

Notes on the monthly talks held on the 25th of August 2011 at the CTH Mess at the Castle: (Where possible members submitted their own notes on the topics displayed)

14 Members and guests attended another winter meeting greeted with the usual soup and buns organised by the Chairman.

The Chairman started by talking about the Libyan conflict as was suggested by some members. One of the questions related to the use of advanced .50 calibre sniper rifles in use by the rebels, which seem to be from South African produced stock which at one stage was sold to the Libyans by the current South African Government.

The talk continued about the rebel invasion of Tripoli which were leaded and supported by NATO Special Forces, notably the SAS, which infiltrated Gaddafi's main bunker system fairly quickly after landing from boats during the night. Fighting occurred in these underground systems which sometimes contained underground road tunnels stretching for 30 km and more. The Libyan army largely consists of Chadian troops loyal to Gaddafi, and there were no signs of white leadership among them.

Speculation then followed on Gaddafi's whereabouts, with the possibility mentioned that he has probably withdrawn to the South where he had still a sizable force of troops and aircraft.

The Chairman also referred to a media discussion by Gaddafi's son Said which declared that the West do not understand Libya's politics, which does not revolve around political parties but twelve clans, which would revert back to tribal conflict should Gaddafi surrender his power. Pierre de Villiers also remarked that the commander of the Rebel forces has already been assassinated by one of the other clans. The U.N and NATO has also put pressure on the Transitional Government to start co-operating with each other otherwise no support would be given to them.

Other technicalities about the war were also discussed, like the British SAS team that got captured by the Rebels and only released after one of the SAS

members got killed, as well as the modern technology currently employed in Afghanistan, where drone aircraft are applied and controlled by flight simulator technology operated from Arizona.

The discussion then enveloped into a discussion about the different ways of operations conducted by the British and American forces, but the consensus being that the British are more capable and professional with less equipment available than the Americans who simply destroy everything in front of them with an abundance of firepower. Other discussions then followed on the capability of the Americans, especially during the Market-Garden operations and on the amount of equipment they had, including the 49 000 Sherman tanks they build during WW2, which was more than the total amount of all the types of tanks the Germans produced during the war.

A preliminary discussion then followed on the 1879 Zulu war which will be the topic for the next meeting, presented by distinguished author Alan Mountain. The Chairman followed on that with a further discussion on the Zulu history of Shaka and Mzilikazi and what happened in the conflict between them, as well as a discussion on the Basutu wars.

The "Show and Tell" side of the evening was started with Mike Madlaner, who brought a German entrenching tool from the Second World War, followed by Arnold Benecke who brought a .45 Colt Combat Commando pistol as well as an Officers model. Wouter brought two Winchester rifles as well as an Astra 9mm pistol. The "Show and Tell" part of the meetings will from now on be featured on the Cape SAAACA website if the presenters send in material of their talks.

The rest of the evening were spend as usual around the "refreshments" available at the bar or a second helping to soup and buns – 'till fairly late as usual.