

Bulletin des Artilleurs de Montréal

Sheldrake's Log

Montreal Gunners Newsletter



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CLOSING THE GAP

In this issue of Sheldrake we bring you the writings of Bombardier Charles Hunter. Charles was a Royal Canadian Artillery Gunner during World War II. He served his country and the guns extremely well and you will enjoy his recollection of some rather interesting events.

It is worth noting that, as we publish Part I of Bombardier Hunter's stories, 8 members of 2nd Field Artillery Regiment are just returning from Afghanistan having completed their tour of duty. No casualties. About 65 years after Charles Hunter's participation in Europe.

The members coming home are:

Padré (Capt) Doiron
Capt Gendron
WO Moloughney
Sgt Derbridge
Bdr/C Pinsonneault
Bdr Coté
Bdr Turcotte
Gnr Moreau.

Welcome back, thank you. Good shooting!

Your Observer

Sheldrake

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REFERMER LE CERCLE

Nous vous proposons dans ce numéro les écrits du Bombardier Charles Hunter. Charles était un artilleur de l'Artillerie Royale Canadienne lors de la deuxième guerre mondiale. Il a très bien servi son pays et les canons et vous aimerez ses souvenirs d'intéressants événements.

Il faut bien noter qu'alors que nous publions la première partie des textes de Charles, 8 membres du 2^{ème} Régiment d'artillerie de campagne rentrent d'Afghanistan ayant complété leur mission. Sans blessure. Environ 65 ans après l'intervention de Charles Hunter en Europe.

Bienvenu à la maison, merci. Good shooting!

Votre observateur

Sheldrake



Photo of Charles Hunter, taken on his enlistment in September 1939

A Word from the President/Le Mot du Président

The activities of the year 2007`2008 are drawing to a close with the holding of our Association's General Annual Meeting on the 29th of April 2008. In this year of 2008, we are celebrating the 400th anniversary of the foundation of Quebec and also the 40th anniversary of the formation of the 5th RALC from Valcartier. Our attention at this moment is focused on the preparations that will mark those two anniversaries for all the gunners of Quebec and of Canada. The special dates to retain are the 11th to the 13th of September 2008 when will be held the joint activities of the AGM of the RCAA and the closing ball of the 5th RALC. All the gunners in Quebec and Canada are invited to participate in those activities and the detail information is available by contacting your respective units.

I take this opportunity to wish a happy anniversary to all the gunners who have served or are serving in the 5th RALC since 40 years.

I would also like to underline that since my last message to you, two of our dearest members of our executive have met with some very serious health problems and that our thoughts and prayers are with them while they are battling to recover their health.

I wish you and your families good summer holidays and that we will get together again in September.

Ubique

Donald Dussault(Maj.ret)
President MAA

L'année d'activité arrive à ça fin pour la saison 2007/2008 pour votre Association avec la tenu de notre assemblée générale annuelle le 29 avril 2008. En cette année 2008 ou nous célébrons le 400^{ième} anniversaire de la fondation de Québec et aussi le 40^{ième} anniversaire de la formation du 5^{ième} RALC de Valcartier, notre attention ce tourne à ce moment aux préparations des festivités qui marqueront ces deux évènements par tous les artilleurs du Québec et du Canada entier. Les dates à retenir sont la fin de semaine du 11 au 13 septembre quand sera tenu conjointement l'Assemblée Annuelle de l'Association National de l'Artillerie Royal Canadienne et le bal de clôture des festivités du 5^{ième} RALC.

Tous les Artilleurs du Québec sont invités à participer et peuvent s'informer des détails auprès de leur unité respective.

Je prends cette opportunité pour souhaiter un joyeux anniversaire à tous le Québec et à tous les Artilleurs du 5^{ième} RALC qui servent ou qui ont servi dans le 5^{ième} depuis 40 ans.

Je voudrais aussi souligner que depuis mon dernier message deux de nos vaillants membres ont connu des difficultés de maladie importantes et que nous pensons à eux pendant leurs moments de difficultés.

Je vous souhaite à vous et vos proches de bonne vacances d'été et ont se revoient en septembre.

Ubique

Donald Dussault(Maj.ret)
Président AAM

Warning Order

Spring Mess Dinner

**The Spring Mess Dinner will be held on
May 9 at the Officers Mess.**

Invitations will be mailed shortly.

Cadet Corps Parade

May 18

The annual inspection and parade of the three Cadet Corps affiliated to Second Field Regiment will be held on Mount Royal Park on Saturday, May 18 in the afternoon.

In the event of inclement weather, the event will be held in the Riding Ring of the Armoury.

Rencontre d'artilleurs à Chicago

par le Major Charles de Kovachich CD (Ret).

En mai 2007, la Financière Banque Nationale tenait sa conférence du Club du Président annuelle à Chicago. Le Club du Président peut-être vue comme une convention ou rassemblement où les dirigeants de la société rencontrent les conseillers financiers ayant le plus de succès afin de discuter des tendances courantes et futures des marchés financiers.

Comme le veut la tradition, une personne de marque est sélectionnée afin de donner le ton au rassemblement qui dure quatre jours. Au cours des années précédentes, des personnalités telles que Jean Chrétien, Brian Mulroney et des célébrités sportives avaient été choisies afin d'inspirer la foule. En mai dernier, le président de la FBN, Luc Paiement, a choisi l'Honorable Sénateur Romeo D'Allaire à titre d'invité parce qu'il l'avait entendu lors d'une conférence plus tôt cette année-la et avait été ému par la présentation qu'il avait faite sur son expérience au Rwanda.

Tout au long de ma carrière, j'ai régulièrement mentionné à mes collègues que j'avais servi dans la réserve. Les dirigeants haut-placés de la FBN sont mis au courant régulièrement que j'ai fait partie des artilleurs de Montréal et un d'eux a communiqué directement avec moi pour demander si je serais disposé à remettre un cadeau à notre invité de marque en remerciement pour s'être adressé à notre groupe. Cependant, sans même m'indiquer de qui il s'agissait, on voulait savoir si je connaissais cet ancien soldat.

«De qui s'agit-il? » ai-je demandé, Est-ce possible que j'en aie entendu parler au moins ? Lorsqu'on m'a dit que c'était le General D'Allaire, j'ai répondu que non seulement j'avais entendu parler de lui, mais qu'il me connaissait !

Sur ce, le ton de la conversation a changé et on me demanda de faire partie d'un comité de bienvenue lors de son arrivée à Chicago. Ce fut très plaisant de voir le General arriver d'un autre rendez-vous tard en soirée. Il a

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Gunners meet in the windy city

By Maj Charles de Kovachich CD (ret'd)

In May 2007 National Bank Financial held its annual President's club conference in the city of Chicago. The President's club could be defined also as a convention or gathering where the management of the firm meet with their top investment advisors in order to discuss the current and future trends in the financial markets.

As is tradition, a keynote speaker is selected to give the tone to the four day gathering. In the past, personalities such as Jean Chretien, Brian Mulroney and sports celebrities have been chosen to inspire the crowd. Last May, the president of National Bank Financial, Luc Paiement, selected the Honourable Senator Romeo Dallaire as speaker because he had seen him during a conference earlier that year and had been greatly moved by his presentation about his experiences in Rwanda.

Throughout my career I have always made a point to my civilian colleagues that I had served in the reserves. The top management of NB Financial is reminded frequently that I have served with the Montreal Gunners and one of them contacted me to see if I would agree to make a presentation to our guest speaker. This is the gift offered by our firm as a thank you for speaking to our group. However, without telling who the presenter was, the management wanted to know if I knew this former soldier. "Who is it" I asked "It is possible that I have heard of him at least". When I was told who it was, I responded that not only I had heard of him, he also knows me.

Of course the tone of the conversation changed and then I was asked to be part of the welcoming committee upon his arrival in Chicago. It was great to see the General arrive late at night, from another engagement. Immediately he impressed everyone with his trademark enthusiasm and energy. His speech was early next morning and after discussing some technological issues with the support

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Rencontre d'artilleurs à Chicago (Suite)

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immédiatement impressionne tout le monde avec son enthousiasme qu'on connaît bien et son énergie.

Son adresse avait lieu tôt le lendemain matin et après avoir discuté quelques points technologiques avec l'équipe de soutien, il nous souhaita une bonne nuit à 1:00 Am.

Le même matin, il était debout avant 7:00 Am pour travailler avec les spécialistes en technologie afin de mettre au point sa présentation audio-visuelle.

La présentation faite par le General D'Allaire était comme on s'y attendait, exceptionnelle. Il renseignait et suscitait l'intérêt de la foule avec des concepts et des détails croquants et surprenants. Lorsqu'il raconta son expérience au Rwanda, le silence qui envahit la salle était tel qu'on aurait pu entendre une mouche volée.

J'avais reçu mandat de remercier le Général d'avoir partagé ses opinions avec nous à la fin de la présentation et de la période de questions et de lui remettre la statuette traditionnelle appelée « le Protecteur ». Le General nous a mentionné qu'il la placerait dans son bureau au Sénat en souvenir de son séjour parmi nous.

Ceci fut une expérience remarquable, laquelle démontre la nécessité pour tous les anciens soldats de réserves de divulguer à leurs employeurs civils et à leurs amis leur service militaire.

Nous sommes tous ambassadeurs de cette culture réserviste et nous devons faire l'effort de la partager avec nos homologues civils.

Gunners meet in the windy city (Cont'd)

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staff he bid us goodnight at 1 am! The same morning he was up before 7 am to work with the technology specialist to fine tune the visual part of his presentation.

General Dallaire's presentation was predictably outstanding. He informed and engaged the crowd with concepts and details that shocked and surprised them. His recounting of his Rwandan experience caused hushed silence in the audience and one would have heard a pin drop on the carpet.

At the end of the presentation and after questions I was asked to thank the General for sharing his views with us. The General then said that he would place the gift, which is a desk size statue called "The Protector", in his Senate office as a reminder of his time with our firm. This was truly a remarkable experience that demonstrates the necessity for all serving and former militia soldiers to disclose to their civilian employers and friends their militia service. We are all ambassadors of the reserve culture and we must make every effort to share it with our civilian counter part.



Charles de Kovachich presenting "The Protector" statue to Gen Roméo Dallaire

Memories of the 2 Field Regiment, Royal Canadian Artillery, at War

as set down by Bombardier Charles Hunter in 2008

I gave my name to the 7th Battery on Sept.3, '39 and was sworn in on Sept.10. Foot drill, gun drill on Champs de Mars. Hauling the guns and limbers up and down that hill was quite a chore. The army had an arrangement with a restaurant on the Main to feed us. As you may know this was the center of the red light district in those days. Marching up de Bullion Street, with the girls hanging out the windows, was quite a temptation. Needless to say, some men decided to forego lunch. We knew that it was getting close to leaving and in December I committed my first crime. On morning parade all married men were told to fall out and were dismissed. Single men were returned to barracks. I fell out with the married men and went home to say goodbye to my parents.

On to Halifax and the Empress of Britain. She had been sitting there since Sept. and was fully loaded for the tourist trade, waiters and stateroom attendants along with the best of food. There were five large passenger liners with the only visible escort, an aircraft carrier, in the middle. When we reached the Clyde river, the destroyers and cruisers had to close in and we then realized what an escort we really had all the way over.

Offloaded and entrained for Aldershot and Leipzig barracks. This was the hell-hole of England. Built pre WW1, it had only been used as a punishment barracks. From inside you could see outside through the boards, no insulation.

One morning, as per custom, the Orderly Officer and Sergeant asked if there were any complaints and got the surprise of their lives. Yells of "this food stinks", plates with food turned upside down smashed on the floor and some thrown like a discus in the general direction of the officer who quickly vacated the premises. I believe the regiment was charged with mutiny and a few of the ringleaders sent to the glasshouse. But better food and more coal resulted.

My all time favorite story. At a crossroad shortly after landing in Sicily, there were a number of women with big baskets of grapes. We wondered about the price. Nick, of Greek descent, said "Let me, I can speak their language..." "quanta costa (short hesitation) buncha grape o".

So back to Leipzig. The four batteries are now together as a regiment, but shortly after we are organized into two batteries, the 7/35th and the 8/10th and again, after another short time, into three, the 7th, 8th and 10th. The 35th was made into an ack ack battery. This served one good purpose by mixing everyone together. Training continued until May.

Now the powers that be decided that the 1st Cdn and the 51st Highland Divs. should be sent to France to knock the hell out of the Germans to save the Brits at Dunkirk. We got as far as Plymouth when the stevedores loading our guns stopped. We asked why? "Gotta have our tea, mate".

Meanwhile, the 1st Brigade was on its way to Paris. The train was stopped and sent back to Brest. Someone had a little sense. The Brit in charge told the Colonel of the RCHA to spike his guns and drive them off a cliff, then get his men aboard (this part is hearsay but from more than one source). The Col. replied "The Canadian artillery has never abandoned a serviceable gun even in WW 1 and we are not going to start now. None of my men get on until the guns are loaded". He won his point. My dad served in the 27th in WW 1 and he confirmed this.

Now we were on primary defense against airborne landings. Stand to at dawn and dusk, ready to give all for king and country. I am afraid we would have if they had come. Then coastal defense at Eastbourne and stringing barbed wire at Deal/Dover, firing range in Wales, kept us on our toes.

Crossing the border into Wales we stopped for the night and lo and behold, there was a pub

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Memories of the 2 Field Regiment, Royal Canadian Artillery, at War (Cont'd)

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on the first corner. So, as good Canadians, the first two ordered two beers, the next ordered three, the next four and so on, until "Time gentlemen please". The following morning we went back for a hair of the dog and the owner gave us one free. He then said "I have never served so much beer in all my years in the business".

All units using the range had to work on the roads. Engineers had measured off sections for a six-man crew. When finished you left. We were done by noon. Some Tommies laughed at us saying, "You'll get a bigger section tomorrow." But we didn't.

Back to England to a place called Addington. Heaven!

In 1939 we were offered a choice of a week over Christmas or one week at New Years. As we had my mother's brother living in Kent, my brother and I chose Christmas and paid him a visit. We took a train to London, stayed overnight and, the following morning, walked toward the railway station, in order to catch a train for St. Mary Cray. Two elderly ladies came toward us one of them said: "Oh look, there are three Canadians. --Come on Charlie, chest out chin up --". The second one then remarked, "Look at the one in the middle. He's just a baby". Instant deflation.



Tea Time

Filling in some gaps. Like all artillery regiments, we had our tours on Salisbury plains. As this was a British establishment, it was staffed by their cooks. This included food and mess times (breakfast, lunch, tea and supper at 8.00 pm). These were quickly changed. It would appear that we had gained a reputation.

A visit to Stonehenge was, of course, on the menu. Certainly a wonderful site worth seeing.

When we were returning, we passed through the town of Amesbury. Of all the beautiful old towns and villages of England this one sticks out. Ginger bread fronts and thatched roofs left a lasting impression on me.

The blackout. This was a bit of a problem for me. In some cases it was fine as, for instance, the romantically inclined. One evening, after a pub- (that most wonderful institution) - crawl, I was running to catch the truck back to camp when I ran full tilt into a steel post. By the time I recovered the truck had departed. Not to worry, there was still the last bus. Holding on to a strap there were a few women sitting in front of me whispering. Every once in a while I heard "Those Canadians". When I got to camp I realized what they were talking about. My face was covered in blood from where I had hit the post. The MO put three stitches in it the next morning.

London bombing. If you went to London you made sure you took your tin lid. Shrapnel from the a.a. was the worst problem. One night my brother and I were walking along when the bombing got particularly intense. Normally you ignored it but this was so bad we ducked down to an underground station full of people, singing, joking, having a good time. We were made very welcome and spent about an hour with them. As we were walking up the stairs a bomb fell quite close so we stopped for a minute. Then two young girls, 13 or 14, came screaming down the steps. Jim grabbed one and I the other to try and calm them. I have never seen anyone, including soldiers, so terrified. Jim and I sat there with

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them for over an hour until the shaking finally stopped. This incident has remained vivid in my memory ever since.

The day we moved to Addington the first stop was at the wagon lines. This was quite a heavily treed area. When backing in I stopped to see what was behind me so I got out of the truck. Someone called that the truck was moving. I turned around and put up my hands to stop it. A two-ton truck loaded with ammunition. Needless to say, I lost the battle. It pinned me to a tree and forced all the air out of me. The boys said they never heard such a scream. By the time someone got into the truck to drive it forward I was unconscious. Lucky, no broken bones.

We had one officer who no one seemed to care for. One day he took us out for a route march. After 7 or 8 miles some catcalls began to emanate from the rear ranks. The officer stood it for a while then said double time. After a bit we went back to walk march. The catcalls started again so the procedure was repeated on and on. Finally after an order to walk every one kept running all the way back, leaving him in the rear. Of course we all paid for it but, what the hell, it was fun.

The story of Tom Burton. Tom was an old man to us. He had crossed the country many, many times, following crop gathering. He was a raconteur par excellence. He was also the first of us to go to the British glass house. I am sure the readers will know why the name. Tom marched as if he was still following the plough.

But let Tom tell the story of his first morning parade. Every one stood around until this big Sergeant came out. He called the parade to attention then asked for a marker for the infantry. A British soldier marched out smartly, smacked his heels down and stood at attention in front of the Sgt. He then called for a marker from the artillery. I waited and waited, but nobody stepped out. So I walked toward him.

You should have seen his face. First it was red then slowly came a look of amazement. I stopped in front of him, he backed up, looked me up and down, then put his face right in

mine and said "what in f@#%\$^&* hell are you?" "I'm a Canadian" I replied. "I asked for a soldier not a f*&^%\$#@ Canadian. Get back there."

When Tom told it, with his slow drawl, it was ten times funnier. He would sit and talk about his trips across Canada for hours and never repeat himself.

One night in Devon we were all sitting at the tailgate of a truck, drinking apple cider, when a runner came to tell Tom the Captain wanted him. He put his bottle in the truck. When he came back he said "Where was I?", reached into the truck, took a big swig of cider and choked. He had picked up a bottle of camouflage paint.

Even after treatment by the doc, poor Tom was spitting pieces of flesh for a month.

Another one of Tom's stories. He said when he got home he would knock on the front door then run around the back and beat the s--- out of the guy with his pants in his hands, then he would go in, bang his wife then take off his pack.

Addington, Palace Green. What a joy after being McNaughton's traveling circus. Palace Green was the name given to a group of houses surrounding a green space. The center green was about 400 ft. long by 50-75 ft. wide. The two storey houses were allotted to so many soldiers, usually with one NCO. Was this to keep an eye on the miscreants? This area was partially finished with only three homes occupied by civilians. It was at the foot of a hill where the town of Addington was situated. Back of us was another low rise and just beyond that was Biggin Hill. For the uninitiated this was the main fighter airport for the defense of London.

This led to some very exciting nights. Very few of us made for the shelters, saying- "What the hell jerry was not the most accurate in his bombing". But only one house got hit on the green and, fortunately it was one of the civilian's. Fortunately, they were not at home at the time.

The green was used for calisthenics in the morning, mounting the guard (ugh) in the

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Memories of the 2 Field Regiment, Royal Canadian Artillery, at War (Cont'd)

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evening and throwing a ball around at night. The wagon lines were about a half k away so everything was back to more or less normal.

Weekends were free (unless you were on guard ugh). Some of us would get a lift into Croydon, 5 miles away, catch a train for London and spend the weekend there. Sunday night we would catch the last train out and be back for morning parade, Monday morning. If you missed the last train you were in trouble. You slept on a hard bench in the station and caught the first train in the morning. If lucky you could make morning parade. If not??? I got to know the cook very well. He said I was the best pot walloper he ever had.

We spent around a year and a half there only interrupted by schemes once in a while.

Canadians were considered a bit of a rough diamond by the English people. But they did learn to like us. Most of us met nice girls and many, like myself, were invited to meet the family. These people made a home away from home for both me and my brother. At the time I was driving an ammunition truck. It was usually unloaded and used for transport. This would include driving the boys into Croydon after supper and picking them up again at 10:30. I would drop over to ma's and tell her to put on the kettle. She always got a big laugh out of that, saying "What will the neighbours think, you Canadians". She once said, "I saw some of your bad boys today working very hard on a road". I told her that these were not bad but a section of our engineers repairing the Caterham bypass.

But for the deadly game they were playing, dog fights made a beautiful display in the sky. As we were always in their flight path to London, we witnessed most of it.

Now off to Scotland for landing practice. More on this and its tragic consequences in next letter.

During the winter at Ortona, the regiment were giving leave to Bari. Six of us from "C" Troop went. Among the group was Ray, who had just been awarded the MM. The following morning we found a barber and all went in for

a shave and a haircut. Ray was the last one and after giving him a haircut, the barber winked at us, put a bit of water on Ray's face and shaved him. We had a good laugh at Ray's expense, but think of it, old enough to be a hero but not to shave.

As you may well imagine 3.5 years in England in the military became very boring. I am trying not to transfer any of that to this narrative.

One thing changed. I had a difference of opinion with some one whose seniority outranked me so I requested a transfer to "C" Troop which was half 7th and the other half a mixture of 8th, 10th and 35th.

So now it is off to Scotland. The trip north had a number of problems, d.r. accidents, trucks going off the road, drivers falling asleep etc. One driver rammed his radiator into the muzzle of a gun. In another incident, a woman civilian driving a small car tried to pass the column and got caught between the gun and limber. I heard that she died.

But eventually we arrived in Rothesay, I believe it was named. In the following days we were to practice loading and landing off an LST (landing ship tank). On the first day the procedure was as follows; guns one and two would drive onto the rear of the ship, gunners would manhandle the gun and limber to the opposite side, the quads would then back off, turn around and back on again. This was then repeated for three and four. I was on the ship moving number one over when someone asked for a stretcher, saying there had been an accident. When finished loading we sailed off to a beach and continued the practice. On returning to Rothesay, Lt. Carpenter called out, "Charlie, can I speak to you for a minute".

I went over to his side and he put his arm over my shoulder and said, "I'm sorry to tell you but Jimmie has died". He never realized that I didn't know that it was my brother who had been injured.

To my knowledge there was no court of inquiry ever called. Two men were very

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obviously at fault but carried on as usual. Strangely enough one of these men was later court-martialled for desertion and the other one sent back as incompetent.

Along with a friend, I escorted the coffin to the military cemetery at Brookwood. I have been back twice since and my sister once to lay flowers on his grave. I must admit to being a very lonesome kid for a couple of months.

So the regiment came back to England and back to boring. This was interrupted by schemes, clean up, another scheme, clean up, etc.

In the spring it was back to Kilmarnock, Scotland. Obviously, this was not going to be another practice. Everything we had, had to be water proofed. It was quite a job covering the motor without interfering with the moving parts.

So finally on board. It was a Liberty ship. For the uninitiated, these were some of the first ships to be welded. Kaiser/Fraser, auto builders, started this and, I believe, eventually reached a production of one a day. We slept in the hold, in hammocks. Very little space but we spent most of our time on deck.

South past Africa, then toward land, then north again. Was this to fool jerry that we were going somewhere else? Up to Gibraltar. Marvellous sight. Lights on both sides, which we hadn't seen in years.

Down the Med with the loss of three ships. As you know this included one of our troops.

Now things got rough. The sea I mean. Waves 10-12 feet high. We had a destroyer beside us, which would disappear for three or four minutes at a time, but suddenly pop up again. Waves came up over our ship. Just about everyone was seasick but not me. For some reason I was a very good sailor. Never once being sick.

July 10 off Pachino beach. Beautiful sunny day. A few shells splashing in the water but many more inland. Beside our ship is a 15-inch monitor. Every time it fires our ship heels over.

To continue. Of the approximately 650 men who went over with the regiment in 1939 there remains the following; from the 7th Ralph Willis, Norman Newman and myself: the 8th, Gordon Lutes, Mike McCormack, Bob Keiver, Art Boudreau: the 10th: Jim Gibb, Nicholson. I know of no one from the 35th. There must be a few others around but obviously, not too many. Most of the above still have a good head on their shoulders. Up until recently, before failing eyesight, I played duplicate bridge as a life master and did the New York Times crossword puzzle.

So here we are off the coast of Sicily.

The whole area seemed to be full of ships of various types. Our turn finally came to land. I am not sure of the time but it was at least late morning. After all our training on an LST what do we get? An LCI (landing craft infantry). It was just large enough to hold one quad, one limber and one gun. They loaded them first, then we had to go down scrambling ropes. Now, normally this would not be a problem, but remember the sea was still running at 6 to 8 feet. If the ship heeled to starboard you swung away, if to port, you hit the side. But this wasn't the worst. When you stepped off, if it was on its way down, it could be a long step, if coming up, you could get a thump.

On with the invasion. We hit bottom, down ramp, charge into three feet of water, up onto the beach, directed to a dirt road, then inland. Our first sight of the enemy was a group of prisoners, escorted by some commandos. They looked very happy and waved to us.

All the roads were walled on both sides with stone. But these roads were made for mule drawn wagons and had 90-degree corners. A bulldozer had to knock down all the inside corners so we could get around them.

Inland for a bit, then taking up a position. We stayed there for the night and were able to see the fire works that night at the beach. Beautiful sight if it wasn't such a deadly game going on.

The second night we welcomed the American invasion. We had watched the plane go over

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Memories of the 2 Field Regiment, Royal Canadian Artillery, at War (Cont'd)

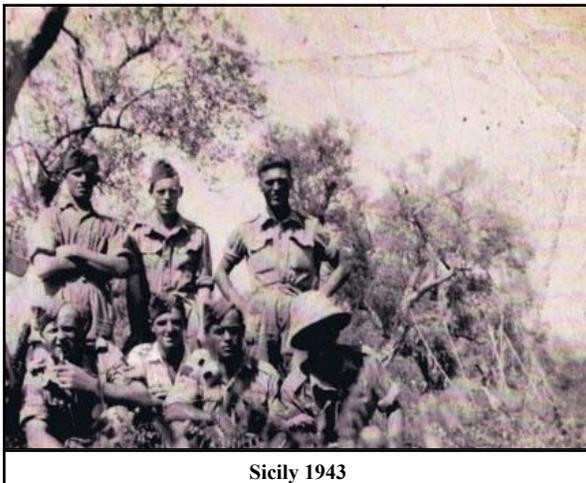
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three times and couldn't figure out what he was up to. A sky full of parachutes soon told us.

I don't mind saying I was scared for a moment but I think they were just as frightened. It seems we got off a lot of shots before they landed.

I felt a lot of sympathy for the infantry at this time. They had to walk and with tanks, trucks and us stirring up the dust from the dirt roads they were white in no time. Then they had to do the fighting when they did stop. PBI was a good term.

When we entered the Catania plain we fired our first shots in anger. We then moved onto the facing side of a low ridge. Jerry waited until we settled then baptized us. No one was injured except our crate of rations, which was



Sicily 1943

demolished.

A quick move forward to the reverse side of another ridge. It was from this position that we supported the Hastings after they had captured Mt. Assoro.

On past Leonforte to Agira, again the PBI took a beating here, and Nissoria. By this time we had reached the slopes facing Mt. Etna. It was here that we watched the bombers come over; one got hit and crashed on headquarters. The pilot, a South African, chute did not open. He landed about 25 feet from me. Despite the

fact that we were on solid rock, he still made a dent.

Back to a rest area in the middle of an orange grove (not ripe yet). The owner had built a concrete tank for water to irrigate his orchard. It was quite large so we emptied it, scrubbed it down, then refilled it. There was a small town not too far away immediately put out of bounds by the MPs. Nevertheless, the road from our camp at the edge of town was interesting, to say the least. Outside of a couple of small shops, bakery, wine etc. It was of no interest. But there was no plumbing, so the street we used was walled on both sides, one side for ladies, one side for men. It was quite common to walk into town and hear squatting citizens say "bonne journo, signor". Wait. This was not wasted. Every day it was picked up for fertilizer. Next time you buy grapes, think of that.

Before jumping across the Messina straits, I would like to dwell a little longer in Sicily.

Allow me to show my pride in the Canadian Army and the work of the artillery, called 5-mile snipers by the PBI. In 2005 the Hastings and Prince Edward Regimental Association, of which I am a member, offered a tour of Sicily and Italy. Andrew Gregory, his mother Paula and myself, took advantage of the offer. We flew into Catania and stayed the night at a first class hotel. The following morning on our way to breakfast, we were stopped by a man who said "Bdr. Hunter I presume". This was my introduction to Col. Patterson. It turns out that he was to be our tour guide.

In our group there were about 50 members of the Hasty P's reserve, a dozen vets and the rest were relatives of the vets. Into two buses and away we go. Through orchards and vineyards until suddenly we came to the Catania plains.

This was the most vivid sight I had on the whole trip.

Memories came flooding back.

The explosion of the ammunition dump (by the way this was triggered by one of the men who

(Continued on page 11)



were killed there), our first experience of being shelled and the general view of the valley itself.

I am attaching some pictures that were taken on this trip so readers can get an idea of what I am talking about.

The second one is of the vets but looking towards the mountains.

The next shows the group of mountains that were the division's objective Mt. Assoro in front, Leonforte to the left, Enna to the left of that (American 1st Div. objective) with Agira



This is a panoramic view of the valley (plain) from Mt. Assoro.

and Nissoria to the right. Formidable looking isn't it? Erik Gregory's model of this is in the regimental quarters.

The Hasty P's had to walk four miles towards the mountain, go around the back and then climb it in the dark. Our contribution would be very important shortly. 500 men performed this feat and arrived at the top just as dawn was breaking. There were two Germans who were instantly killed. As it turned out they were artillery observation officers with the best of equipment. As per their wont, they counter attacked, were driven back and then started to shell and mortar the position. As it happened Major Kennedy, the 2 i/c, was an ex artillery officer. With the aid of the captured equipment he quickly brought counter battery fire on them. To quote Col. Tweedsmuir of the Hasty P's, "slowly now the tide of battle began to turn. As the enemy's guns began to fire at us, the muzzle flashes gave them away and short minutes later, salvos from our field and medium guns rained down on them." Kennedy kept up the counter battery work until noon when most of their batteries had been put out of action or moved back out of range. This battle was on the British war college's list of lectures for its ingenuity.



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Memories of the 2 Field Regiment, Royal Canadian Artillery, at War (Cont'd)

(Continued from page 11)

So, vacation is over, back to work.

Hook up the nicely cleaned quad, limber and gun. Out to the coast road and up to Messina. Now, at long last, we can put all our training into practice on how to load on a LST. Across the straits and charge onto the beach at Reggio Calabria to a bunch of smiling Italian prisoners. Not a shot fired in anger but we are the first allied troops to land on continental Europe. Inland to an assembly area, then start to chase Jerry.

We form battle groups of an infantry company, artillery troop, tanks, engineers etc. and away we go. The only trouble was that Jerry was an expert at using explosives. Blown bridges, rock slides, and whatever. He had all the tricks. We were criticised for being too slow but what else can you do on a single road through the mountains.

About this time, during a brief stop, Mr. Carpenter called for me. He said, due to accidents and sickness we were short of NCO's. Therefore he was putting me in charge of a gun. When we could stop for a rest



Captured German 88mm

he would put the order in for stripes. So Gunner to Acting Sergeant without pay (they really were desperate).

As it happened I came down with the scourge of Italy, malaria. Back to the MO, then into an ambulance and off to the nearest airport?

This was to be the ride of my life. A bright sunny day when we took off for the hospital in Catania before long it clouded up, became stormy. This was a DC-3 stripped down to some racks for stretchers and everyone else sat on the floor. Sitting by the window I could see water very close. A British medical Sgt. told us that Catania airport was socked in so we were going to Africa. It was black out there but I could still see the water. How low were we? Thunder and lightning when suddenly a big swing around and back to Italy. But then, without even the slightest bump, I could see the ground going by. We had landed.

They took us to the airport and laid us out on blankets for the night, a sandwich and a cup of tea. Then the pilot came in. Was he 20 years old? He didn't look it. He went down the line and asked everyone if they were all right. Then he made two announcements. First, we were very lucky to have come through the night. Then, when the second ambulance had pulled away from the plane, it had touched the end of the wing, knocking it off its chocks. Then the wind had taken it right down and off the end of the runway. It was wrecked.

The following morning we were loaded onto another DC-3, this one American, for Catania. What a difference. Bunks for those that needed them and seats for everyone else.

Orderlies walking up and down making sure we were all ok. A bright sunny day and we landed with at least 6 good bumps. Up to now I had only been a little feverish but by the time I got to the hospital I was out of my head. With this disease you can have a very high temperature > 105 without dying. Liquid quinine is the cure. Horrible stuff.

A couple of weeks to reinforcement depot, just in time for a draft from the 2nd.Fd Regt. I arrived back when they were in Campobasso. The town was now being used as a leave center. It was a strange area with inhabitants being partly pro and partly con to the allied forces. You had to watch your back.

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Shortly after, we moved over to the coast to relieve the Brit. 78th Div. Oh joy, it was now the rainy season. Before we arrived at the Sangro river, we were stopped for quite a while. An engineer came up and told us they were still repairing the bridge. As it was pouring rain at the time, I invited him in to get a little warmth. Oh yes, I'd got the promotion. Anyway he asked if any one was from Montreal. I said I was. Where? Rosemount. Me too. What's your name? Charlie Hunter. A laugh and then, I am Ben Smith. Whom I had known all my life!

Finally, over the Sangro and into action, thus beginning the most miserable series of months possible. Dig a slit trench, washed out. Pull into a field. Get stuck. Out drag ropes. Pull boys.

The quad with its winch was very handy, but it did not always have a place to anchor itself.

Service Corps would bring up the ammunition and dump it at the road. All depended how far you were from the road was the distance you then had to lug it. Most of the time through fields of mud. With some of those 500 round barrages, you were pretty beat by nightfall. Not that you got any rest then, because there was always Jerry's counter attack to take care of. (tsk tsk ending with a preposition). Sometimes numbers 5 and 6 would still be at it while the rest of the crew were firing and often enough it was still raining.

I hope I have given the readers some idea what it could be like. And, believe me, these were not rare occasions. The Ortona winter was the worst of my six years in the army.

We finally moved into a position that we would hold until Spring. After getting washed out of my slit trench at least 6 times I decided to build one above ground. I kept all the ammunition boxes, filled them with dirt, piled them two high and two deep. A pup tent over that and I was as snug as a bug in a rug. Soon everyone had done the same. It all depends on a situation, what makes you happy but there was no doubt that this was our winter of discontent. Some counter battery/mortar work, harassing fire and aeroplane FOO shooting. Otherwise things were quite



peaceful most of the time. We fired a barrage for the 5 Div infantry so that they could get their feet wet. Total disaster.

We had an artificer who liked a drink. He had an assistant who was a teetotaler. They had to share a tent like everybody else. See where I'm going? Wine got to be too mild for Biz so he built himself a still. He then ran wine through the still Brrrr. We christened it "steam". One night he staggered to the tent full of "steam". Needless to say the fight started, during the course of which Biz bit Will's thumb. A few days later his parents got a telegram saying your son has been wounded in action.

I elected myself cook for the crew, mostly because no one else would be bothered.

Following is the recipe for Hunter's hamburgers:

Need -1 mixing bowl, 1 fry pan. Dump one can of m/v into the bowl. This stood for meat and vegetables, renamed muzzle velocity. One can bully beef. Add whatever the crew can supply from their parcels. Add whatever is left from a borrowed chicken. Mix well. If you can, wash your hands first. Take about a dozen hard tack and crush them, using a 25 pounder as a rolling pin. Form the mix into patties, roll in the flour from the biscuits. Fry in the fry pan. No grease needed, this is well supplied by the m / v. It made a change.

Spring came and also the CRA. He took one horrified look at our wonderful little village and said "get rid of it and get back under

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Memories of the 2 Field Regiment, Royal Canadian Artillery, at War (Cont'd)

(Continued from page 13)

ground". While he was there it was a beautiful sunny day but you know what happened shortly after we had dug our new slits. It rained and it rained.

By one o'clock we were all huddled around with great coats, wet blankets, ground sheets over our shoulders. At first light the command post called to send one man up for a rum ration. I came back and suggested it was a sip for all but a good drink for one. All agreed believe it or not. I pulled the ace of spades. After finishing the rum, I felt sorry for the rest of them, so I said I would go and find some wine. Back down the road to the first farm. They all had at least one barrel in the shed. I filled up the bottles to take back, but the trouble was that I started to drink one of them. The next thing Eddie finds me passed out on a hay stack. He said you better come back, they are looking for you. My reply, "No way. I am resigning from this man's bull s--- army". Next comes Van, but I succeeded in getting him as loaded as I was. Back to the troop at 6 p.m. I had been gone all day and we were in action.

I was very lucky in that all they did was take my stripes. I think my officers put in a good word for me with the Colonel. They had to put up with the same crap that the rest of us had to take. I really believe that "C" Troop had very good and understanding officers (more on this later).

On my trip back in 2005 I mentioned how memories flooded back when we entered Catania plains. This did not occur at Ortona. The bridge across the Moro was new and 60 years of growth hid the river. Ortona was rebuilt which was not my memory. From a distance there was some familiarity, but that was all.

Soon after this they started to give leave to Bari. I mentioned earlier the hair cut incident on our way back.

They stopped all Canadians at Foggia and put us behind wire. From there we were trucked over to the Tyranian coast. The battery was positioned on a ridge facing Casino. We had a

bird's eye view of the American bombing of the monastery.

Promoted to BDR in Part Two Orders. Some days later demoted again. I didn't even get a chance to wear them.

Clean up, we were off again. Over into central Italy. Slowly pushing Jerry back. We stopped for a couple of days by a bull farm. It seems all the farmers around would bring their cows there to be serviced. The wife handled this job. When a cow was still a good distance away you could hear the four bulls start to argue with each other. Its my turn, no it isn't, you had the last one. They raised quite a racket. The farmer would pick the bull he wanted and the woman would lead him over and then h mmmm guide him to his target, shall we say.

Till June/July for some reason we were getting a lot of rain. We would stand 8 shells in a shell case so as to keep them out of the mud. One night jerry put on one of his typical counter attacks in to our right. This meant moving the trail around to the left where the ammunition was. Two hundred pounds in a case stuck in the mud. Pull, pull, until I pulled my back out. The MO gave me two weeks light duty. What a laugh.

I had had a few close ones up to then, even getting buried once, but this was different. We were all in our slit trenches because the 88's were coming in thick and fast. Then I felt one hit the ground just in front of me. I felt it boring its way in the ground I swear to God it was coming in to join me.

I held my breath, but nothing happened. It was a dud. I still jumped out of the trench and ran, just in case.

We were beginning to look really bedraggled. Which we were. Any way some kind soul said let's send a few of the worst ones down to the beach at Salerno.

We stopped for a couple of days by Abulcassino and the Liri valley.

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For some reason this period is vague in my memory. The night we moved up Jerry sent over dive bombers and caught us pretty good. He bombed and strafed the column for a good period. He forced us to seek shelter and we ran away from the road. As it happened there were a lot of trenches around for protection but, guess what? They were all full of dead Germans. Some work of the 4th Div I suppose. It was a tough hour or so.

From then on we did an awful lot of moving and firing, getting very little sleep. The boys at the point of the sword were going ahead against our old foes, paras and panzers. The Americans had finally broken out of Anzio and headed for Rome. We were stopped at Pontecorvo so that they could have the honor.

Part 2 of Bdr Hunter's story will appear in the Fall Issue of the Log.

Sheldrake

NATO is in crisis. So what?

JOHN IBBITSON

From The Globe and Mail

As North American and European leaders gather in Bucharest, the world's most important alliance struggles, once again, for unity of purpose. This is hardly new.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization has endured alarms and setbacks almost from its inception - the withdrawal of France from the military command; the mass protests over the deployment of intermediate-range nuclear weapons; the collapse of the Soviet Union; the disintegration of Yugoslavia.

The current challenges - whether to admit Ukraine and Georgia and what to do about Afghanistan - have created serious rifts within the alliance. But before we get too pessimistic, or fatalistic, we should remember where NATO came from, and what it is.

It came from unprecedented statesmanship that combined self-interest with generosity of spirit. And it has proved to be, for nearly 60 years, the greatest force for good on Earth.

NATO was a sequel. The main act was the Marshall Plan, the best and smartest thing the United States has done since the Second World War. The Marshall Plan was not just, or even principally, about reviving European economies prostrated by the Second World War or about preventing the spread of communism into Western Europe.

Its real mission, as defined by the Truman administration, was to force the Europeans to co-operate with each other, to make each country lower its tariff barriers against the others, to make them think in continental terms.

Before the Americans would deliver a single dollar in aid, they demanded that the recipient nations agree among themselves on how the money should be spent. Countries that had just emerged from two devastating wars, that had been at war - more on than off - for more than a thousand years, met in Paris on July 12, 1947, and, out of desperation and to their own amazement, worked out a joint plan for relief: how much each country should receive, how the money should be spent, what role their and the American governments should play.

This was the true beginning of the European Union, America's first great postwar gift to the continent. The second was NATO.

Ernest Bevin, Britain's foreign secretary, realized that his country's days as a great power had ended, and that only the United States could protect Europe from a threatening Soviet Union. He convinced his fellow Europeans, the Americans (who were already thinking the same thing) and Canada that a new alliance was essential for the West's collective security.

With NATO's creation in 1949, the Western alliance declared to the world that an attack on one was an attack on all. The democracies, we declared, are united. We have remained united, whenever it has really counted, to this day.

Because things get better over time, a prosperous and democratic Russia will join the alliance one day. If things keep getting better,

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40^{ème} ANNIVERSAIRE - 5^eRALC - 40th ANNIVERSARY

FIN DE SEMAINE DES ARTILLEURS QUÉBEC 2008

L'assemblée annuelle de l'Association de l'Artillerie Royale Canadienne (AARC) se tiendra dans la belle ville de Québec les 11, 12, 13 Septembre prochains.

Le bal du 40e anniversaire du 5e RALC, l'événement phare de la fin de semaine des artilleurs à Québec aura lieu durant la soirée du 13 Septembre 2008 au Centre des Congrès de Québec.

Les artilleurs du Secteur Québec de la Force Terrestre et les congressistes de l'AARC se joindront aux membres du 5e RALC afin de souligner cet événement.

GUNNER'S WEEK-END QUEBEC 2008

The Annual Meeting of the Royal Canadian Artillery Association (RCAA) will be held in beautiful Québec City on the 11, 12 and 13 September 2008.

The 40th Anniversary Ball of the 5 RALC, the gunner weekend's key event will be held in the Centre des Congrès de Québec on 13 September 2008.

Gunners from the Land Force Quebec Area and participants to the RCAA Annual Meeting will join the members of the 5 RALC for this special evening.

<u>ACTIVITÉS</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>ACTIVITIES</u>
Assemblée Annuel de l'AARC	11, 12 & 13 Sept 2008	RCAA Annual Meeting
Tournoi de golf de la fondation du 5e RALC	11 Sept 2008	Golf tournament of the 5e RALC Foundation
Meet and Greet à la citadelle de Québec	11 Sept 2008	Meet and Greet at the Québec Citadel
Ball du 40e du 5e RALC et fête des artilleurs secteur Québec	13 Sept 2008	5e RALC 40th Anniversary Ball

L'HOTEL DELTA HOTEL AU CENTRE-VILLE DE QUEBEC EST L'ENDROIT OÙ LE TOUT SE DÉROULERA POUR LA 132^e AGA DE L'AARC ET LES RÉSERVATIONS POUR LES ACTIVITÉS DOIVENT ÊTRE FAITES EN PASSANT PAR LE 5 RALC D'ABORD ET ENSUITE FAITES VOTRE RÉSERVATION À L'HÔTEL PAR TÉLÉPHONE OU COURRIEL.

Pour la réunion annuelle (AGA) de l'AARC 2008 et les célébrations des Artilleurs au Québec du 11 au 13 sept 2008, veuillez faire toutes vos réservations d'activités avec l'une des coordonnées suivantes:

Adresse courriel:

5RALC.artilleursquebec@forces.gc.ca

Adresse postale:

Comité des Artilleurs du Québec
5e RÉGIMENT D'ARTILLERIE LÉGÈRE DU Canada
CP 1000 SUCC FORCES
COURCELETTE QC G0A 4Z0

Téléphone: (418) 844-5000 poste 4445 ou 5254

DELTA HOTEL DOWNTOWN QUEBEC IS WHERE EVERYTHING IS HAPPENING FOR THE RCAA 132nd AGM AND RESERVATIONS FOR THE EVENT MUST FIRST BE MADE THROUGH 5 RALC AND SUBSEQUENTLY CONFIRMED BY PHONING OR E-MAIL THE HOTEL WITH YOUR CREDIT CARD NUMBER.

For the 2008 AGM and the Quebec Area Gunners Celebrations 11-13 Sept 2008, please make all reservations for the events using one of these coordinates:

E-Mail:

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COURCELETTE QC G0A 4Z0

Telephone: (418) 844-5000 ext. 4445 or 5254

Aujourd'hui, l'OTAN

Mario Roy, La Presse

Le samedi 05 avril 2008

Faire débarquer des troupes supplémentaires en Afghanistan était important pour le Canada, on le sait: c'était la condition posée par le premier ministre Stephen Harper au maintien de la présence canadienne dans les zones de combat.

Un millier de soldats américains, remplacés à l'Est par un contingent français, se joindront donc aux 2500 Canadiens actifs dans le Sud afghan; c'est ce qu'on a déterminé à Bucarest où a pris fin, hier, le sommet de l'Organisation du traité de l'Atlantique Nord.

La décision n'a rien d'une surprise. Et elle est au moins aussi importante pour l'OTAN que pour le Canada. Quelle explication aurait-on donnée, en effet, si la plus puissante alliance militaire de l'Histoire, regroupant 26 pays dont les moyens sont presque infinis, s'était révélée incapable de dénicher 1000 soldats de plus pour une mission d'une telle importance?

Cela dit, ce renfort ne donne pas toutes les solutions aux problèmes que présente la situation réelle dans l'ancien fief des talibans et d'Al-Qaeda.

Sans même revenir aux interrogations morales et politiques qui pullulent dans ce dossier, le contexte dans lequel se poursuivra la mission canadienne n'a pas atteint la totale clarté. Comment l'accroissement de la force de frappe américaine dans cette zone sensible sera-t-il vécu au sein du commandement local, des troupes canadiennes et de la population afghane? Quels sont les plans - on n'a pas eu de détails - pour rendre rapidement disponible le matériel nécessaire, notamment les hélicoptères dont on connaît l'importance tactique? Comment doit-on interpréter le léger flou que laisse subsister Stephen Harper quant à l'après-2011, moment prévu pour le retrait des forces canadiennes?

Le cas afghan, qui nous concerne directement, est en outre l'illustration de l'incertaine période de transition que vit l'OTAN. «Ne vous

trompez pas, l'OTAN n'est pas en train de gagner en Afghanistan», prévient l'ex-commandant en chef de l'organisation, James Jones (dans *The Economist*). Or, l'OTAN, elle, est-elle en train de gagner en crédibilité, en cohésion, en pertinence, s'interroge le général?

Qu'est aujourd'hui l'OTAN? L'alliance, en effet, n'est pas encore remise de la fin de la Guerre froide, est divisée sur nombre de sujets et de plus en plus grevée par les contingences politiques dans lesquelles elle se meut.

Hier, par exemple, cela s'est concrétisé lors de la présence à Bucarest du président russe, Vladimir Poutine, hostile à plusieurs points inscrits à l'agenda de l'OTAN, en particulier l'élargissement de son membership vers l'Est. (Dans une allusion à la crise existentielle de l'OTAN, Poutine a d'ailleurs cru utile de rappeler que «l'URSS et le bloc de l'Est n'existent plus»!) On remarque que, d'une part, la croissance de l'organisation vit un peu les mêmes affres que l'Union européenne; que, d'autre part, l'affaire est politique avant d'être militaire.

Pour l'heure, cela laisse en plan la vaste rénovation stratégique et logistique de l'OTAN, seul projet - terriblement pratique- dont l'aboutissement redonnerait à l'alliance atlantique sa crédibilité, sa cohésion, sa pertinence.



How Stephen Harper snookered Stéphane Dion

J.L. GRANATSTEIN

The House of Commons voted on March 13 to keep Canadian troops in Kandahar until the end of 2011. The vote was 198-77, the Liberals aligning themselves with the government. So the issue is decided and, beginning in January of 2012, Canada will be out of the long war against the Taliban. Or will we?

Sometimes, politicians plot and connive and, sometimes, they make mistakes out of naiveté and a want of guile. The resolution that the House accepted shows a combination of these traits. All the guile was on the government front benches; all the naiveté was across the chamber.

The heart of the Harper government's initial motion, introduced on Feb. 8, was this: "The House supports the continuation of Canada's current responsibility for security in Kandahar beyond February, 2009, to the end of 2011." There were qualifying phrases on the troops' role and references to the conditions suggested by John Manley's panel, but the nub of the issue was an extension from February of 2009 to the end of 2011.

The Liberals objected to the government position, and there were sharp discussions as MPs battled for the soul of Stéphane Dion. The result four days later was a long amendment to the government motion that struggled to balance the many Liberal positions. But the key clause was simple: "Canada should continue a military presence in Kandahar beyond February, 2009, to Feb. 1, 2011." The Liberals, although trying to shorten the commitment, had accepted the extension in principle.

The Prime Minister and his ministers were quick to praise the Grits for their bipartisan actions in the national interest. On Feb. 21, the government duly introduced its final resolution. Again, the text was straightforward: "This extension of Canada's military presence in Afghanistan is approved by this House expressly on the condition that ... the government of Canada notify

NATO that Canada will end its presence in Kandahar as of July, 2011, and, as of that date, the redeployment of Canadian Forces troops out of Kandahar and their replacement by Afghan forces start as soon as possible, so that it will have been completed by December, 2011."

The government had held firm on its end date, but it accepted almost everything else demanded by the Liberals.

But what had happened? Did the government commit to getting out of Afghanistan at the end of 2011? Or did Stephen Harper yet again snooker Mr. Dion and his party? The Feb. 8 resolution had talked about a continuation of Canadian responsibility for security in Kandahar; the Liberals' Feb. 12 amendment, while changing the phrasing, had kept the sense, calling for Canada to continue a military presence in that troubled province. The final resolution made clear that "Canada will end its presence in Kandahar as of July, 2011," with all troops to be posted out by the end of that year.

Nowhere did the language call for Canada to be out of *Afghanistan*, only for our soldiers to leave Kandahar. What does this mean? Well, it can only be understood to mean that Mr. Harper, assuming he is in office in 2011, could pull Canadian troops out of Afghanistan completely or, if the situation warrants, post them to the safer northern regions or even to the more hostile Uruzgan province. The March 13 resolution gave the Prime Minister almost complete flexibility, sanctioned by the House, to do whatever he chooses three years down the road. All he is committed to is to take Canadian troops out of Kandahar.

Mr. Harper has already demonstrated he is a brilliant tactician. Now his manoeuvring on this war issue ranks him with Mackenzie King, who, in 1942, held a plebiscite on conscription for overseas service, won it except

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GRANTING OF THE HONORARY DISTINCTION UBIQUE TO JOINT TASK FORCE TWO (JTF 2)

THE BATTLE HONOURS COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY RECOMMENDED THAT JTF 2 BE AFFORDED THE HONORARY DISTINCTION UBIQUE. THE MOTTO UBIQUE IS A TYPE 1 HONORARY DISTINCTION THAT IS GRANTED IN LIEU OF BATTLE HONOURS AND IS ACCORDED IN RARE AND EXCEPTIONAL CASES TO AUTHORIZED HONOUR-BEARING UNITS AS A MARK OF SPECIAL FAVOUR.

THE ORIGIN OF THE MOTTO UBIQUE CAN BE TRACED TO 10 JULY 1832, WHEN HIS MAJESTY KING WILLIAM IV GAVE THE ROYAL REGIMENT OF ARTILLERY AND THE CORPS OF ROYAL ENGINEERS HIS PERMISSION TO WEAR ON THEIR APPOINTMENTS, THE ROYAL ARMS AND SUPPORTERS AND THE MOTTO UBIQUE QUO FAS ET GLORIA DUCUNT. THE FOLLOWING YEAR, THIS MOTTO WAS REDEFINED AS, UBIQUE (EVERYWHERE) AND QUO FAS ET GLORIA DUCUNT (WHITHER RIGHT AND GLORY LEAD). ON 1 JUNE 1833, THE KING CONFIRMED THAT UBIQUE WAS QUOTE TO TAKE THE PLACE

OF ALL PAST OR FUTURE BATTLE HONOURS AND DISTINCTIONS GAINED IN THE FIELD UNQUOTE. ON 11 MAY 1994, CF POLICY CONFIRMED THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MOTTO AND IT WAS DIRECTED THAT FUTURE USE OF THE MOTTO BE RESERVED FOR ORGANIZATIONS WHICH MEET LIKE COMBATANT CRITERIA

GIVEN THE UNIQUE CHARACTER OF JTF 2 - IN THAT IT OPERATES AS SMALL TEAMS, FIGHTS IN WIDELY-SEPARATED LOCATIONS AND ITS PARTICIPATION ON OPERATIONS IS NOT OPEN TO PUBLIC SCRUTINY - THE AWARD OF UBIQUE WOULD PROVIDE THE UNIT WITH DESERVED RECOGNITION AS COMRADES-IN-ARMS. THEREFORE, I HEREBY GRANT THE HONORARY DISTINCTION UBIQUE, AND ALL ITS SIGNIFICANCE, TO JTF 2

SIGNED BY GEN R.J. HILLIER, CDS

Contributed by Jack Day

US Marine Corps Humour

Two California Highway Patrol Officers were conducting speeding enforcement on I-15, just north of the Marine Corps Air Station at Miramar. One of the officers was using a hand held radar device to check speeding vehicles approaching the crest of a hill.

The officers were suddenly surprised when the radar gun began reading 300 miles per hour. The officer attempted to reset the radar gun, but it would not reset and then turned off.

Just then a deafening roar over the treetops revealed that the radar had in fact locked on to a USMC F/A-18 Hornet that was engaged in a low flying exercise near the location.

Back at the CHP Headquarters the Patrol

Captain fired off a complaint to the USMC Base Commander. The reply came back in true USMC style:

“Thank you for your letter. We can now complete the file on this incident. You may be interested to know that the tactical computer in the Hornet had detected the presence of, and subsequently locked on to, your hostile radar equipment and automatically sent a jamming signal back to it, which is why it shut down.

Furthermore, an Air-to-Ground missile aboard the fully armed aircraft had also automatically locked on to your equipment location.

Fortunately, the Marine Pilot flying

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**L'Association de l'Artillerie de
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Artillery Association of Montreal**

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NATO is in crisis. So what? (Cont'd)

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NATO, China and India will form a new alliance - if we're lucky, without a war coming in between. By then, the world will be largely, perhaps finally, at peace.

Of course, none of this may come to pass. Many believe that war is a permanent part of the human condition. And history, of course, doesn't only go in one direction. But this is the direction in which we should *want* it to go. That is why it is vital that we not let NATO's squabbles blind us to its greater purpose: to give the Atlantic democracies the strength to protect themselves and lead the world.

Claptrap, the skeptics will say. Idealistic nonsense. Jingoism.

Perhaps. But because of the Marshall Plan and NATO, there has been no war among the great powers for more than 60 years. And for those of us old enough to remember the Cold War, a final thought: This year's summit is being held in Bucharest. Isn't that amazing?

How Stephen Harper snookered Stéphane Dion (Cont'd)

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in Quebec, then refrained from action. His tactics had forced the pro-conscription Conservatives to support him in the plebiscite, however unwillingly. And their reward? His government's policy, King said, was "not necessarily conscription but conscription if necessary." That phraseology stopped the implementation of overseas conscription until November of 1944, a political miracle.

Mr. Harper's Afghan legerdemain has replicated King's feat. The Liberals, many flatly anti-war, had let themselves be manoeuvred into supporting a resolution to extend the mission. And their reward? Canadian policy is now "necessarily not Kandahar, but anywhere else in Afghanistan if necessary."

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From The Globe and Mail

US Marine Corps Humour (Cont'd)

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the Hornet recognized the situation for what it was, quickly responded to the missile system alert status and was able to override the automated defense system before the missile was launched to destroy the hostile radar position.

The pilot also suggests you cover your mouths when cussing at them, since the video systems on these jets are very high tech. Sergeant Johnson, the officer holding the radar gun, should get his dentist to check his left rear molar. It appears the filling is loose.

Also, the snap is broken on his holster.

Thank you for your concern."

Semper Fi