

TASK ONE

You are going to read **two texts**. For questions **1 to 6** choose the answer (**A, B or C**), which fits best according to the texts.

Text One

Can Osprey Still Fly?

The MV-22 Osprey aircraft has always been mired in controversy. At first, the U.S. Marine Corps Osprey program was highly criticized as multiple accidents raised safety concerns. Later it was put in jeopardy by the MV-22 squadron's commander at Marine Corps Air Station New River. To make the plane appear more reliable, he instructed his unit to fabricate the maintenance records. When discovered, the incident caused such outrage that it almost led to closing the program, and the squadron's commander was relieved of duty.

Now, with the Osprey having completed its first Iraq deployments and the Marines preparing it to deploy to Afghanistan, a report from the Government Accountability Office (GAO) is again raising doubts about the further use of this largely unproven tilt-rotor technology. The MV-22's mission-capable rates in Iraq were disappointingly low. It failed with high altitudes and in hot weather; problems emerged with dust getting into the wiring harnesses systems and generators. GAO experts also note the lack of a forward gun as a serious design flaw. And, the key factor in the GAO's stand on the aircraft – the costs for it soared over two decades of development, from \$38 million per plane originally to \$93 million.

Yet, the MV-22's range, speed and lift are unsurpassed by any other medium-lift aircraft. Its ability to take off, hover and land like a helicopter is unparalleled and provides perfect operational advantages. Other criticisms by GAO that the MV-22 is unable to carry as many Marines as it was designed for are just unfair. GAO reached that conclusion by boosting the combat load of each Marine from 240 pounds per person to 400 pounds. Even when accounting for extra ammo, a typical combat-loaded Marine will still come in under 300 pounds.

The MV-22 may no longer represent brand-new technology, but it does represent cutting-edge combat capability. It is way too soon to give it up for scrap, though its opponents would like to see it withdrawn now.

1. The Osprey program was almost cancelled after ...

- A. the scandal with the falsified records
- B. the squadron's commander's dismissal
- C. the complaints about the safety of the plane

2. According to the GAO, the biggest problem with the MV-22 is ...

- A. the serious mistakes in the design of the plane
- B. the plane's failures in hot weather conditions
- C. the increasing costs of the plane's production

3. The author thinks that the MV-22 ...

- A. needs to be withdrawn from the service quickly
- B. fails to meet the Marines' transport requirements
- C. wins competition with other medium-lift aircraft

Text Two

Slated U.S. Carrier Visit Irks China

The Chinese government is angrily protesting the Pentagon's announcement to send the aircraft carrier George Washington into the Yellow Sea in the upcoming exercises with South Korea. The exact date the aircraft carrier would enter the Yellow Sea was not released. The George Washington failed to enter the Yellow Sea during the joint exercises with South Korea last month, supposedly after Chinese objections, but plans to do so in the upcoming exercises have once again enraged Beijing. Foreign Ministry spokesperson Jiang Yu stated officially, "Our stand on the Yellow Sea exercises and the scale of manoeuvres planned for that vessel is clear and definite. We urge the relevant parties to take it seriously."

Offending Chinese people is not in the fundamental interest of the United States. Any activity aimed at pushing a country with a 1.3-billion populace would be inadvisable. However, hearing the Chinese government's protests, Pentagon spokesman Geoff Morrell said, "There are obviously territorial waters that we are always respectful of no matter where we operate in the Yellow Sea. But beyond that jurisdiction, beyond that 12-mile limit, we get into the high seas, international waters that we, China or anybody else is free to operate in."

In response, Maj. Gen. Luo Yuan, deputy secretary-general of the People's Liberation Army Academy of Military Sciences, said the Pentagon decision was a risky provocation. "Imagine what the consequences will be if China's biggest debtor nation challenges its creditor nation," he said. Economic observers say that the U.S. owes China \$750 billion. "China is also the world's largest market and offending it means losing, or at least decreasing future profits," Luo added. This is not the first time Chinese officials have used the economic card to threaten Americans. Last year U.S. officials were considering releasing new F-16 aircraft to replace Taiwan's aging F-5s and similar comments appeared to make Washington withdraw from that \$6 billion arms deal.

4. China wants ...

- A. the American vessel to leave the Yellow Sea Waters
- B. the carrier not to participate in the Yellow Sea exercises
- C. the U.S. to limit the number of exercises in the Yellow Sea

5. In the Pentagon's opinion, ...

- A. China's government's objections are groundless
- B. opposing Chinese protests is now unreasonable
- C. international law has been violated by China

6. According to the Chinese general, the U.S. risks having ...

- A. difficulty gathering the debts from China
- B. problems signing a profitable arms deal
- C. lower incomes from the Chinese market

TASK TWO

You are going to read an interview with Lt. Gen. Peter Devlin, Chief of the Land Staff, Canada. Seven questions have been removed from the interview. Choose from questions A - H the one which you think fits best each paragraph 7 - 13. There is an extra question which you do not need to use.

- 7 ____ . Soon after we return home from Afghanistan many things will have to be changed. There is a need for us to energize our winter warfare training and our ability to operate in the north. We'll have to be aware of the complexity of certain types of operations, such as amphibious operations, mountain warfare, but also jungle and parachuting. They have to be introduced because of the emerging threats in the world and Canada's desire to have the Army ready to conduct prospective operations home and abroad and to be fully capable at combat.
- 8 ____ . Most of it certainly will. But there are some areas such as influence activities, psychological and information operations that need to be thought over or even discarded. Other things like our persistent surveillance suites (PSS) need to be reconsidered as well. We have to keep that ability alive in Canada but not man it to the full extent.
- 9 ____ . It will certainly be a gradual process. It's a different environment here in Canada which comes with a whole set of other challenges. To be able to adapt to these challenges we need to train aggressively to have a force that remains motivated, believing in what they've done away from home and what they're going to do.
- 10 ____ . The study into its influence is still in progress but it's obvious that due to the economic crisis the coming financial times will be different for the Army. So, we'll have to look carefully at how we train, how to change our structures, what gear we'll need and when we we'll receive it.
- 11 ____ . All this is still carefully analysed. After Afghanistan the RG-31 and the Leopard 1 tank are on the top of the list but there are other vehicles we are examining, too. It is important for us to dispose wisely of our old, well used gear.
- 12 ____ . We're fortunate as most of our orders have been approved and are under way. We'll receive newer vehicles in the years ahead such as the upgraded Light Armored Vehicle (LAV)-3 and new Close Combat Vehicle (CCV) and the Tactical Armored Patrol Vehicle (TAPV). The Army will also purchase new Chinook helicopters.
- 13 ____ . I don't think so. Unlike the Army programs, the completion of theirs will require more time. The Air Force equipment will be delivered in midterm and the Navy ships will be ready in the longer term. I think it's actually been sequenced quite nicely for the Canadian Forces and certainly from an Army point of view.
- A. Have you analyzed what impact this transformation might have on the Army?
- B. What new items do you plan to introduce instead?
- C. Are there any future concerns for the Army resulting from the MoD's focus on the other forces?
- D. What is the future of the Canadian Army?
- E. Will all experience you gained on that mission be useful to you back home?
- F. What effect will the new equipment have on the efficiency of the Army?
- G. Is the transition from Afghanistan combat situation into a peacetime Army going to be difficult?
- H. What equipment might the Army get rid of on your return?

TASK THREE

You are going to read a newspaper article. For questions 14 to 20, choose the answer (A, B, C or D), which fits best according to the text.

Glimmers in the Holy Land

The time has come for the Obama Administration to do a reset of American policy in the Middle East. At the moment, things are a mess. Earlier this year, US officials requested that the Israelis stop all construction of settlements. Having drawn such a line in the sand, they appeared to blink when the Israelis kicked some of the sand in their face. Nor were the Americans able to persuade Arab countries to cooperate with Israel in exchange for further concessions. So peace talks are on hold.

Israelis sometimes lament that the Palestinians never miss an opportunity to miss an opportunity. This time it may be the Israelis who are letting a precious opportunity pass: the West Bank Palestinian leaders President Mahmoud Abbas and, especially, Prime Minister Salam Fayyad are the best partners for peace in Israel's history. Abbas and Fayyad have been astonishingly successful at fulfilling the road-map obligations to reform their security forces, resulting in a near ceasing of violence in or from the West Bank. Indeed, the most notable occurrence in the past few years was something that did not occur: when Israel invaded Gaza last January, the West Bank did not erupt. Fayyad has instituted financial transparency and launched smart economic initiatives.

These accomplishments provide a foundation for what could be a new American approach. Last summer, Fayyad announced that – instead of waiting for political negotiations to reach a final agreement on a Palestinian state – he would simply work to build the institutions of such state right away. His aim was to create conditions that within two years would convince the world, including the Israelis, that the entity should be granted statehood. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has proposed a similar approach. He wants to provide both sides with security by building the Palestinian economy, and has lifted some of the checkpoints in the West Bank.

Private groups have been helping this process. In partnership with the Palestine Investment Fund, the Aspen Institute created the Middle East Investment Initiative, which uses loan guarantees to provide financing for medium-size Palestinian businesses. In two years it has advanced 150 loans totaling \$38.3 million, generating 3,121 new jobs. In addition, the group has created an affordable mortgage facility, which will help more than 10,000 families purchase homes. Another consortium, the US-Palestine Partnership, helps create a venture-capital fund run by Israeli and Palestinian investors to finance technology start-ups.

Given the impasse in Israeli-Palestinian talks, the US has various options. It could table its own comprehensive peace plan. It could change its focus to negotiating a deal between Israel and Syria. Or, which seems to be the best way, it could vastly reinvigorate the effort to build up democratic Palestinian state institutions on the West Bank to a step-by-step progression towards peace. Working with special envoys, such as Tony Blair, the US could help build economic institutions, job centers, industrial free-trade zones and youth programs. It would not require a lot of money; it could be done by enlisting American corporations and organizations in public-private partnerships.

An economic surge should not replace peace talks. It should complement them by demonstrating the benefits that peace would bring both sides. Or it could be the foundation for solving regional problems in which the two sides should focus first on resolving border issues, which are actually easier to resolve than they may appear. In the process, Fayyad and Abbas would be strengthened. The next step would be tackling more difficult issues such as trading arrangements, water rights and other practical matters. The most complex ideological issues that go to the heart of each side's conflicting narrative – the right of return of Palestinian refugees and sovereignty over Jerusalem – could be saved until later. So, too, could the question of Gaza, whose citizens would then be presented with the stark choice of continuing to support Hamas or embracing the peace and prosperity enjoyed by their brethren in the West Bank. And President Obama could take a large step toward fulfilling the hopes he raised in his Cairo speech.

14. In the Middle East the Americans ...

- A. managed to get the support of Arab countries
- B. stopped the construction of Israeli settlement
- C. were unsuccessful with their regional policy
- D. succeeded in making Israel hold peace talks

15. According to the author, at present Israel ...

- A. has big chances of assuring peace
- B. blames Palestine for violence in Gaza
- C. is following the road-map successfully
- D. accuses Palestine of a lack of cooperation

16. Prime Minister Fayyad thinks Palestine should ...

- A. be granted statehood right away
- B. have state institutions set up first
- C. remove checkpoints in the West Bank
- D. have more influence in negotiations

17. The Middle East Investment Initiative ...

- A. provides financial support
- B. sponsors job training centres
- C. finances technology start-ups
- D. builds new housing settlements

18. At present, the best way for the US to assure peace in the Middle East is ...

- A. to prepare their own new peace plan
- B. to involve Syria in the peace talks
- C. to support democracy on the West Bank
- D. to engage private sector in social programs

19. The peace talks in the region should ...

- A. be completely abandoned as ineffective
- B. go together with economic development
- C. concentrate on resolving political issues
- D. leave out economic development matters

20. The least difficult problem to solve in the region seems to be ...

- A. the Gaza strip problem
- B. the support for Hamas
- C. refugees resettlement
- D. the border issues