, we have the operational task force there, ships of the Northern Fleet are practically constantly present in the Arctic region — both in the eastern and in the western zones,” Kochemazov said. “Also, ships of the Pacific Fleet that during the year are on combat duty in the Gulf of Aden, are present in the Indian Ocean.” His comments come a day ahead of Russia’s planned bilateral exercise with India and after a year of other high profile exercises — including the largest ever amphibious training between Russia and the Chinese. Signs also point to the current surface action group off the coast of Syria remaining in the Eastern Mediterranean for the duration of Russia’s ongoing air campaign. The increased tempo is a turnaround from just a few years ago of operations, Eric Wertheim, naval analyst and author of *US Naval Institute’s Combat Fleets of the World*, told USNI News on Tuesday. “If true, these statistics represent a remarkable turnaround for the Russian fleet in just a few years,” he said.

However how long the Russian Navy can keep up the pace is very much an open question. “Their country has had to make tremendous sacrifices to enable this type of surge in military operations and capabilities,” Wertheim said. “The more a fleet is used, the more experience it gains, but also the more it costs. Enhanced ops tempo requires enhanced maintenance down the line, and these efforts will require continued infusions of money.” With a little less than 280 ships and submarines, the Russian Navy is — on a ledger — about the same size as the US Navy’s battle force of 272 ships. However, while there is parity in the numbers, it’s unclear how many of Russia’s ships are fully mission capable and how many remain mostly pier side with skeleton crews.

Logistics, maintenance and supply ability have atrophied in the last 20 years throughout the entire Russian military, as evident in the difficulty the Russian Air Force has had maintaining its own surge in operations. Also the efficacy of Russian surface ships, especially surface combatants, are largely Cold War built and far from modern. For example, the surface action group off Syria is not fitted with Russia’s long-range Kalibir NK and a missile strike into Syria was conducted with corvettes with Russia’s Caspian Sea fleet. While the Russian Navy has some new surface ships in production to refresh its surface fleet, it’s faced consistent problems

effectively completing the ships in its construction queue. An exemplar is Russia's challenge to find maritime propulsion solutions for its new class of Admiral Grigorovich-class (Project 11356) and Admiral Gorshkov-class guided missile frigates (Project 22350) frigates.

Following the seizure of the Crimean Peninsula, Ukraine – the Soviet heart of marine gas turbine technology – cut Russia off from promised gas turbines with no ready domestic replacement for the Russian Navy. The one area in Russian naval power that approaches parity with the US is attack and ballistic missile submarines operations and construction. While the Russian surface fleet largely languished following the collapse of the Soviet Union, development of nuclear and conventional submarines has continued unabated.

Russian yards are delivering new nuclear attack boats, conventional diesel electric boats and a new class of boomers. US Navy leaders — while loath to talk about any submarine operations — have hinted several times in the last few years that Russian submarines have remained active throughout the world. For its part, the Russian military is far from transparent in its operations and the Kremlin's propaganda arm is quick to highlight successes and minimize problems with any aspect of the Russian military. Some analysts have concluded that highlighting the military prowess of Russia may be less about intimidating potential rivals and more about providing venues to showoff defense material to potential customers.

Military Weapons Programs Face 'Disproportionate' Cuts

• by [Clay Dillow](#) December 3, 2015



F-35 fighter jet production could take a hit as the Pentagon wrestles with \$15 billion budget gap.

The Pentagon's ongoing efforts to sharpen the US military's technological edge will be drastically slowed in the years ahead, officials say. The Defense Department is bracing for significant cuts to major new weapons programs in its fiscal 2017 budget as it struggles to reduce costs while spending more in Europe. Speaking at an event organized by the Potomac Officers Club on Wednesday, Pentagon acquisition chief Frank Kendall warned of "disproportionate hits to modernization, R&D and procurement" in the fiscal 2017 defense budget now being weighed by the Pentagon. The cuts could impact flagship Pentagon programs, including the Air Force's new stealth bomber initiative and the procurement of new Lockheed Martin "LMT" F-35 fighter jets, though officials have yet to disclose which programs will suffer the biggest cuts. However, Kendall did hint that the cuts could impact procurement more significantly than programs still in the research and development stage. "The

disproportionate hits on '17 are going to be on modernization,” Kendall reiterated later in his speech. “I think that will probably be more on production than R&D.”

The cuts come as the Pentagon scrambles to deal with unfolding global events as well as the latest National Defense Authorization Act, which President Obama signed into law last month. After much political wrangling, Congress managed to compromise on a two-year defense budget agreement that offers the Pentagon budget stability through 2017. But the agreement provides \$15 billion less in fiscal '17 than the Pentagon was expecting based on the White House's original budget proposal. Meanwhile, the Defense Department is working to provide additional funding for its European Reassurance Initiative, which aims to boost both equipment levels and US military capability in Europe. Speaking Monday, Pentagon Comptroller Mike McCord told an audience at the Center for Strategic and International Studies that the US plans to ramp up funding for the ERI in fiscal '17, compounding pressure on the Pentagon to cut costs elsewhere. McCord also cited modernization programs as likely candidates for funding cuts.

Several banner Pentagon programs fall under the “modernization” umbrella, including the F-35, the new Long Range Strike Bomber program, the Ohio class submarine replacement program, and US Air Force efforts to upgrade its aging intercontinental ballistic nuclear missile arsenal. Some cuts could prove less impactful, as development programs like the Long Range Strike Bomber that are running behind schedule shed funds that they wouldn't have been able to spend anyway (the bomber program is on hold following a protest of the award to Northrop Grumman “NOC” by rivals Boeing “BA” and Lockheed Martin). But the cuts could hit Lockheed's F-35 procurement program in a significant way. At the same time Kendall was voicing his preference for sacrificing production and procurement over research and development on Wednesday, Sen. John McCain—who chairs the powerful Senate Armed Services Committee—was across town openly questioning whether the Pentagon needs all of the 2,443 aircraft currently on order.

Kendall acknowledged that while the F-35 is central to the Pentagon's future air power aims, the program is far from untouchable. “It's impossible in these budgets to entirely protect it,” Kendall told reporters following his remarks. “It is our most cutting edge capability. Dollar for dollar it probably gives us more combat capability than any other investment that we're making, but we've got a lot of other things that we've got to do as well. So it's not entirely fenced. I can't say that it's entirely fenced.” “The F-35 would be an obvious one to cut,” says Byron Callan, a defense industry analyst at Capital Alpha Partners, citing Congress's general unwillingness to cut multi-year shipbuilding programs. The Pentagon has also indicated that it will circle the wagons around its nuclear triad—made up of long range bombers, intercontinental ballistic missiles, and nuclear-missile armed submarines. Among major modernization programs, that leaves the costly F-35 program conspicuously exposed.

No specific program is in as much jeopardy as the Pentagon's larger strategy of enhancing the military's technological edge to offset the advances potential adversaries have recently made in ballistic missile, anti-aircraft, and naval standoff technologies. Development of key elements of

the much-hyped initiative could be drastically slowed or scotched altogether as budgets are cut and resources are diverted elsewhere. However, the cuts are eventually spread around, no single modernization program is in existential danger, Callan says. “It’s probably going to be a dog’s breakfast of cuts—not so many big cuts, but lots of little ones,” he says. “There’s nothing right now that’s really badly wounded among the big, iconic weapons systems programs. And when there’s no really obvious place to make cuts, you have to spread this out.”

Public Health Care Plan and Dental Tax Write Off

If you are paying for the public health care and dental package offered to all who served and retired here is some good information re: income tax. You may claim premiums paid as deductions for the last ten years on your taxes. The pension office will send you the tax receipt if you contact them and give them your particulars. Call CF Medical Plan Office 1(800) 267-6542 and CF Dental Plan Office 1(800)267-0350 and ask them for your premium paid tax receipt for the past ten (10) years. They will take your information and you will receive receipts in the mail.

The CRA process is not so easy as submitting the receipt with your taxes. You must write to CRA and request an Adjustment to Line 3-30 of your income tax return for the last ten years. Include your SI number, your full name and phone number. Attach the tax receipt you received from the pension offices. Sign and date the letter and mail to Canada Revenue Agency, 4695 12th Ave Shawinigan, Quebec G9P 5H9

The Gunners of Canada Vol III

The moment all you Gunners have been waiting for has finally arrived. The book launch for The Gunners of Canada Vol III took place on the 12 September, 2015 at the RCAA AGM held at the Chateau Laurier in Ottawa.

The shipping charge for individual books is quite high so we are looking at getting a bulk order to save on shipping charges. Anyone interested contact me at bob.mugford@outlook.com

Who is it? Last Week: These cars are already to go meet the Royal Train during the 1939 Royal Visit. The BC Hussars, who resided in Bessborough Armoury at this time, were tasked with escorting the King and Queen for their tour of the City. The arguments on the make and model of the vehicles are still raging throughout the Sports car community but our best guess so far is that they (the majority) are MG(Morris) VA models. I had always understood that the Hussars had been issued these vehicles to train on in place of Armoured Recce vehicles but it was pointed out that at the time the govt was too broke to even buy those vehicles so they had to borrow these vehicles from the local MG dealership for special occasions. I know the 15th had to borrow horses from the local milk delivery company to practise moving their guns at that time as well.



This Week: Our quiz this week takes a seasonal turn, as far as the weather goes. Some of you might remember the days when snow covered our houses and streets, and not just the higher reaches of the ski slopes. Well, this shot comes from those pre-global warming days (although it isn't of downtown Kerrisdale, which never got that cold).



The vehicle is one of which the author has fond memories, not because of some romantic interest, but because of halycon days long ago when cadets got to do really dangerous things, such as spend several nights abandoned in lean-tos in minus 20 degree weather, and blast away with a variety of light and medium firearms. We were the bane of any whiskey jacks who happened to land anywhere near the improvised targets.

So, your task, dear shopped-out reader, is to identify this mighty tracked vehicle. For

bonus points, can you tell us where the photo might have been taken (hint: I took it in 1964 and the original is now property of the Canadian War Museum), and, for super bonus points, can you tell us what vehicle preceded its adoption by the Canadian Army? Answers and educated assumptions may be sent either to the editor, or to the author, John Redmond ([johnd. redmond@telus.net](mailto:johnd.redmond@telus.net)). Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

From the 'Punitentary'

What do you call people who are afraid of Santa Claus? Claustrophobic!

Murphy's other Laws

(When Murphy was an aide to Attila) You say 'Burn and Pillage' but always remember to pillage before you burn.

Quotable Quotes

If everyone is thinking alike then somebody is not thinking - *George S Paton*