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Sea Kings from the Navy's HS 817 Squadron at HMAS Stirling in Western Australia.
Photograph: Navy Public Affairs (WA)
Treaties, Alliances and Aid within the Asia Pacific Region and the Security they Foster

By Captain A.G. Bokor, RAE

"Treaties are like flowers and young girls — they last while they last" Charles De Gaulle, "Treaties are observed as long as they are in harmony and interest" Napoleon, (Tsouras 1992:446).

Introduction

No two countries are permanent friends or enemies, they either share similar interests or take opposing positions at any point in time. A means to foster countries pursuing similar interests is to develop bilateral relations with one another. These bilateral relations can be developed and promoted in a number of ways, some of which include but are not limited to: treaties, alliances and aid programs. Bilateral relationships can be all encompassing or be specific such as political, economic and/or defence orientated.

The development of bilateral and multilateral relations are sure methods of maintaining similar interests, thereby fostering security between co-signatories. A good example of such cooperation is the treaty of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Asian Productivity Organisation and a recently developed treaty, that of the Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC).

The underlying condition of membership to a treaty or an alliance is to guarantee a right of access to the terms and conditions as stipulated in the alliance, thereby providing an element of predictability in dealings between signatories. The first part of this article briefly describes the strategic changes that have taken place within the Asia Pacific region as a consequence of the end of the Cold War. The changes described are by no means comprehensive; they were selected to illustrate the range and complexity of issues and events that pose consequential threats to regional security. The second part of the article outlines the benefits that treaties, alliances and bilateral aid packages have and how they can contribute to dispelling tensions that develop between nations and how they contribute to fostering security within the region. Finally, Australia's response to regional security in this new dynamic environment will be outlined.

End of the Cold War

The end of the Cold War in which the United States and the former Soviet Union and their principal allies, faced each other off in a perpetual, ideologically motivated confrontation (Hsuing, 1993:2) have ceased to be the vehicle for East West conflict. This has meant that the international economic structure and the Third World are no longer the extended battlegrounds of these two former rivals. Examples of the cooperation between these two former foes are the extension of observer status granted to the former USSR to the recent GATT (soon to be known as the World Trade Organisation (WTO) talks and the alignment on the same side over the Gulf Crisis of 1991. China also joined the U.S. in a world stand against Iraq, (Hsuing, 1993:3). Furthermore, China has also made application for membership to the WTO.

The key contributor of this new world order is the shift from a bipolar to a multipolar domination of the world, the transition from a nuclear to a conventional force deterrence and the rising importance of economic security as distinct from military security (Hsuing, 1993:18). However, nuclear proliferation is still a major issue of concern with countries like North Korea, Iraq and other outlaw states trying to acquire nuclear technology of their own, often from the former USSR and using it in a threatening manner to further their interests.

The implications of the end of the Cold War are the end of diplomatic/military confrontation between the communist and capitalist worlds, the growing economic competition and tension between developed and newly industrialising economies (NIEs), who were former Cold War allies; and the wave of democratisation, (Clark, 1993:129), as demonstrated in Indo-China and the tragedy of the protest for democracy in Tianamen Square, People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1989.

The major players to emerge within the Asia Pacific area are the USA, China, Japan and to a lesser extent India. Of these countries only Japan is not a nuclear power; however, Japan's economic strength will draw, to a large extent, the other nations of the region into its economic orbit, (Hsuing, 1993:6). Peter Polomka, Senior Research Fellow, Strategic and Defence Studies Centre at the Australian National University (SDC at the ANU) comments that Japan's economic strength
and technological capabilities give it the option of becoming a major autonomous military power with a nuclear capability, (Polomka, 1993:98). Fortunately the demise of the military confrontation will give rise to the importance of economic alliances and hopefully foster security. Of concern is the rapidly expanding PRC economy and its commitment to enhancing its military capabilities, and Japan’s efforts to redress the difference between its extremely strong economic performance and its restrained political and defence profile, (EAAU/2:83). Japan has already demonstrated this with its participation in the Cambodia free elections by providing logistic support troops.

Asia is a dynamic region and this dynamism is being reflected in part by the military build-up of Asian nations. Much of the modernisation has been made possible as a result of the region’s increasing economic strength and independence and the changing trade patterns. The Prime Minister of Malaysia, Dr Mahathir, made comment at the 27th international general meeting of the Pacific Basin Economic Council (PBEC) that Asia has the right to arm itself but dismissed suspicions there was an arms race in the region... and that Asia’s expenditure on arms was bound to rise in line with its economic growth, (Chong, 24 May 94).

**Threats to Regional Security**

The direct security threat within the region has in many ways heightened as a result of the loss of the checks and balances that were provided by the previous order of the bipolar stand off. The vacuum created by the collapse of the USSR coupled with the withdrawal of much of the US forces in the Asia Pacific region, such as the closure of Subic Bay and Clark Base, both in the Philippines, has left countries in a position whereby they now must accept a greater degree of responsibility for their own security.

Many of the modernisation programs being undertaken are focused towards force projection capabilities and that they pose a number of key strategic issues for Australia and the region as a whole in the years ahead, (Charlton, 20 Nov 93). Professor Paul Dibb, head of the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre at the Australian National University, says of concern to Australia and the remainder of the region will be the consequential realignment of alliances and the strengthening of existing alliances. These will ensure peace and security in the region in order to check confrontation before it occurs between competing nations previously without the capability, (Charlton, 20 Nov 93).

It is this search for identity and national assertion that will heighten tension between countries, in the form of territorial confrontation, to reclaim lost territory and protect perceived maritime economic interests, especially in exclusive economic zones. Numerous claims exist, but are inclined to be resolved peacefully through bilateral and regional negotiation, (EAAU/2:84). The Spratly Islands, a chain of islands in the South China Sea, is but one example of a potential flash point. The islands are claimed by the People’s Republic of China; Vietnam; Taiwan; Indonesia; Brunei; the Philippines and Malaysia in the expectation of the recovery of seabed resources like oil and hydrocarbons. In early 1988 Vietnamese and PRC naval ships confronted each other and exchanged fire resulting in sinking and damage of each others vessels.

Another dispute between nations, laying claims to territory, include the Kuril Islands. These islands are located north of Japan and were garrisoned by the then USSR troops during World War II and which the Russian Federation still occupy and administer, however, claimed by Japan. The importance of these islands is that they currently form part of the fortified barrier along with Sakhalin and Kamchatka Islands in defence of the Russian homeland. Coupled with air superiority over the maritime provinces of the Sea of Japan and the Sea of Okhotsk, the Russian Federation ensure transit to the Pacific Ocean for their naval fleet, (Babbage 1989:39). The progressive return of the Kuril Islands within a defined time frame are an important step towards development of a comprehensive understanding between Japan and the Russian Federation. This understanding can lead to the development of the energy and other resources within the region, especially Sakhalin Island, using the large-scale economic, technical and investment cooperation offered by Japan and would provide impetus to the reconstruction of the Russian Federation’s economy, (Drysdale 1991:9). Yet another area of tension is on the Korean Peninsula between the North and South over the sovereign right to reunify the country partitioned in the late 1940s. This is of particular concern as the acquisition of nuclear weapons by the North, and their willingness to use them, could also fuel nuclear proliferation in other North East Asian nations, (EAAU, 1992:104). These are but some of the areas/issues of conflict within the region, that if allowed to escalate will cause major disturbance within the region as they are centred around the sea lanes of communication in the region.

Inimical interests of other countries in the region are an ongoing matter and often a source of tension. The US still maintains a strong military presence through its bilateral treaties of one kind or another with the various
nations of the region. An example where this has caused tension is in Singapore. Singapore provides the US Navy with a home for its Asia Pacific logistic unit despite initial opposition from Indonesia and Malaysia... Singapore is a small country predominantly different in racial background and culture to its neighbours and sees the need for a large and powerful friend to insure its survival. (Stewart L., 7 May 94).

### Treaties and Alliances

International relations within the Asian Pacific region have increasingly assumed more interdependent features. There is a rising tendency towards increased trade between nations, cross-investment between economies, and an increase in cultural exchanges, (Chan, 1993:174). Evidence of this occurring is the enhanced importance and role of the Association of South East Asian Nations, (ASEAN), treaty which has been the foundation for the improved regional relations in South-East Asia and will continue to be so into the 1990s. An example of collective efforts to promote peace and prosperity was made on 18 April 1975, after the Khmer Rouge seized power in Cambodia, the then five members of ASEAN jointly recognised the new Government of Cambodia... This was followed by a joint statement by the foreign ministers of the member countries on 15 May 1975 that ASEAN was ready to enter “into friendly and harmonious relations with each nation of Indo-China” and “to cooperate with these countries in the common task of national development” and the social and political differences should not be obstacles to this development, (Renggar, 1990:525). The fruit of this initiative has flourished with Indo-China being extended increasingly cooperative relations with ASEAN over the last decade leading towards both Vietnam and Laos possibly being admitted to membership during this decade. (EAAU/2:83).

The advent of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Forum will compliment the peaceful cooperation developing in the region through commerce, by encouraging open multilateral trade. This will prevent the world economy from fragmenting into defensive trading blocks, eg by the inclusion of the nations that comprise the North American Free Trade Association.

APEC has principally been an Australian-driven initiative which has been challenged by the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Dr Mahathir’s proposal for an exclusive East Asian nations only multilateral trade treaty, the East Asian Economic Caucus. This move by Dr Mahathir is of major concern to Australia as an East Asian nations exclusive treaty would exclude Australia and would have a major consequence for Australia as a trading nation within the region and not belonging to any trade pact.

At a recent summit meeting held in Indonesia on 18 May 1994, Mr Weber Loeis, the Indonesian Chairman of the meeting, said APEC would give greater attention to human resource development, promotion of small and medium-scale business, encouragement of private sector participation and enhanced cooperation in commercial and private infrastructure, (Suwastoyo, 19 May 94). He further said “…that these four fields of cooperation… are crucial to the efforts of the developing economies in APEC to achieve a rate of development that will allow them to reduce the gap between themselves and their industrialized partners”.

It is through these forums and treaties that open regionalism can be stressed in order to minimise the possible emergence of trade and political problems in the region.

### Bilateral Aid

Aid is also a vehicle through which donor countries can benefit through sponsorship of specific social and environmental projects in recipient countries that the donor perceives as important to itself. Examples of Australia’s bilateral aid flow to South East Asia include assistance in preventative health care, such as the $20m HIV/AIDS program to Indonesia, (Walters, 28 Apr 94), and also the environmental preservation programs specifically directed at the forests of Thailand and Malaysia. It is through aid programs that recipient countries are able to direct their limited resources to immediate needs whilst matters perceived as lesser priority can be addressed more often than not to the mutual benefit of the donor and recipient alike.

Aid is another important vehicle for supporting Australia’s commercial and wider political and strategic interests in the South East Asia region. Australia has been one of the major donors into the region since the 1950s, resulting in a rise in standards of living for many of the recipients. Raising standards of living within recipient countries will open further commercial opportunities for Australia in the region, and a more prosperous region is likely to be politically stable and enhance regional security, (EAAU/2, 1992:127).
The historic cultural disparity of Australia to its Asian neighbours has always been an issue to be overcome if Australia is to integrate deeper into the economics and politics of Asia. As a result of the accelerating pace of international strategic change within the region, Australia has been required to play a more predominant role. In his article “Bridging Gaps”, Peter Charlton, a journalist, gives credit where credit is due to the efforts of the successive Australian Labor Governments since 1983 to the positive overtures in foreign policy to our Asian neighbours, especially those on the Indo-China peninsula, (Charlton, 6 Apr 94). Australia has emphasised dialogue as a means of building confidence between nations in order to share their threat perceptions, thereby defusing the potential for an arms race and emphasising cooperation with each other to address specific issues with security implications, (EAAU, 1992:105).

Australia has acknowledged that the pace of multilateral dialogue and cooperation cannot be forced. To overcome this hurdle Australia has been active in expanding its own bilateral links with regional nations and in developing proposals for practical confidence building and cooperative measures, (EAAU, 1992:105). An example of this is the Australian funded and built “Friendship Bridge” across the Mekong River between Thailand and Laos. The significance of the bridge, as the first across the Mekong River, will be to enable an increase in economic activity on the peninsula previously not available, thereby providing a means for redressing the vast imbalance in the economic wealth of Laos through the promotion of trade. The Prime Minister of Australia, Mr Paul Keating, said at the opening of the bridge “Australia hopes that the ‘Friendship Bridge’ will be an enduring symbol of our relationship with the region, of the expertise and goodwill we bring with it”, (Charlton, 6 Apr 94). Australia has plans for many more such projects such as a $100m bridge across the Mekong River in Vietnam, (Stewart C., 3 Mar 94) and a $21m aid package to Cambodia including a bridge and assistance to the mine clearance operations, (Wright, 11 Mar 94).

Australia also played a significant role in bringing free election to Cambodia in 1993. It was Australia’s determination to see that peace was brought to the Indo-China peninsula that a United Nations sponsored Transitional Agreement on Cambodia, in which Australia played a significant role, was established to oversee the peaceful and successful conduct of the election of the free government.

The increase in training aid that Australia provides to the Indonesian Military is testimony to the improvement in relations that the two countries have been cultivating over the last few years. The significance in the bilateral defence cooperation being exercised between the two countries paves the way for further overtures of improvement in relations both in economic and political terms. Especially so in the context of Australia lobbying Indonesia to express its concerns within the ASEAN Forum. Defence relations are an expression of mutual trust for one another that cannot be trivialised. Australia now enjoys the privilege of being the provider of the largest range of defence cooperation activities to Indonesia, (Walters, 22 Mar 94).

The end of the Cold War brought with it an end to the bipolar diplomatic/military confrontation, between east and west spheres of interest, with the world now facing growing economic competition and tension between developed and NIEs who were previously Cold War allies. This situation has arisen as a consequence of the NIEs search for national identity and assertion.

The Prime Minister of Vietnam, Mr Vo Van Kiet, said at the PBEC 27th meeting that “the only way to control the dangers of conflicts is the way of dialogue aimed at strengthening mutual understanding and mutual trust, promoting intra- and extra-regional cooperation” (Chong, 24 May 94). Vehicles used to promote trust and cooperation are treaties, alliances and aid packages. It is through these vehicles that signatories have experienced stability, security and prosperity as is evident in the nations that comprise the ASEAN Treaty as compared to their neighbours. The extension of relations between the ASEAN signatories to those of the former communist nations of Indo-China, demonstrates that friendly cooperative and harmonious relations between nations can promote national development as a common task. It is whilst these bilateral relations exist that nations will prosper and open regionalism can be stressed.

Australia’s historic cultural disparity with Asia has been an issue to be surmounted, if Australia is to integrate deeper into the economics and politics of Asia. Since 1983, Australia has made positive overtures in foreign policy to Asia. Australia has played a leading role in the advancement of peace within the Asia region through its promotion of peace in Cambodia via the United Nations and through its foreign aid programs throughout the region.
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Captain Bokor is a graduate from the Officer Cadet School, Portsea, he was allocated to the Royal Australian Engineers. He is studying toward a Bachelor of Social Science, Human Resources Management vide the Junior Officer Professional Education Scheme through Southern Cross University, Armidale, NSW. Captain Bokor is currently Manager One-Stop-Shop at BASC Enoggera.
What Does the End of the Cold War Portend for Security Alliances in the Asia Pacific?

By Major RJ. Easton, ANZIM, RNZAOC.

History has not ended; only that great master of discipline, the Cold War, has taken a bow.

Introduction

The Cold War provided the raison d'être for a number of security alliances in the Asia Pacific region. However, the predictability and simplicity of the Cold War security environment have gone and 'many nations are simultaneously not quite sure where they should be going in security terms'. One thing that is certain is that alliances forged during the Cold War will undergo change, for as Barry Buzan, in 1991, noted: 'As the alliance structures of the Cold War dissolve into irrelevance... a looming void seems to be appearing at the heart of the international system...'. And as Raymond Aron, a French scholar, wrote 'Alliances either evolve or dissolve.'

This article sets out to determine what the end of the Cold War portends for security alliances in the Asia Pacific region. It will firstly examine the nature of alliances in the Cold War era. This background will then be contrasted with the security environment emerging in the post-Cold War world. Finally the article will assess what the new security landscape foreshadows for security alliances in the Asia Pacific.

Alliances in the Cold War

Post-World War Two, the world became split into two ideologically hostile camps, and the system whereby Europe had dominated international affairs was replaced by a bipolar balance between East and West. In the Asia Pacific region, diverse threat perceptions (in comparison to those in Europe) mitigated against formation of a multilateral alliance system similar to NATO.

Instead, an array of alliances and alignments evolved, aimed at, and justified in terms of, containing the threat posed by the respective superpower and its ideological system. To this end, the Soviet Union was aligned with North Korea, Vietnam and, until the 1970s, with China, while the US formed bilateral alliances with Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, Thailand, and with the sub-regional groupings of ANZUS, ASEAN, and the South Pacific Forum. Hence, throughout the Cold War, the Asia Pacific security landscape was characterised by a system of counter-balancing threat-orientated alliances, generally bilateral in nature.

In the post-Cold War world, however, the USSR no longer exists and a much 'flatter' and more diffuse international order characterises the geo-strategic landscape. Geo-political predicability has given way to uncertainty, and while the pace and intensity of change mean that judgements made must be tentative, there are some emerging elements of change that will shape future alliance relationships.

Elements of Change Shaping Alliance Relationships in the Post-Cold War World

The first element of change is the changing role of both the US and regional powers. The US is the predominant Asia Pacific power but, in relative terms, its power is declining. Budgetary pressure has lead to a reduction in US presence in the Asia Pacific region, while at the same time there has been a rise of new Asian powers, both economical and political. Concerns are being expressed about how China, Japan, and India will respond, to changing geo-strategic trends.

Apart from the Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA), the region has no multilateral security alliances to support regional security. Many states fear that a US withdrawal from the region may lead to a rearmament by Japan, or moves by other regional actors such as China and India to fill the void left by the US. Given the sensitivity of most Asia Pacific states, any such moves could spark an uncontrolled arms race throughout the entire region. Paradoxically, on the other hand, some nations (particularly developing and non-aligned nations) regret the loss of political and economic leverage over the US that could be extracted as a consequence of the bipolar East-West struggle.

Second, in the post-Cold War world the security construct, which has traditionally focused on military secu-
rity has been redefined. ‘Security’ is now considered a multi-dimensional and comprehensive construct, one where economic, environmental and other non-military aspects of security are treated as being on the same plane of significance as military security. Economic and technological strength have increased in importance relative to military strength.

As the world’s economies have become increasingly interdependent, a new kind of political-economic diplomacy is emerging. In the post-Cold War world, where globalisation and regionalism are two major issues, economic strength will, more than ever before, decide a nations place in the international system. Desmond Ball noted the rising salience of economic strength in the Asia Pacific region in writing:

*The condition and character of security in the Asia/Pacific region is changing rapidly... The most important change is economic. Economic strength has become the single most important index of national power, eclipsing... possession of... advanced military capabilities. It is the ability of national economies to sustain high levels of real growth... and to engage competitively... in the international market place that will determine ranking in the national power lists at the turn of the century.*

The world’s economies are increasingly interdependent; and for most Asia Pacific nations military and economic security relationships are intertwined, and mutually supporting. Today the region enjoys the highest rate of economic growth of any region in the world. The quest for economic growth is a compelling and potent force. Increasing levels of economic cooperation and interdependence have facilitated growth at the regional and sub-regional level. But in a world not predicated on ideological differences of a political kind and one in which renewed fears of global protectionist pressures have emerged, economic and trade warfare are a very real possibility. There are currently ‘trade disputes between key trading partners in the Asia Pacific, with uncertainties over market access and fears of retaliation.’ Indeed, as Paul Dibb concluded:

...not all aspects of economic growth and International economic interdependence will work in favour of regional stability. The disparity between nations and the emergence of powerful new economic competitors could lead to confrontation.*

Moreover, as J. Mohan Malik succinctly describes, the whole character of future conflicts is changing. Mohan Malik wrote:

*As a natural corollary of the changing concept of security, the character of conflicts between nations in the future will also change... conflicts over natural resources... will break out more frequently as ‘economic security’ takes a higher priority in nations’ security calculations. There will be increasing competition among countries for resources and markets. The control and exploitation of natural resources and colonisation of outer space and markets will be the key objectives of future conflicts.*

It should also be clear, that the use of military force in the ‘traditional’ sense cannot be ruled out. The civil war in Yugoslavia is a stark reminder to Asia Pacific states, many of which have internal ethnic problems and territorial disputes with other states, of the destructive potential of such disputes in the post-Cold War world. Indeed, despite the prevailing peace, Asia Pacific states remain mindful that military force is likely to remain the final arbiter in power struggles.

There are also a number of non-military problems assuming greater importance in the security of the post-Cold War world. Refugees, international crime, piracy, the narcotics trade, environmental degradation, religious fundamentalism, migration, population increases, and terrorism are amongst the threats faced. While few of these directly threaten military security nor can they be solved by military means, they threaten the very fabric of society and can debilitating a country. Such threats are also not constrained by national borders and management in one country can threaten one or a number of others which may resuscitate traditional inter-state fears and rivalries that had, in the name of regional resilience, otherwise been suppressed.

Third, the tidy symmetry of the Cold War has been exchanged for a new and complicated range of possibilities. In many ways the post-Cold War world is in a state of ‘Disorder’ rather than order. The collapse of the bipolar struggle has given rise to regional disputes, interstate rivalries and intra-state tensions, that had been held in check by the ‘heavy hand of central communism’ and the super power confrontation. These include, amongst others, disputes in the Korean Peninsula, Sino-Indian Border, Indian-Pakistani border, Kurile Islands, conflicts in the South China Sea, border and territorial disputes between ASEAN states, and ethnic and racial tensions within many states (for example, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Cambodia, Malaysia and Indonesia).

The growth in arms proliferation in the Asia Pacific, particularly in the fields of nuclear weapons and ballistic missile technology, is the fourth element of change in the post-Cold War world. Indeed, the pace with which advanced military technology, and this includes conventional weapons, is proliferating throughout the region is worrisome. This trend means regional nations...
have increased both their firepower and reach.

The rise of multi-polarity in what is a complex and intricate region, is the final element of change that warrants consideration. As participants adjust to the end of the Cold War there are now more principal actors on the international scene; and the circle of participants will both widen and loosen.

Economic interdependence and the complex array of security issues facing states will make it impossible for them to manage in isolation. They will need to cooperate. This will lead to regional and inter-regional integration and growth of regional organisations and institutions such as ASEAN, the South Pacific Forum and APEC, and even informal coalitions such as the Cairns Group. And as J. Mohan Malik noted, the growth of regionalism would 'bring about a change in the concept of nation-state and national sovereignty.'

The Implications for Post-Cold War Alliance Relationships

So what do these changes portend for security alliances in the Asia Pacific region? Clearly a number of deductions can be made.

First, the number of principal actors and the range and complexity of issues to be dealt with in the post-Cold War world, means that alliance relationships will need to be flexible and fluid. Threat perceptions, both military and non-military, will change rapidly and nations will desire, and require, freedom and flexibility of action. Hence, it is unlikely that we will see permanent alliance relationships, particularly military ones, they are an anachronism in a rapidly changing world. In practical terms future alliances will be 'pactless pacts' or security frameworks without binding alliances.

Second, in the Cold War, military security dominated the agenda through a series of threat-oriented alliances. In a world in which immediate military threats are not identifiable, and one in which security is now viewed in a multi-dimensional sense, 'the need for threat-oriented alliances has diminished, at least as an instrument of containment and mutual defence.' More importantly, 'threat-oriented alliances' will not be effective in dealing with or managing emerging trends in the region. It is therefore predicted that there will be a transformation to more 'order-oriented' and collective alliances.

Indeed, in the past, Asia Pacific security cooperation has been mostly bilateral, centred on the Western alliance system, and related mainly to military issues. In the post-Cold War world the elements of change cited in the foregoing discussion create a strong imperative for multi-layered, multi-dimensional, and multi-lateral, regional, and sub-regional approaches to security cooperation.

The US has traditionally preferred to form a comprehensive system of bilateral relationships. But now the diffusion of power and complexity of the post-Cold War security architecture will mitigate against such. As the Gulf War showed, albeit that it was a special case, coalition building is the obvious way for countries to increase their weight and influence.

Smaller countries, particularly those who have lost their previous leverage, recognise that their interests can best be served by a multilateral system which has an improved capacity to deal with breaches of the peace and promote an open world economy. Indeed, the prevailing strategic uncertainty and the likely nature of the future conflict, will compel both small and large nations to coalesce into multilateral arrangements. These arrangements will be useful in dealing with military or non-military regional and territorial crisis. It seems that the Clinton administration has recognised this new reality and 'will encourage Asia in its desire to interweave a regional security network.'

Moreover, the perception that the US and the West in general is in relative economic decline will accentuate efforts by Asia Pacific states to diversify economic and foreign policy links. This, together with the rise of geo-economics at the expense of geo-politics, will compel states to search for new policies and alliance relationships that 'minimise the chance of military conflict while maximising advantages in trade and economic development.' Military and non-military alliance regimes will need to be complementary and congruent. For example, within ASEAN, states have in the early 1990s, complemented their bilateral military agreements with economic alliances. Indeed, in the post-Cold War world it is both conceivable and likely that nations will have alliances with some states for economic reasons, and alliances with different states for military reasons.

There can be no greater supporter for these conclusions than the results of July 1993 ASEAN ministerial meeting in Singapore. In the words of 'Australian' foreign editor, Greg Sheridan: 'ASEAN, with its PMC and Regional Forum, is now the dominant regional security body, while APEC is clearly the dominant economic body.'

Finally, all this does not mean that existing alliances will be cast aside. The US led alliances, for example, are important in economic and strategic terms, for both the US and the Asia Pacific region. Most Asia Pacific nations recognise that presently the US is the only nation with the capacity to serve as the balancer in the Asia Pacific region. American interests in East Asia are
too large and too complex for any retreat." As Patrick Cronin noted "...US economic leverage on a country-to-country basis is declining. This, in turn, enhances the relative importance of the US military presence as an instrument of American influence."16

While alliances forged in the Cold War will remain, a transformation or realignment of alliance relationships will take place. First there is the need to give them a new meaning and relevance for the 1990s and beyond, for without this they will wither. For example, the FPDA was originally developed to counter the communist threat, but in the post Cold War world, its contribution to regional order and the need to counter the rise of new Asian powers, are cited as its new raison d'etre.17

For many existing alliances unilateral security guarantees will be replaced by 'cooperative political and economic arrangements.'18 While, in the US led alliances, partners will be called on to take an increasing burden of commitment and expenditure of the alliance from the US.

Such transformations are already being seen in adjustments being made to the US-Japan alliance in the political and economic dimensions. Continuance of the US-Japan alliance is seen as vital to the peace and stability of the Asia Pacific region. An independent Japanese security role is hard to see. It would require not only a breakdown of the alliance, but an American withdrawal from the Western Pacific and a major regional threat to Japanese interests.19. It would also invite a backlash from countries like China, Korea, and India. Japan's security role will inevitably increase, but it will do so within the framework of the American alliance.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, political realignment, economic interdependence, the redefinition of security, the changing nature of future conflicts, the growth of regionalism, together with the many unresolved conflicts in the region, are potent forces that portend significant changes for security alliances in the Asia Pacific region.

Cooperative, flexible multilateralism, with congruent bilateralism, will characterise the new security landscape. It is anticipated that an array of flexible bilateral and multilateral alliances, with interlocking military and non-military cooperation at the sub-regional, regional and global levels, will emerge. Overlaiding this will be a commitment of the US to the region (as security guarantor of the last resort) and continuation of the US-Japan alliance.20

Finally, multilateralism does not presuppose the establishment of new military alliance regimes. There will be a transformation or realignment of existing bilateral arrangements. In the post-Cold War world traditional alliance relationships will not be 'so much ends in themselves as means to the end of greater security.'21

In this sense, traditional alliances are currently being subsumed into wider regional and global security relationships, and have clearly provided the building blocks for expanded dialogue and relations. The recent initiatives in APEC and the ASEAN Security Forum are clear evidence of this. Equally, they are clear evidence that, in the post-Cold War world, 'threat-orientated' alliances are being replaced by 'order-orientated' regimes.

Taking all factors into consideration, in this situation of transition and uncertainty it is imperative for Asia Pacific nations to assess correctly the new challenges as well as the new opportunities inherent in them, and to adapt their security policies and approaches accordingly. Failure to do so may result in marginalisation at a time when being left on the margins is the worst place to be.

**NOTES**

6. While in military terms the world may be unipolar, it is important to note that in economic terms, the global balance is essentially tripolar, based on US, Europe and Japan.
7. See for example, Douglas Johnston, 'Anticipating Instability in the Asia Pacific', *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol 15, No 3, 1992, p.104; who notes that 'The principle threat in the Western Pacific is the instability that would arise from a precipitate withdrawal of US Forces.'


26. See Hinge ibid p.53; who noted that 'Coalitions — which are alliances or unions between disparate groups, factions or partners especially for some temporary and specific reason — may displace formal alliances in future as territorial disputes will tend to arise not for ideological reasons but for economic reasons.'


28. Where neighbours and regional states are seen as allies to be embraced.

29. Which emphasises secure national borders, and neighbours are seen as potential threats.

30. Jason Lewis, op cit., p.188.

31. For example the 'Growth Triangle' triangle between Singapore, Indonesia and Malaysia.

32. For example, given Australia's security situation, it is conceivable that it could have a military alliance with the US and an economic alliance with Japan.

33. Members include ASEAN nations of Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore, The Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei, plus Australia, the US, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea, Russia, China, Vietnam, Laos, and Papua New Guinea.

34. Members include ASEAN countries plus Australia, Canada, China, Hong Kong, Japan, Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Taiwan and the US.


37. American interests in Japan would alone prevent this, and for the US. It is expected that by the end of the decade US trans-Pacific will be more than double that of US trans-Atlantic trade. Moreover, eight out of the top twenty US export markets are Pacific rim nations. See J.D. Lewis, 'Southeast Asia-Preparing for a New World Order', The Washington Quarterly, Vol 16, No 1, Winter 1993, p.193; and Hinge, op cit., p.57.


42. J.D.Lewis, op cit., p.197.

43. Gareth Evans and Bruce Grant, op cit., p. 112.

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Major R.J. Easton is currently the New Zealand Exchange officer posted to Admin Br LHQ. He is a graduate of OCS Portsea. The US Army Logistic Executive Development Course, and the Singapore Command and Staff College. In December 1993 he completed a Master of Defence Studies at Deakin University, and is currently undertaking an MBA at Macquarie University, Sydney.
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Emerging Threats to Regional Security: Can Australia Contribute to a Resolution?

By Major T.J. McCullagh, RAA

The gravest threats to peace and stability within nation-states at present stem from a variety of sources: deeply rooted ethnic, religious and regional cleavages; the inequities and social strains accompanying rapid economic development; the challenges to authority with the loosening of political controls and the expanded power of private interest groups and decline of an ideology or set of values that would underwrite a genuine political community.

Introduction

A wave of uncertainty is sweeping over 'our region'. The end of the Cold War has signalled the commencement of a new era with new rules and challenges. The evolution from the certainty of old to a new environment will involve a transformation which will require a delicate understanding of the scope and magnitude of the problems that are likely to confront our region. Dr Mahathir, the Malaysian Prime Minister, described this as an 'era of transition and its attendant uncertainty' with 'other battles to be fought, different dragons to be slain, new powers and new constellations to relate to'.

The uncertainty of this transformation is shaped by two over-riding factors: the end of the Cold War and the remarkable economic growth of the region. As a result, the region is witnessing the emergence of new powers as each state embarks on a course of nation-building by integrating new-found economic, political and military strengths. Although the potential for major conflict within the region is low, there is a range of emerging threats due to differing perceptions over a wide range of issues originating from ethnic, religious, economic and cultural concerns. Problems confronting the relationship between individual countries range from the conflicting claims in the South China Sea, the transmigration of illegal immigrants and refugees, differing outlooks as to the management of the rapid economic growth and health issues such as AIDS. The high economic growth has, \textit{inter alia}, been a measure of the political stability within each regional country. However, centralised government is increasingly being confronted by a variety of emerging issues. Rapid economic growth brings its own trials as a growing middle class challenges deep-rooted traditional views balanced against emerging ethno-nationalism within the Asia Pacific region. Differences in the approach to environmental issues may have an effect on neighbouring countries.

State energies will be directed towards economic growth and acknowledging the rising forces of democracy. Centralised governments, the powerful role of the military and the deep-rooted traditions of ethnicity and religion will all be challenged in the period of transition. This powerful mix of ingredients in flux, fuelled by rapid economic growth and the rapid influx of Western ideas of democracy and human rights may provide an arena for the rise of internal and intra-regional conflict. Des Ball acknowledges that 'in East Asia, there remains much fertile ground for regional conflict', but goes on to state that in this period of transformation 'most of these issues are unlikely to lead to inter-state conflict'. These uncertainties within our region are a challenge to Australia, and our contribution to the stability of our region will be measured by how well we appreciate the nature of this uncertainty and the delivery of an appropriate response. This article will identify the intra-regional and internal developments and disputes that are likely to threaten regional security and determine if Australia should contribute to the resolution of these differences.

Intra-Regional Sources of Conflict

Conflicting Territorial Claims

Internal instability, mainly via insurgency, in the post-colonial era, was the major concern to almost every Southeast Asian nation. Conflicting territorial claims that have been a part of the Asia Pacific for some time, are now an emerging threat to many countries in the region. The end of the Cold War has seen the need for collective action in the face of a common threat dissipate, and the resurfacing of old claims over territory.
TABLE 1: TERRITORIAL CONFLICTS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conflict</th>
<th>Countries Involved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Claims over Malaysian state of Sabah.</td>
<td>Philippines and Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competing claims to the Spratly Islands in the South China Sea.</td>
<td>China, Vietnam, Brunei, Malaysia, Taiwan and the Philippines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boundary dispute on the demarcation line on the continental shelf in the South China Sea, near Natuna Island.</td>
<td>Indonesia and Vietnam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Border disputes.</td>
<td>Vietnam and Cambodia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boundary dispute on the off-shore demarcation line.</td>
<td>Vietnam and Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dispute over ownership of the island Pulau Batu Putih, 55km east of Singapore in the Straits of Johore.</td>
<td>Malaysia and Singapore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competing claims to islands of Sipadan, Sebatik and Ligitan, in the Celebes Sea, 35km from Semporna in Sabah.</td>
<td>Malaysia and Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Border dispute.</td>
<td>Malaysia and Thailand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Border conflicts.</td>
<td>Thailand and Burma</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Trodd claims that 'many of these disputes have their origins in events now decades old and have been kept alive either by Cold War tensions, the absence of serious attempts at settlement or the diplomatic estrangement of governments.' However, the increased profile of territorial claims between states has also been a product of two factors: the potential for untapped economic resources and the rising maritime capabilities of many regional states. Both of these factors are complementary as rapid economic growth has fuelled the need for natural resources and also provided the means by which regional states can economically support a larger maritime presence. The absence of conflicting territorial claims in the South Pacific stems from the scarcity of original claims and the lack of common land borders with neighbouring countries. Table 1 lists these claims and the countries concerned.

The most serious concern is the Spratly Islands where six countries have conflicting claims in the South China Sea, namely: China, Vietnam, Taiwan, Malaysia, the Philippines and Brunei. The area is of importance: not only do the islands lie astride one of the most strategic bodies of water, but the area also has the potential for gas, oil and fishing development. The potential for armed hostilities over ownership of the islands has heightened since China clashed with Vietnam in March 1989, declared all of the islands to be part of her sovereign territory in February 1992, and signed a contract for joint development with a United States offshore oil-drilling company three months later.

Possible solutions include allocation of part of the area to each claimant or alternatively, cooperative development. Professor Mark Valencie, of the East-West Centre, USA, advocates a cooperative regime for the entire area. Indonesia's experience in the Timor Gap Treaty negotiations with Australia has been useful in its efforts at preventive diplomacy to assist claimants to solve disputes peacefully.

With the exception of the claims to the Spratly Islands, all conflicting territorial claims exist on a bilateral level. Although this reduces the complexity of finding a solution, these claims are unlikely to be placed on the regional security agenda at the ASEAN post-ministerial conference or Regional Forum meetings. However, the regular and diverse nature of consultations that occur at these meetings may provide an avenue for resolution at a bilateral level.
Transnational Migration

Transnational migration by illegal immigrants and economic and political refugees impacts on the economic, political and security policies of neighbouring countries. Illegal immigrants provide the economic driving forces in some regional countries. For example, Malaysia has sustained a fair portion of its rapid industrial growth by allowing a large influx of illegal immigrants to satisfy a crucial unskilled labour shortage. The number of illegal immigrants in Sabah is estimated to be 500,000 to 700,000, one-third of the state's population. With internal unrest in areas of Thailand, the Philippines and Myanmar, the flow of these workers to places of better employment opportunities and lifestyles is likely to increase. This will place a greater strain on a country's resources and may well upset delicate ethno-religious balances. Malaysia is a popular destination for illegal immigrants because its high economic growth offers better employment and wage opportunities, and for the reasons of its geographic location and a cultural affinity with certain neighbours.

ASEAN countries are reaching a situation of compassion fatigue over dealing with political refugees from many of their northern neighbours. An unwanted flow of refugees from neighbours due to economic, political or military instability will affect the relationship between countries, as it did in 1984 when over 11,000 Ivorianese walked from Irian Jaya to Papua New Guinea in search of freedom from political suppression by Indonesian Armed Forces. Although the flow of refugees from the Indochinese states has diminished, refugee problems still exist. When Arakan refugees fleeing Myanmar reached a massive level, individual ASEAN countries were concerned about the impact on regional security. In the event of internal unrest in China, a large refugee flow would make the former flows from Indochina pale into insignificance. Overall, in addition to refugees generated by ethnic conflicts, the number of people who may cross international borders due to a combination of political strife, economic hardship and environmental degradation is likely to increase in the 1990s. Such events will have an increased profile on the regional security agenda.

Economic Cooperation

ASEAN's major declared objective at its founding was economic cooperation; it is in this area however, that ASEAN has made little progress. Intra-ASEAN trade was only 19.6 per cent in 1990 and was restrained by tariffs, poor business links and preferences for goods made elsewhere. In general, the ASEAN economies are in competition with one another. Nevertheless, the ASEAN economies have been among the fastest growing in the world as they make the transition to export-oriented industrialisation fuelled by stable government, sound macroeconomic policies and the influx of foreign investment.

However, a new global economic environment is providing a challenge to the Asia Pacific nations. Increasing economic nationalism, the emergence of non-liberal trading practices and a lack of economic leadership as Japan and the European Community join the United States as the world's leading economic powers will challenge the economic fabric of ASEAN and the other Asia Pacific states. The Asia Pacific countries are understandably concerned about future access to North American and European markets. The ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA), the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the East Asia Economic Caucus (EAEC) and the Cairns Group provide avenues to enhance regional economic development and understanding. If access to global markets is reduced then; any prolonged economic downturn would have adverse social and eventually political repercussions on the Southeast Asian domestic societies. However, despite differences in opinion among regional countries over the APEC and the EAEC, economic-based tensions are not a security concern now or in the medium term.

The Environment

It is increasingly evident in Southeast Asia that the environment and development are on a collision course and the environmental dimension to security has thus come under greater focus in recent years. Dr Mahathir, the Malaysian Prime Minister, at the June 1992 Rio de Janeiro United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), accused the developed countries of attempting to impose their environmental will on developing countries, thereby limiting their economic growth. His argument, which is well supported within Southeast Asia, is that the environmental resources of the region are necessary to alleviate poverty and provide the means to achieve the status of a developed country. Just as damaging are the developed countries' restrictions on free trade which is also a limiting to the alleviation of poverty. The message was simple: 'You free trade, we'll save forests.' It is likely that this issue will remain a source of concern to many of the regional countries, as much of their development is dependent on their indigenous natural resources.

South Pacific nations are particularly concerned about the environmental effects of global warming, over-use of maritime resources, and the dumping and testing of nuclear and chemical weapons within their region. Their fragile economies, mainly dependent on maritime resources, could be seriously damaged by uncontrolled environmental excesses by outside nations.
Disagreements among regional countries over the handling of common environmental concerns can have a serious impact on relations among neighbouring countries. Differing approaches towards handling environmental problems in areas such as the Straits of Malacca, shared river systems such as the Mekong and fishing in the South Pacific, all have security overtones which could be raised at regional security conferences. For example, internationally, there have been over 200 disputes over shared river basins.36

Health

Worldwide, 11 to 12 million people have been infected with the AIDS virus, and the World Health Organisation (WHO) has described Asia as ‘the sleeping giant of AIDS’.25 In Asia, the spread can be directly linked to poverty, poor health resources, the availability of commercial sex, rapid urbanisation and cultural attitudes on male sexual activities. India and Thailand are the two countries where AIDS is most visible, with as many as 500,000 Thais infected with the HIV virus, and the possibility of an escalation to two-four million by the year 2000.37 The economic cost of AIDS is considerable: ranging from the direct costs of treatment, education and research and development to the indirect costs of the loss of productive members of society. In 1991 the direct economic costs of the disease was US$107 million.

AIDS can be linked to conflict. For example, AIDS and drugs have been claimed to be symptomatic of the breakdown of law and order in Myanmar.38 In 1988, the suppression of the pro-democracy movement in Myanmar led to an increase flow of cross-border refugees, many AIDS carriers. This has certainly heightened Thailand’s growing AIDS troubles and strained the relationship between the two countries. The AIDS problem in regional countries will have to be carefully monitored to reduce the likelihood that this pandemic disease does not spread, draining precious economic resources and straining relations between neighbours.

Internal Sources of Instability

Ethno-Nationalism and Secessionist Movements

Many regional countries face internal schisms, as a result of their diverse racial make-up. The rallying points for ethno-nationalism and secessionist movements include religion, language, history and culture. Countries such as Myanmar, fighting the Karen rebels, and the Philippines, coping with an ongoing Communist insurgency, find precious resources drained and governments distracted from the vital task of economic rebuilding by the need to settle domestic threats. Nor are such problems confined to these two nations alone. Indonesian troops are currently occupied with the Acehnese insurgency, a highly publicised ‘occupation’ of East Timor, and the Organisasi Pemuda Merdeka (OPM) rebels in Irian Jaya. The precedent set by these nations, and, more recently by Thailand and Indonesia, that the use of force is almost obligatory against dissident groups, does not augur well for nations such as Malaysia, with its delicate balance between the Chinese and Indians, and the Malays who make up the potent Islamic movement. Although there is an absence of trouble in the South Pacific, two military coups in Fiji, the secessionist bid in Vanuatu in 1980 and the ongoing crisis in Bougainville, provide testimony to the fact that this region has the capability for further trouble. Table 2 lists the current minority group and secessionist movements that may give rise to internal instability in regional countries.

Except for Sabah, all minority and secessionist troubles are in countries where economic development is well behind their regional neighbours. The three Indochinese countries, Myanmar, the Philippines and Indonesia are the least wealthy countries in Southeast Asia.39 Precious economic resources are being diverted to deal with international trouble, whereas other regional countries have been able to make the most of the rapid regional economic growth due to a stable internal situation. The country facing the greatest internal threat is Cambodia, where the process of nation-building is being thwarted by the Khmer Rouge. Given the geopolitics of the area, Thailand, China and Vietnam will continue to have a large stake in the stability of the country.

Neighbours are seldom immune to the effects of internal troubles next door. Refugees and separatist movements residing in neighbouring countries will cause security concerns. The 1992, troubles between Myanmar and Bangladesh over the Rohingya Muslim refugees and the ongoing concerns about the OPM rebels between Indonesia and Papua New Guinea provide testimony to this. Despite these problems, however, separatist, religious and ethnic groups do not seem to be threatening the stability of current governments.40

The Effects of Rapid Economic Growth

Rapid economic growth is not a panacea to the problems of internal stability, although it does provide more stability rather than unrest in most regional countries. It has two consequences for the internal security of regional states: it fuels the challenge between the oppos-
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conflict</th>
<th>Countries Involved</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Armed Communist and Muslim insurgencies.</td>
<td>Philippines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shan, Kachin, Karen secessionist, Communist insurgents and pro-democracy rebellions.</td>
<td>Myanmar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fighting between government and resistance forces.</td>
<td>Laos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communist guerilla operations along border in northeast Thailand.</td>
<td>Thailand and Laos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuing conflict.</td>
<td>Cambodia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separatist movement.</td>
<td>Sabah, Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The continuing resistance to rule in East Timor.</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aceh independence movement in northern Sumatra.</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Organisasi Papua Merdeka (OPM) resistance movement.</td>
<td>Irian Jaya (Indonesia) and Papua New Guinea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secessionist movement in Bougainville.</td>
<td>Papua New Guinea</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

ing forces of tradition and modernisation, and secondly, it gives rise to an increasingly pluralist society. These forces will often clash in a region where traditional views of culture, religion and ethnicity form the core of society. Modernisation through economic growth leads to social mobilisation bringing about rising expectations and demands for higher standards of living. Better education, greater mobility and a greater awareness of Western luxuries and values all raise the potential for discontent and social friction. The lines between ethnicity, religion and culture are being eroded by the imperatives of rapid economic growth. A modern and pluralistic society cuts horizontally across the traditional vertical boundaries of religion, culture and ethnicity. For example, in Indonesia, 'capitalist demands for efficiency and the maximisation of profits have tended to undermine the time-honoured mechanism of work-sharing that has sustained the fabric of traditional Indonesian society.'

An increasing number of middle-class interest groups are not only making conflicting demands on the government, but also want a part in the decision-making process. The central mechanisms of government are being challenged in most Southeast Asian states, but especially in states such as Vietnam and Cambodia, as they make the transformation to a market economy. Failure to provide adequate mechanisms to express these interests could merely intensify tension. Political stability may well depend on how well these governments handle the transformation to a market economy, particularly in the sensitive area of equitable income distribution.

For the remainder of Southeast Asia, governments will have to be responsive to the vocal minorities and move away from centralised forms of government to firstly, cater for those who wish to take part in the decision-making process, and secondly, to be able to respond quickly to the rapidly changing world and regional economy. The aggressive promotion of human rights and democracy by some Western powers, including the United States, is seen as a major threat to the internal stability of regional countries. Increased access to international electronic and print media by a growing middle class is promoting Western values over traditional values. Bob Lowry, an Indonesian analyst, argues that 'internal security is the most immediate threat, and this threat will probably mount under the impact of rising expectations, rising levels of education, the side-effects of economic development, increased exposure to
international media, and the addition of an estimated 60 million people to the population in the next 30 years.\(^7\)

In some countries, economic grievances have a racial dimension. Indonesia and Malaysia are two very good examples where the local minority Chinese communities control the majority of the wealth. This, combined with a resurgence of religious interest, often based along racial lines, is an indication that some countries are in the midst of a conflict between economic modernisation and traditionalism.\(^8\) The potential for conflict appears to be greater since religion, economic well-being and race seem to be at odds with one another. Modernisation, urbanisation and a resurgence in religion may force minority ethnic and religious groups to find refuge in neighbouring countries.

**Australia’s Contribution**

The 1989 Ministerial Statement was a formal recognition that our security and economic future lay in the Asia-Pacific region, and was articulated as a policy of ‘comprehensive engagement’ for Southeast Asia and ‘constructive engagement’ for the South Pacific.\(^9\) Australia’s contribution to regional security, particularly when viewed in the light of a wider definition of regional security, will require the full efforts of the multidimensional approach detailed in the Ministerial Statement. The assessment was that ‘the prospects for our regional security environment are positive.’\(^10\) That assessment is still valid. The question that must be asked is: is it in our national interest to become involved in these regional differences? To answer this question it is worth referring to two of the main priorities of Australian foreign policy: ‘protecting Australia’s security through the maintenance of a positive security and strategic environment in our region’ and ‘contributing to the cause of good international citizenship’.\(^11\) To assess the worth of any contribution three basic questions must be answered: to what extent is Australia’s security threatened by the existence of minor regional disputes? Acting as a good international citizen, does Australia have the capacity to influence any regional countries in the resolution process? Would an Australian involvement in any dispute be likely to achieve a resolution?\(^12\)

In answer to the first question, Australia’s security is based on protecting its physical integrity and sovereignty. An examination of each of the possible sources of intra-regional and internal conflict reveals that there is little threat to Australia’s security in the existence of these disputes. Australia does not have any territorial disputes and to date we have not been affected by the flow-on effects of any regional disputes. The only potential concern that may arise is the flow of illegal immigrants from the north. Currently, there are almost 80,000 illegal immigrants in Australia and 652 people have arrived in Australia in small boats since November 1989.\(^13\) Generous government policies, such as allowing the 27,000 Chinese immigrants to remain in Australia and the lengthy bureaucratic and legal processes to determine the status of illegal immigrants currently in detention centres send a clear and welcome message to our northern neighbours. With large income differentials between Australia and most East Asian countries, Australia is a very attractive destination for economic refugees. With an already large transnational migration in Southeast Asia, the effects of such trends could eventually flow on to Australia. Such an event is currently challenging our immigration policies, and may well challenge our security policies in the future.

Secondly, the question of Australian influence in the region must be examined to determine our capacity to achieve any form of resolution. The Ministerial Statement on Regional Security identified seven key instruments of influence for Australia at a regional security level. In broad terms these can be divided into economic, political and military capabilities.

In economic terms, Australia is unable to match the remarkable economic growth of the region and has a humble trading relationship with regional nations. The majority of Australian exports are sent to Japan, the EC and the USA, with ASEAN accounting for less than ten per cent of Australia’s exports. Australia receives just over two per cent of ASEAN’s exports.\(^14\) However, our trading relationship is changing: Australia’s merchandise exports to Southeast Asia have been rapidly growing over the last decade and in 1991 our exports to Southeast Asia grew at 13 per cent compared with only five per cent for the total world export market.\(^15\) Official Development Assistance (ODA) is important to Indonesia, the Philippines and most of the Southeast Asian countries. Japan is the major donor to the majority of these countries and in particular provides over half the assistance to ASEAN. In 1990, Australia ranked behind Japan, USA, the Netherlands, Germany and France in the provision of aid to Southeast Asia.\(^16\) Evans acknowledged that in regional terms Australia is declining in importance as an aid donor as countries such as Japan take a more active role.\(^17\) However, we are having increasing diplomatic success in the economic arena. Australia’s efforts through APEC and the Cairns Group do translate to some regional influence as we draw a wide range of regional countries into a closer economic and consequently a closer political relationship.

In military terms, Australia has the capacity to make a contribution to regional security. Our efforts in Cambodia, the close defence relationship with all of the
Southeast Asian countries and particularly those in the Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA), our Pacific Patrol Boat Project, and our Defence Cooperation Programme (DCP) in general all sit well with our regional neighbours. Our close defence relationship with Indonesia and Malaysia has been maintained throughout difficult political periods in recent years, often the envy of DFAT, and underscores the depth of our defence influence in the region. Philip Methven argues that the FPDA should be the ‘flexible centre-piece of a politico-military contribution to regional security which serves the interests of Australia and of ASEAN members.' Finally, in political terms Australia has acquitted itself well over the last decade. Our efforts to establish the Cairns Group, the APEC, the Regional Chemical Weapons Initiative have all been successful. Our efforts at promoting regional security discussion via ideas such as the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Asia and the mass of academic literature developing ideas for the enhancement of regional security have also promoted an environment for healthy and constructive discussion on security issues. Australia is often seen as a constant source of genuine and imaginative ideas on how to tackle delicate security problems, which are usually welcomed by all.

The cornerstone of Australia’s contribution to regional security should be the fostering and support of dialogue among regional states. Steele supports this approach: ‘dialogue is the beginning of trust and can readily lead to cooperation.’ The avenues that will support this approach are ASEAN, APEC, the Cairns Group, FPDA, the South Pacific Forum and the South Pacific Commission. Continued support for these organisations should be seen as part of the multi-dimensional approach to regional security.

Finally, would an Australian involvement in any dispute be likely to achieve a resolution? The wide range of possible regional disputes opens many avenues for Australia to contribute to the resolution of any differences. However, the majority of differences are either bilateral or internal for most regional countries. With a growing sense of national自豪 in both the South Pacific and Southeast Asia, it is unlikely that Australia would have the influence to direct an outcome. In most cases it would be seen as Australia’s exercising paternalism or cultural superiority. Australia’s foreign policy has shown maturity in adopting a non-interventionist approach over a wide range of issues at intra-regional and internal levels. Although Australia has an interest in the peaceful resolution of the current crises in Bougainville, the internal troubles in Timor and Irian Jaya and the multiple claims in the South China Sea, it has been prepared to observe from a distance. More often than not, this has been as a result of Australia’s asking itself the three basic questions: is it in our national interest to contribute; do we have the capacity, and finally, will anyone listen? In the majority of cases the answer is usually, ‘no’. The promotion of dialogue through multi-dimensional avenues is probably our most important contribution to the regional security debate.

### Conclusion

Australia is a part of a region that is in a period of transition from the certainty of the past to a new future of economic and political security. In this process there are many potential and emerging threats that may impede the attainment of the new future. Differences of opinion exist over a variety of issues ranging from conflicting territorial claims, transnational migration, regional economic cooperation and the conflicting issues of the environment and development. Ethno-nationalism is growing in many areas of the Asia Pacific and an emerging middle class is challenging the traditional notions of power and government. However, ‘despite these problems it is reasonable to characterise the overall situation in the Asia Pacific region as positive.’

Australia, as a part of this region, will be challenged in the manner it approaches this period of transition. Our contribution to the stability of the region will involve all of the multi-dimensional instruments at our disposal. Our economic, social, political and cultural links with this diverse region will greatly assist in overcoming these emerging security concerns. However, Australia must be guarded in its response to these issues and constantly assess each situation against the needs of our national interest. Any attempt to act as a regional policeman is likely to fail however, a response which is balanced and establishes common interests and concerns by promoting dialogue among regional partners is in Australia’s interest. Current regional organisations, such as ASEAN, APEC, the Cairns Group, FPDA and South Pacific Forum and the South Pacific Commission make a valuable contribution, via a form of preventive diplomacy to the resolution of any emerging threats. Australia’s diplomatic contribution as a partner in the regional security environment that is able to offer new and innovative methods and an intellectual framework to the resolution of regional problems will always be welcome.

### NOTES

2. Gareth Evans described 'our own region' as Southeast Asia, the South Pacific and the eastern reaches of the Indian Ocean. Southeast Asia was defined as the six ASEAN countries (Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Philippines and Brunei), the three Indochinese countries (Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia) and Myanmar. The South Pacific region includes Papua New Guinea, the other South Pacific Forum countries, the remaining colonial possessions and New Zealand. See 'Australia's Regional Security', Ministerial Statement by Senator Gareth Evans, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Canberra: December 1989, p 1, para 4.


5. Gareth Evans grouped security problems into four groups: emerging threats, disputes, armed conflicts, and other major security crises. See Evans, G., Cooperating for Peace: The Global Agenda for the 1990s and Beyond, Allen and Unwin, St Leonards, Australia: 1993, pp 6-7.


19. Intra-ASEAN trade has grown very slowly; it was 18.2 per cent in 1980. See East Asia Analytical Unit, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Austrade, Australia's Business Challenge: Southeast Asia in the 1990s, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra: 1992, p 41.

20. Annual growth rates of real GDP in 1990 within Southeast Asian countries were as follows: Singapore 8.3 per cent, Malaysia 9.8 per cent, Thailand 10.0 per cent, Philippines 2.4 per cent, Indonesia 7.4 per cent, Brunei 4.8 per cent, Vietnam 4.5 per cent, Laos 6.6 per cent and Cambodia -0.1 per cent. The average world growth was only 2.2 per cent, ibid., pp 11-17.


23. Ibid., p 27.


36. All ASEAN countries except Singapore and Brunei have major income disparities which may lead to social and economic disparities. For example, a 1988 World Bank Study on the Philippines declared that the top 20 per cent of the population control 51 per cent of the total income of the country. In Thailand the top 20 per cent share 55.63 per cent of the wealth (1985/86 figures). See Snitwongse, K., Southeast Asia Beyond a Cambodian Settlement: Conflict or Cooperation?, Australian National University, Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, Working Paper No 223, December 1990, p 6.
37. Lowry, B., Indonesian Defence Policy and the Indonesian Armed Forces, Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, Research School of Pacific Studies, The Australian National University, Canberra: 1993, pp 15-16.
38. For a Malaysian example see Mauzy, D., 'Malaysia', in Mauzy D., Politics in the ASEAN States, pp 182-185.
40. ibid, p 46, para 181.
41. ibid, p 1, para 1.
42. Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs Fact Sheet No 5, 'Boat Arrivals Since 1989', revised 18 October 1993 and Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs Fact Sheet No 6, 'People in Australia Illegally', revised 14 October 1993.
45. ibid, p 56.
49. ibid, p 109.

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Major Terry McCullagh graduated from the Royal Military College, Duntroon and was allocated to the Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery. He has served in a variety of regimental and instructional jobs. He is a graduate of the Malaysian Armed Forces Staff College, and is currently serving within Force Development (Land) HQ ADF.

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The Changing Role of the Indonesian Military (ABRI) in establishing Territory, State and Nation

By Lieutenant Commander P. Flynn, RAN.

Introduction

In 1993, President Suharto was elected unopposed to a sixth five-year term of office as the Indonesian Head of State. He was supported as always by ABRI (Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia) and the Golkar Party, itself a creation of ABRI and Suharto and controlled to varying degrees by both. Only the second undisputed leader Indonesia has known since independence, Suharto is both a product of the military and a hostage to their doctrines and political and military power. While their relationship has not always been trouble-free, each essentially complements the political needs of the other, whilst acting as a check on each other’s activities and presenting a united front to any external threats. An unusual symbiosis which has nonetheless provided the stable environment the nation desperately needed to achieve economic development, something which both ABRI and Suharto see as essential to building nation and state.

Frequently portrayed in the Western media as corrupt, repressive and anti-democratic, the Indonesian military have long held a unique and powerful position within their state and continue to perform an active and decisive role in the political, economic and bureaucratic life of the country. This depth of involvement in addition to purely military activities gives ABRI a great deal of influence in the political geography of the nation and, to a degree, the region. This was not always the case though; originally styling themselves as freedom fighters, liberators of the masses who were content to accept the Western view of the armed forces as apolitical servants of the state, the army leadership found itself forced by a number of circumstances to take a leading role in economic, social and political matters.

As we move through the key factors impinging on the development of the ABRI role in establishing territory, state and nation, the way in which actions and reactions coalesce to lead ABRI in an increasingly focussed direction assume an air of inevitability. The seminal point in the development of ABRI was undoubtedly the experience of the Sukarno years (1958-1966), during which the perceived failure of Indonesian economic, political and social experimentation on both the national and international stage brought about the need for a fundamental change in the way in which the country was governed.

Gaining independence from the Dutch in 1949, Indonesia underwent nearly ten years of political, economic and social disruption as minority or fragmented governments came and went. Regional rebellions broke out on religious or ideological grounds, international finance and aid withered, the organs of Dutch colonial government decayed or collapsed, and social and urban problems proliferated. Military leaders became increasingly disillusioned by the antics of the civilian politicians, who were unable and, in some cases, unwilling to achieve the declared aim of creating a stable republic based on Western democratic principles and the Pancasila. Essentially, the power blocs within Indonesian politics were so disparate that there was little or no common ground on which to build a future, and it is this inherent disparity, with its potential for future disruption, which has largely shaped the political thoughts and actions of ABRI.

With power divided between TNI (the Indonesian National Army — ABRI nowadays consists of the Navy, Army Air Force and Police Service), politicised Islamic groups and a collection of Marxist/Socialist parties (which eventually became the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), only the army had the organisation, resources and will to restore order, which they did in 1958 under martial law. The result was an unusual political structure, with the TNI acting as the main support to the new President, Sukarno, in an uneasy alliance with the PKI, which was providing an air of political legitimacy to the government because of its electoral popularity, although not achieving a role in government itself. Essentially a political balancing act, the new structure of power could not survive indefinitely because the aims of the constituent elements were again totally different.

The difficulties faced during the formative years of the Indonesian state and nation have a powerful effect on the way in which the military interpret their functions and roles. Given that the ‘Cold War’ era of the 1950s was a turbulent period locally, regionally and internationally, and that the military were involved in government in many parts of world, the role of the
 Indonesian military then was not seen as particularly unique nor surprising. Other factors, political rather than military, were to prove decisive in the transition of ABRI from a position of providing primarily military support to an opportunistic strongman in a bankrupt, heterogeneous Third World country in the 1950s, to that of a full and legitimate partner in a long-term, stable system of authoritarian government ruling a relatively prosperous and homogeneous (although the Javanese influence is dominant) nation in the 1990s — albeit not necessarily seen in that light by those political commentators who continue to seek the imposition of Western democratic values and processes.  

Despite the high profile of President Suharto, and the electoral strength and success of Golkar, ABRI is still the final arbiter of power in Indonesia. The military leadership feel that they have a right to engage in the political process because they had so much to do with creating, developing and protecting the nation and state. As Jenkins puts it "...ABRI is one of the "granite masses" on which the Indonesian republic is founded. Indeed, it is the granite mass, there being no independent parliament, executive or judiciary."

Currently somewhat out of favour with President Suharto because of the way in which they arranged for one of their own (General Try Sutrisno, former commander of ABRI) to be elected Vice-President in 1993 without apparently consulting him beforehand, the ABRI leadership have been concerned for some time about the Presidential succession, which they would prefer to be peaceful. Interestingly, Suharto does not appear to be in any great hurry to nominate his successor, preferring perhaps to maintain creative tension amongst the elements of the ruling power structure.

While critics of the Indonesian regime call for democratic government, human rights, a free press and an end to 'military suppression of the masses', they conveniently ignore the lessons of the nation's past, current Southeast Asian trends towards single-party broadly centrist governments, and the role of ABRI — which is politically and militarily unique. A nation of more than 13,000 islands, with a population of nearly 190 million made up of many ethnic groups and with no history of pre-independence homogeneity, is not likely to slip effortlessly into any recognised political pattern of statehood. ABRI has long believed that it takes strong populist leadership and a comprehensive control network to simply keep the nation unified, let alone provide a benign environment for development, which they see as the key to prosperity. Jenkins quotes a senior ABRI officer, speaking in 1983:

*Now we have stability. Even if you say we have no democracy, it's all right because we have stability. And the most important thing is that develop-ment can take place.*

The ABRI leadership today base their requirements for political and social stability, political influence (if not control) and economic development not only on the experiences of the early years of independence, but on the bitter lessons learnt during the term of office of the first President, Sukarno. A charismatic nationalist, Sukarno claimed a background as a freedom fighter whilst ignoring the influence of the policy of the Japanese occupation force during World War II of encouraging indigenous nationalist movements in the territories they conquered. Espousing a program of Indonesian-style socialism, Sukarno actually delivered a paternalistic dictatorship described as Guided Democracy, which involved the nationalising of Dutch and multinational assets, the rejection of Western political and social concepts and the adoption of Soviet bloc ideologies.

As the remaining Dutch departed in ever increasing numbers during the late 1950s and early 1960s, more and more Indonesians, including many TNI officers, moved into management positions in key industries and government departments. Sukarno and the PKI meanwhile tended to focus more on the ideological aspects of their relationship, and became closer political allies, each feeding off the other. As this process quickened the TNI became disenchanted with Sukarno's actions and their effect upon the nation, and with the increasing influence of the PKI on government policy. By 1965 Indonesia was embroiled in the *Konfrontasi* with Malaysia on purely ideological grounds, with only grudging TNI support.

Foreign aid and assistance from the Western donor nations had dried up, and the country once again faced economic ruin. The time had come for the TNI to end the unhealthy Sukarno-PKI relationship, even though this would see a marked departure from the original philosophy of military state involvement — *Dwifungsi* and The Middle Way.

A failed coup attempt in October 1965, possibly engineered by the TNI leadership, gave the military the excuse they needed to topple Sukarno and eliminate their hated rivals, the PKI. By March 1966 Sukarno had handed authority to Suharto, who became President two years later, and up to a million PKI members, many of them ethnic Chinese, had been massacred — often for quite non-political reasons. Suharto has remained President ever since, the military hold on power has never again been subordinated to any political figure or party, and socialist or communist politics are permanently proscribed.

By their actions today in breaking up demonstrations, closing media outlets and suppressing independence movements, ABRI is constantly reminding the people...
and politicians of Indonesia about the events of October 1965, with the clear inference that they are willing and able to repeat the exercise should the structure of the nation, as they see it, begin to unravel again. Nearly 90 per cent of the 440,000 strong ABRI consists of the Army and Police Force, which are closely coordinated in the internal security role. Western commentators, perhaps unaware of the disruptive power inherent in the underlying tensions within Indonesia, see the actions of ABRI as unnecessarily brutal and repressive. The point is frequently made that the nation has achieved a relatively high degree of economic development, yet retains an ossified form of social and political control (ABRI) whose ideology is firmly set in the redundant past. The primary justification for military action, then, and now, is enshrined in two fundamental concepts, Dwifungsi and The Middle Way.

After establishing a central role in politics for the military in 1958, General Nasution, Chief of Staff of TNI, introduced the concept of Dwifungsi (the dual function) to rationalise and entrench that role in all key aspects of the Indonesian national and state structure. Dwifungsi is described as:

...a doctrine that declared that the armed forces had a dual role as both a "military force" and a "social-political force". As a 'social-political force' the army's activities covered the ideological, political, social, economic, cultural and religious fields.

Building on the foundation of Dwifungsi, General Nasution further defined the role of TNI in society in 1958 as being more than a mere instrument of the government, yet with no intention of monopolising political power. Neither politically active nor a spectator, TNI would follow the Middle Way, in which its officers would ‘...be granted an opportunity to participate in the government... in determining economic, financial, international, and other policies at the highest level of government’. In a prophetic warning to Sukarno and the PKI, Nasution had stated that failure to allow TNI to participate in government would constitute discrimination, and that a violent military backlash might occur.

The concept of Dwifungsi (and by implication its offspring, The Middle Way) faces increasing challenge and debate within Indonesia, particularly as civilians encroach on ABRI political territory by taking up positions within the local government structure and the diplomatic corps. What may come as a surprise is that the debate on the validity of Dwifungsi is not restricted to the civilian arena. As the generation of '45, the original leaders of the military, pass from the national stage, those that follow them are increasingly critical of the amount of ideology and rhetoric they are required to absorb during indoctrination into ABRI. There have also been calls from within the military for a less obvious ABRI presence in the political structure, and a return to the purity of the past. These attitudes may be interpreted in a number of ways.

Having been inculcated since early childhood with the principles of ABRI social and political involvement, they may feel that there is no need for reinforcement; on the other hand, as the complexities of military technology increase, they may wish to spend more training time on learning their ever more complex trade, particularly as increasing exposure to the military forces of neighbours, including Australia, allows them the opportunity to compare levels of military professionalism. They may of course simply feel there is no place for the military in government, or conversely that their position within the politico-military-bureaucratic power structure is secure enough to warrant an easing of ideological demands. Whatever the reason, ABRI are not likely to relinquish any of their influence under threat, internal or external, rather they may wish to modify their stance to give the impression of moving with the times. Should Dwifungsi come under serious threat, ABRI can still rationalise their role under the mandate of Pantjasila.

The fundamental principles of the Indonesian state, still taught to every schoolchild and enshrined in the constitution, were developed by leaders from many different backgrounds during the Japanese occupation. The Pantjasila, or five principles are:

Belief in one Supreme God,
Just and Civilised Humanity,
The Unity of Indonesia,
Democracy led by the wisdom of deliberations among representatives; and
Social Justice for all the people of Indonesia.

In an example which is valid today we should examine the actions of the military in 1965, when the leadership of the TNI could see little evidence of the Pantjasila principles being achieved, indeed the country seemed to be moving in a decidedly Marxist direction. Committed as they were to the doctrines of Pantjasila, Dwifungsi and The Middle Way, and cognisant of the multiple political, social, religious and economic problems the country faced, the military acted to end the obvious divisions within the country and provide a strong, stable government.

General Nasution, architect of Dwifungsi and The Middle Way, is a long-standing critic of President Suharto and a leading member of Petisi 50 (Petition of 50), a group of so-called dissidents who have for many years been a thorn in the side of the Indonesian Government. The General has himself challenged the current interpretation and application of Dwifungsi, arguing for a lower military profile in politics; in doing so he has attracted a following within the middle ranks.
of ABRI and intense criticism from the President. Caution should be used when evaluating the position adopted by General Nasution, and the effect that position is likely to have on the ABRI command; intrigue and personal animosities play a large part in the intricacies of Indonesian politics, both military and civilian, and the purpose of any given statement or position may not always be what it seems. For example, criticism of ABRI and Dwijugesti could be interpreted as criticism of President Suharto, whose position is secured by both.

ABRI members cannot vote (thereby perpetuating the myth that they have no political power), because it is felt that political factionalism would eventually reflect in internal divisions within the military; ABRI however, controls an automatic allocation of 100 parliamentary seats. In reality ABRI and Suharto, under the banner of their New Order program, created the organs of state which have run the country for nearly 30 years, and have also rigidly controlled and manipulated the institutions and instruments of social control, particularly by the judicious placement of serving or retired ABRI personnel into every layer of these organisations. Originally made up of people from every walk of life, ABRI has found it harder to recruit from the upper levels of society in recent years because there are far more lucrative avenues of employment available to the young as the economy develops. In reply, ABRI has developed the concept of being 'of the villages', where the vast majority of the predominantly peasant population still live.

A bright young man (although women serve in ABRI their status and opportunities for advancement are low) from a poor rural background can achieve a relatively high level of education, status and wealth by committing himself to ABRI, and many do. With the pattern of employment which ABRI has developed over the years, a young officer can expect to serve in both Service and civilian positions on his tours of duty, and if his skills lie in administration he could well retire to the lucrative position of mayor of a prosperous town.

Because of the network of serving and retired ABRI personnel which has built up in the civilian administration, he will know many of the men serving in similar positions within the civilian infrastructure; thereby further cementing the control that ABRI has over all aspects of Indonesian life. At the higher rank levels, a successful senior officer, serving or retired, can find himself entering corporate life as an integral part of the politico-military-bureaucratic (PMB) oligarchy of the New Order.

In addition to the PMB structure, which practically formed itself under Suharto and ABRI, a class of Western (mainly American) trained 'Technocrats' was created to oversee the financial, technical and economic development of Indonesia. The Technocrats have prosp-pered politically and are an integral part of the PMB nexus; although closely watched by ABRI, they have achieved a powerful position in cabinet. Recent power plays have seen the Technocrats challenge the ABRI assumption that the next president will be from the Army. They may have been encouraged in their actions by the appointment of a civilian as head of Golkar for the first time, and by the increasing level of funding for their high-tech projects which has in part come at the expense of ABRI. As frequently pointed out though:

The basic qualities often mentioned in Indonesia as necessary for the next president are threefold: that he be Javanese, like Suharto; from the armed forces, either active or retired; and from an operations background rather than an intelligence background. Given Indonesia's 90 per cent Muslim population, it is virtually assured that the next President will also be a Javanese Moslem.

Conventional wisdom would suggest that Vice-President Sutrisno is the ideal candidate to replace Suharto in time, although his ABRI background does not include operations experience. Indeed, he has not physically taken part in any of the military actions undertaken by the ABRI in their role of establishing the territorial limits and security of Indonesia.

First involved in bloody fighting to suppress Muslim and Communist rebellions during the devolution of power from the Dutch in the late 1940s, ABRI has maintained an internal security posture, with little force projection capability. With the exception of the Konfrontasi aberration, which was a PKI initiative, ABRI has concentrated on establishing the borders of national sovereignty, eliminating secessionist movements, and, largely through the police force, maintaining social stability and obedience. Regardless of the arguments which may rage in the international community over issues such as East Timor, Irian Jaya, suppression of the Aceh separatists and the regular clampdowns on wayward unions and religious extremists, ABRI has largely achieved its aims, and have certainly shown no inclination to apologise for their actions.

In recent years those who control Indonesia have shown a degree of sensitivity, albeit slight, to the changes occurring within the nation. Essentially run as a corporation by Suharto and his PMB cohorts, Indonesia has achieved a high level of success in improving the economic and educational standards of the people, although there is an overwhelming urban bias to this improvement. The creation of a large and growing middle class, the spread of literacy and exposure to foreign concepts of social justice and politics have all impacted on the behaviour of both the population and on ABRI.
As ABRI members are drawn from the population at large, it is entirely plausible to suggest that a degree of change in their attitude will eventually flow through to their actions. This is not likely to happen quickly though, as the monolithic nature and history of ABRI would suggest that change usually comes in small steps, at a pace which ABRI considers beneficial to both the nation and themselves. Some stimuli are more powerful than others though, with organised labour, religious fundamentalism, ethnic divisions, and communalism all attracting a deal of ABRI attention.

During the Sukarno years, labour unions were largely run by the PKI as politicised instruments of their ideological aims. For many years now Indonesia has allowed government sanctioned and controlled unions to operate, condoned ‘official’ marches, meetings and demonstrations, and even tolerated independent unions up to a point. Having said that though, any attempt by unions or their members to step outside of their charters draws swift and bloody action by ABRI. The head of the independent Indonesia Welfare Labour Union has recently appeared in court, charged with inciting workers to riot in Medan in April 1994 by telling them that they had the right to strike if negotiations over wages and conditions were not successful. The ensuing riot, Indonesia’s worst in years, required action by large numbers of ABRI troops and police, many of whom are still stationed there to maintain order. Of particular concern though was that the riots quickly turned anti-Chinese; it was an ethnic Chinese businessman who died, and it was Chinese-owned factories which were destroyed.

Long the middle-men and traders of Asia, the ethnic Chinese in Indonesia are the backbone of the economic structure, highly favoured by Suharto, and an integral part of the PMB support network. Unfortunately, although the ethnic Chinese are present in all state organs, including ABRI, they are still not a fully assimilated part of Indonesian life, particularly in the villages, where they are often the only group with any form of economic power. Given the diverse nature of Indonesia’s geographical, economic and ethnic structures, communalism is an ever-present risk, particularly when a highly visible group such as the ethnic Chinese provide a convenient outlet for frustrations. The dichotomy facing ABRI is that as the desire to share the economic benefits of development spreads, they increasingly find themselves protecting those whom they have twice before destroyed.

Although the ethnic Chinese were the driving force behind Communist activities in the past, they are now the engine room of economic growth upon which the nation depends.

The Pantjasila, created to encompass and unite all Indonesians, carefully calls for Belief in the One Supreme God, not a specific entity. This allows all religions to be practiced freely in Indonesia, where 90 per cent of the population are Muslim. The rise of Fundamental Islam in Western Asia, and its gradual spread into Southeast Asia is of great concern to ABRI, which has wide experience in dealing with religious disturbances. Primarily recruited from the villages, where Islam is a powerful influence on everyday life, the overwhelmingly Muslim ABRI personnel cannot be comfortable when called upon to control Islamic demonstrations, whatever the cause.

Although Indonesian Islam is very much a gentler Javanese version of the original product, the potential for fundamentalism to erupt into a very real social and political problem is never far away. The ethnic Chinese, who live in great numbers in Southeast Asia, do not normally tend to take up Islam, thereby providing a religious as well as economic focus for the release of Muslim tensions. Although tolerance of the recently disbanded radical Malaysian Al-Arqam sect within Indonesia surprised some neighbouring countries, the sect leadership were well aware of the limited social and religious parameters within which they could operate, and that they would be under the watchful eye of ABRI. For a multitude of reasons, the religious field is one area in which ABRI usually behaves with the utmost circumspection, unless believing itself forced to do otherwise.

ABRI activities today are essentially an exercise in maintaining social stability by controlling, balancing and sometimes prohibiting the activities of the power groups within the social structure. Pressures for social and political change are building from within the growing middle class, and corruption scandals in government and the military are calling into question the legitimacy of the regime. International aid donors and trade partners, are beginning to bring pressure to bear, particularly on worker’s rights. Despite this, the present regime is reasonably secure as there is really no alternative government available via an organised opposition in the political sense; legal opponents are weak and fragmented coalitions. Having said that though, there may be hope for a move towards more centrist government in the future, if only because of the example of neighbouring nations, with whom ABRI and the government are gradually forging closer ties.

The September 1994 visit to Australia by the Indonesian Vice President (and ex-ABRI commander) is indicative of the way in which Southeast Asian and Australasian governments have committed themselves to a process of dialogue in recent years. Well aware that a great number of misunderstandings — and consequently fears — existed in the cultural, political and military fields, regional governments have made a conscious decision to learn more about each other. Experience has shown that personal contact is by far and away the best ice-breaker, and in the military this has been actively
encouraged between senior officers of all Services. Joint exercises, personnel exchanges, ship visits and technical and training assistance are all ways of improving understanding, and ABRI are becoming increasingly involved on a bilateral basis with their neighbours.

The changing role of ABRI in establishing nation, state and territory has been, in military, political and social terms, both evolutionary and revolutionary. As their military and political strength has grown, and as their position within the PMB structure has increased in stature, their activities have, to a degree, assumed an air of relative sophistication. Yet the ability to react quickly and decisively, particularly in the military sense, has not weakened, nor has their willingness to use force. Despite their faults and differences, ABRI and the rest of the PMB power structure are well aware of the realities of life, and of how much each element depends on the others for its survival. Although the present regime cannot last indefinitely, we should not expect major or revolutionary changes to the political structure of Indonesia in the near future, particularly in relation to the roles of a relatively small group of like-minded people, with similar cultural conditioning, whose future well-being depends on their acting in unison to achieve common ends — and on maintaining the status quo.

NOTES

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Lieutenant Commander Flynn is a graduate of the inaugural RAN Intelligence Officer's Course. He completed the RAN Executive Management Program at the University of New England, and won the Director's prize for Public Speaking and Oratory on completion of the RAN Staff Course in June 1991. He will commence Indonesian Language Studies in 1995. Lieutenant Commander Flynn is currently serving in Sydney as the Command Police Officer to the Naval Support Commander.
Law and Society in China: A Study of Comparative Military Law in the Chinese People’s Liberation Army and the Australian Defence Forces

By Lieutenant Colonel Frank E. Thorogood (Retd)

"The General was at liberty to behead any man serving in his camp and to scourge with rod the staff officer as well as the common soldier.”

Cicero

Introduction

Military law is that system of law by which the military establishment is governed and every well-developed state has found it necessary to prescribe special rules for its military. The source of military law is generally by enactments from the same legislative body which produces domestic law, both customary and conventional. Moreover there are offences in military law which are not offences within the civilian community.

The role of military law according to the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) is to fill two paramount policy goals:
1. Military law reinforces the political nature of the PLA and recognises the leading role of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP);
2. Military law operates to maintain discipline and efficiency of operation through a system of formal and administrative legal procedures.

Aim

This article will examine the differences between the military law systems of the PLA, from its founding by proclamation on 25 April 1949, and the Australian Defence Force (ADF).

Methodology

The comparisons will be made largely, but not exclusively, in a peace-time environment to better analyse the relationships between the defence forces and the community at large. An examination during war would obscure some useful comparisons. The position of the defence forces within the community and the law involved necessitates a brief historical review to show how a nation’s past and culture becomes imbedded in the law. The focus will be on military offences, the hearing process and punishments.

But first a brief explanation of the respective roles of the ADF and PLA.

Role of the ADF

The primary role of the ADF is training for war and there is little formal involvement with the civilian community. However, the resources of the ADF are available to the states in times of natural disaster, and for ‘Defence Aid to the Civil Community’ which includes naval patrol boats assisting customs and immigration, air force provision of transport and search aircraft and the maps produced by the army contribute to national development. Such specialised use of defence resources is not uncommon in Western armies.

Role of the PLA

The PLA in accordance with its role described in the Proclamation of the Chinese People’s Liberation Army has responsibilities to protect the people quite unlike the ADF. Additionally, Mao Zedong on 8 February 1949 determined the army is not only a fighting force, ‘it is mainly a working force.’ This is part of the imagery of the PLA, but the reality is somewhat different. According to Nelson the Military contribution to civilian agriculture has never exceed 0.05 per cent and there has been no serious attempt to use the PLA as a labour force. The PLA has attempted to be as self-sufficient as possible, running its own farms and the like, and is one of the least expensive per capita military systems in the world. Nevertheless, the PLA enjoys a special relationship with the civilian community and the People’s Republic of China (PRC) has an annual campaign to strengthen the bonds between the PLA and the rest of the Chinese community.

The PLA on a per capita basis is about half the world average in size, but its ground forces are the largest in the world. The PLA is a preferred career for Chinese youth and is one of the most attractive ladders for success.
Summary

The roles of the two defence forces and the political systems in which they operate suggest their respective military law would have different priorities and solutions.

Historical Background

A brief historical account will be made to trace the sources of Australian and Chinese military law.

History of Australian Military Law

British military law can be traced back to the Middle Ages to the Ordonnances of King Richard I, 1189. A feature of the British Army was the system of purchase of commissions which had its genesis in the Civil War when England was under a military dictatorship, ruled by army officers who usually had no stake in the country and often were military adventurers. After the Restoration the Parliament determined the army would never again be in the hands of such men. The officers were to be men of property with a stake in the country and able to pay the price for a commission. This, in part, explains the class distinctions which developed between aristocratic officers and working class other ranks.

As late as the 18th Century, Blackstone charged that the military system of justice was not built upon any settled principles, but was entirely arbitrary in its decisions and was something indulged rather than allowed as law. In 1847, the system of military justice was radically reformed in the Royal Navy by the Naval Discipline Act and in 1879 in the British Army by the Army Discipline and Regulation Act.

Australian military law was clearly enunciated in the Manual of Military Law, Australian Edition published in 1941 which was used together with the Defence Act 1903-39 and Australian Military Regulations. On 3 July 1985 the Defence Force Discipline Act 1982 (DFDA) was implemented and combined the disciplinary law for the three services into one Act.

History of Chinese Military Law

Chinese military law pre-dates any recorded European military law and Rodearmel traces its genesis from China’s Golden Age circa 2600 BC when Hwang-ti issued regulations at the Battle of Cho Lo. Sun Tzu 400 BC, whose works are still studied, realised the need for military law and noted that discipline means that regulations are strict and clear.

Throughout the imperial period there was competition between the jural and societal models of law favoured by the Legalists and Confucians respectively. Ultimately the Confucian concepts of ethical norms prevailed, but much of the legalist positivist law was incorporated. There was little difference between the military and civil codes; however, the Ch’ing code specified some particular military offences. Military offenders were tried in the civil courts under the supervision of the Board of Punishments.

In Republican China (1911-1949) the Nationalist Government of Dr Sun Yat-sen borrowed heavily from the civil, criminal and commercial laws of France, Germany, Switzerland and Japan, and the Kuomintang Government rapidly developed a military law system. The development of military law in the Red Army, later the PLA, was made during a number of significant periods prior to the establishment of the People’s Republic of China in 1949. These periods were:

1927-1931. From its establishment in 1921 the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) infiltrated the Kuomintang to propagandise the workers and peasants. The Chinese Communist Armed Forces (the Red Army) was developed following the failed revolutions of 1927. Mao Zedong wrote of the seizure of power by armed struggle and realised the CCP needed its own army. Its role was to carry out the political tasks of the revolution. The first rules of discipline were formulated in 1928 — the three rules and eight points — and essentially dealt with the relationship with the civilian community. These are still the foundation of military discipline in the PLA and were specifically designed to be within the comprehension of even uneducated soldiers.

1931-1934. During the Chinese Soviet Republic (CSR) period the political nature of the Red Army was clearly established and only workers, peasants and the urban poor could join. Military law was further developed and incorporated the traditional concepts of resolving conflict at the lowest level possible, the value placed on voluntary surrender and confession and analogy.

1934-1937. The Long March began and a communist base was established by the survivors at Yanan. During this period Mao Zedong outlined the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) infiltrated the People’s Republic of China to fight the Japanese.

1945-1949. Following the defeat of the Japanese, the civil war was resumed culminating with the
establishment of the PRC on 1 October 1949. The PLA was established by Proclamation on 25 April 1949 by Mao Zedong and Chu Teh. Its Covenant clearly highlights the special place of the PLA within the community in the PRC in eight points summarised as:

1. Protect the lives and property of the people.
2. Protect the industrial, commercial, agricultural and livestock of the national bourgeoisie.
3. Confiscate bureaucratic capital... all factories, shops, banks etc.
4. Protect all public and private schools, hospitals, cultural and educational institutions.
5. Hold incorrigible war criminals and counter-revolutionaries who have committed the most heinous crimes.
6. To maintain peace and order and round up stragglers.
7. Solve the problem of feudal land ownership.
8. Protect lives and property of foreign nationals.

The PLA was regularised under the 1954 Constitution and military courts were set up which, in the absence of a military criminal code applied 'Provisional Military Regulations'. In 1963 a unified military discipline regulation was published and the procedures followed principles and procedures from the civil system.

The Cultural Revolution of 1966 to 1976 was launched by Mao Zedong, but it was an ill-conceived by-product of his 'Theory of Contradictions' which was supposed to analyse and resolve societal conflicts. It was intended to resolve the class struggle between proletariat and bourgeoisie because the total socialist society demands a transformation of the 'superstructure' of culture, customs and habits to eliminate the contradictions between proletarian collectivism and bourgeois individualism. The head of the PLA, Lin Piao, ordered the PLA to support the Red Guards, and while the courts functioned only sparingly, military control committees were established to exercise direct military administrative and legal control throughout China. But General Zhang disagrees with Rodearmel's version of military law and cites a draft he finds unsatisfactory from The Military Encyclopedia of China. Rodearmel noted the PRC sensitivity about state secrets and military documents which are generally classified and few emerge from China. It is difficult to obtain comprehensive material dealing with PLA military offences in the same detail as for the ADF. Rodearmel noted the PRC sensitivity about state secrets and military documents which are generally classified and few emerge from China.

Law of War

The Law of War is essentially the international humanitarian law represented by Hague and Geneva Law together with some additional protocols. Of great importance are the so-called 'Soldier's rules' — the basics — which determine the treatment of wounded enemies and prisoners of war when they fall into the hands of frontline troops.

The PRC announced on 13 July 1952 that it would recognise the Nationalist accession to the 1925 Geneva Gas Protocol and its signature to the 1949 Geneva Conventions. It ratified the 1949 Geneva Conventions on 28 December 1956 and was the first permanent member of the United Nations Security Council to ratify the 1977 Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions on 14 September 1983. By contrast the United States while a signatory to the Additional Protocols has not ratified and Australia did not ratify until February 1991.

Thus in this important area of international humanitarian law, both the PLA and ADF are bound by the same law, but the PLA, unlike the ADF, has incorporated some Geneva Law into its military law. Offences against international humanitarian law, when imported into domestic law, attract domestic law penalties.

Military Offences and Discipline

Military Law is designed to reinforce discipline and allows for the punishment of military offences and crimes, within the military jurisdiction, that are also civil crimes. Zhang notes the PLA has not agreed a definition of military law and cites a draft he finds unsatisfactory from The Medical Encyclopedia of China. Rodearmel noted the PRC sensitivity about state secrets and military documents which are generally classified and few emerge from China. Civilian members of both the PLA and ADF can be charged with military offences. The Defence Force Discipline Act 1982 (DFDA), at Part III — Offences, has divisions categorising offences...
relating to operations against the enemy; mutiny, desertion and unauthorised absence; insubordination and violence; performance of duty; ships, vehicles, aircraft, weapons or property; arrest, custody and proceedings before service tribunals; custodial offences; miscellaneous offences; and other offences.

The best possible determination of what constitutes PLA offences is from a conjoint examination of two sets of regulations, viz: 1981 Punishment Regulations (which deal with punishment of military crimes in law) and 1984 Discipline Regulations (which provide for disciplinary penalties for lesser offences), which are only available in an abridged form.

The most similarities between the ADF and PLA are found where laws have been created to deal with offences while on active service operations and include treating with the enemy, desertion, mutiny and the like. These types of offences are common to all armies, even from ancient times. It's the differences that are interesting and some examples are worthy of examination.

The military law of the PLA is the end product of the laws of an ancient civilisation with traditions and culture imbedded into the legal system which developed throughout the imperial history of China. This culture and law was reflected in the military law of the PLA insofar as it was appropriate and acceptable to the communist state. The inherent collectivism of socialism and the relationship with the civilian community has resulted in a range of offences peculiar to the PLA which deal with the position and role of the PLA within Chinese society.

The ADF law, by contrast, is inward looking and individualistic, designed to reinforce internal relationships for the maintenance of a cohesive and efficient force and the relationship with the civil community is simply not a factor or of any concerns in terms of military law.

The PLA 1984 Discipline Regulations at Article 2 lists the basic content of PLA discipline including the 'Three Main Rules of Discipline and the Eight Points for Attention' which are the fundamental basis of PLA military law.

The Three Main Rules of Discipline

The first relates to obeying lawful commands which is arguably the most important requirement in any disciplined army and the ADF has similar provisions.

It is the second 'Main Rule' which states '[d]o not take a single needle or piece of thread from the masses' that shows the cultural and philosophical differences between the PLA and the ADF. The history of the Red Army from the time of the Chinese Soviet through the Long March and the Revolution has shown how importantly this direction is regarded. The trust and confidence placed by the community upon the PLA depends upon total respect by the PLA of the rights of the civil community and their property. Indeed, many commentators have observed that the most shocking part of the massacre in T'ien-an Men Square was that the trusted PLA were the attackers not the police.

Within the Australian community there is no need for the ADF to be regulated in terms of the second 'Main Rule' of the PLA. On active service, in a foreign country, it is possible that the spirit of such an exhortation could be contained with a 'Win the Hearts and Minds' program, or similar, if the operational situation was appropriate.

The third 'Main Rule' requires the PLA soldiers to '[t]urn in everything captured'. The ADF at s. 48(1) of the DFDA deals with looting and there is a need for troops to turn in captured material for its intelligence value.

The Eight Points for Attention

These points are: speak politely, pay fairly for what you buy, return everything you borrow, pay for anything you damage, do not hit or swear at people, do not damage crops, do not take liberties with women, and do not ill-treat captives. They probably entered into the PLA rules of discipline to maintain and ensure continued good relationships with the community by codifying an approved standard of conduct. Presumably, there was no general expectation that all PLA soldiers could be relied upon to understand this need without such promulgation.

The ADF has no equivalent regulations, but it does maintain a longstanding provision to cover any offence that had not been specifically proscribed. The DFDA at s. 60, 'Prejudicial Behaviour — A defence member who, by act or omission, behaves in a manner likely to prejudice the discipline of, or bring discredit upon, the Defence Force is guilty of an offence' covers any lacunae.

The requirement not to ill-treat captives is binding upon both the PLA and ADF in accordance with the Geneva Conventions and is probably included in the Eight Points of the PLA by way of emphasis of 'Soldiers Rules' and reiterates Mao Zedong's 1937 'three principles' supra. But interestingly, no Geneva Law is included in the DFDA. This could be explained by the fact that the Geneva Convention Act 1957 (Cth) imported the Geneva Conventions into Australian Law; however, it does show the internal focus of ADF military law. Prisoners of war are liable under the DFDA s. 7 as if they were members of the ADF.

As noted, material available detailing PLA military law is sparse; however, it is clear the PLA offences are expressed in very broad terms which leave opportunities for the facts of a offence to be widely interpreted. The
wording of the offence articles is also simple and presumably written to be easily understood by the least educated soldiers. By contrast the ADF offences in the DFDA are 'black letter law', extensively detailed and are supported by two large volumes of the Discipline Law Manual...

Some further contrasts are noteworthy, but these are disciplinary offences and not offences against military law and that distinction is explained under punishments infra. Article 22 of Chapter 111 of the 1984 Discipline Regulations has an offence of '[a]cting individually without orders or coordination from superiors and thereby hindering coordinated operations.' There is no similar ADF offence and none would be expected as the ADF puts a premium on initiative. In the same article there is an offence of '[s]eeing a danger and not assisting.' Again, no similar ADF offence exists, but the offence of prejudicial behaviour supra is always available. The common law rule of 'no duty to rescue' could also produce some interesting defence arguments.

All servicemen or servicewomen who commit crimes not specified in military law are liable if the crimes are specified under criminal law. In the case of the PLA article 23 of the 1981 Punishment Regulations provides for action under The Criminal Law of the People's Republic of China", while the ADF members are similarly liable to prosecution for offences outside the military law."^37

Hearing Process

The hearing process is the sequence of events from the commission of an offence, the laying of a charge until its finalisation by either dismissal or conviction and including appeals.

Within the defence forces a superior may charge a subordinate with a military offence. Like so much of military law this has its foundations in the past and is based upon military necessity which could find a junior non-commissioned officer (JNCO) needing to exercise discipline over a private soldier in a remote or isolated position.

Within the ADF good leadership, camaraderie and customs of the service allow many minor offence to be dealt with informally. It reflects the realities of service life and is consistent with community norms.

The PLA has a non-judicial practice formally enshrined within the 1984 Discipline Regulations which states:

'Article 5
Military personnel must conscientiously obey and maintain discipline. When one violates discipline and is stopped and dissuaded by others, he should make immediate corrections; the exemplary behaviour or deeds of others observed should be diligently learned from and applied; upon observing other personnel violating discipline, one should dissuade and stop them; upon observing others violating the law, one must step forward and persistently stop it. All the above-mentioned circumstances should be timely reported to superiors.'

The contrast between the ADF and PLA approaches is a particularly graphic exemplar of the cultural and social differences between the ADF and the PLA.

Military law application in the ADF is a presumed top down process, whereas within the PLA there is a clear implication that soldiers of equal rank have responsibilities of discipline to each other (1984 Discipline Regulations, Article 35). This again illustrates the effects of the socialist collective concept as compared to the individualism of a capitalist system.

The 1984 Discipline Regulations in further articles illustrate the disciplinary concepts considered necessary by a socialist state that would be regarded as unnecessary or unprincipled law in a capitalist state. For example:

'Article 34. Accusation and appeal are the democratic rights of servicemen [and] bring into play the role of supervision of the masses'

'Article 36. Accused have the right of defence, but should not try to make things difficult for, or try to hinder, the accuser.'

There are various levels of military authority relevant to the hearing process and penalties. In both the ADF and PLA charges can be laid by any superior against a subordinate, but the hearing of charges is based upon the military hierarchical system.

A member of the ADF may be proceeded against by a summary authority or trial by court martial. There are three levels of summary authorities; viz: subordinate summary authorities (company commanders), commanding officers (battalion commanders) and superior summary authorities (ranks higher than commanding officers)^37. At each stage the summary authority may try the charge, or direct it not be proceeded with, or refer to higher authority. A member of the ADF may be tried by defence force magistrate or court martial for offences of a serious nature and in some circumstances an accused may elect trial by court martial. Courts martial follow the judicial procedures of the civil courts and there is an appeal process.

The PLA has similar structures except there is a role for the political commissars at all levels and there are several additional levels of hearing above the commanding officer. These additional levels of hearing in
the PLA probably represent the needs of a huge army spread over a large nation compared to Australia's smaller defence force, the concentration of population, and superior internal communication systems.

Zhang explains that the PLA has military courts and procuracies (prosecutors) at three levels and the operation of the military courts is summarised by the term 'courts of three levels and trials of two instances.'

The Three Levels are first, the highest is the Military Court of the PLA which deals with commanders of high rank, reviews appealed cases and capital sentences; second, the next (higher) level deals with military regions and lower ranking offenders and appeals; and third, the primary level deals with battalion commanders and lower including soldiers and civilian employees.

The Two Instances of Trial describe the trial of first instance according to the rank of the accused and the second instance is the next higher court for appeal or review.

The military court procedure of the PLA follows the Criminal Procedure Law of the PRC.

### Punishments

According to General Zhang, the PLA has a strict differentiation between military discipline and military law which is quite unlike ADF practice wherein no distinction would be drawn between discipline and law. He explains that in cases of 'markedly mild offences and when not too much harm has been caused the act is not considered an offence and will be dealt with in accordance with military discipline.' He gives an example where under the United States Code of Military Justice an act of disrespect towards a superior commissioned officer would usually merit non-judicial punishment — it is a breach of military discipline, regulated by discipline and not by law. The offence, in China, would have to be more than disrespect and require violence or threats to become a court martial offence.

While this seems complex and it is difficult to unravel given the sparse material available it would seem that PLA non-judicial and judicial authorities equate to ADF summary and court martial authorities respectively and apply to offences in law. Additionally, non-judicial punishment is included in the disciplinary process. But this then requires an explanation of disciplinary punishment mentioned by General Zhang.

Rodearmel provides the answer, and in doing so highlights a substantial contrast between the PLA and ADF approach to offences and penalties. In 1981 the National People’s Congress introduced the ‘the PRC Provisional Regulations on Punishing Servicemen Who Commit Offences Against Their Duties’ and it was held to be a system of military criminal law to cover crimes committed by servicemen, not crimes in the civil criminal law. Offences not punishable by criminal penalty are disciplinary offences and are not covered by law.

The military crimes are extremely serious offences and would be so regarded by the ADF with severe penalties provided. The disciplinary breaches identified by the PLA could often be evaluated to breaches of military law in the ADF but the PLA penalties in some instances seem incongruous and in other instances harsh. The contrasts and differences that are apparent in the PLA system compared to the ADF are eloquent testimony to the differences in the histories, cultures and ideologies of Australia and China.

### Some Comparisons

The DFDA at Div. 1 deals with offences in operations against the enemy which is equivalent to the PLA 1981 Punishment Regulations at B. Combat Offences. Some Comparisons are:

- ADF ‘Desertion’ (s. 22) — maximum 5 years and PLA ‘Desertion’ (art. 16) — 10 years to life or death.
- ADF ‘Disobedience’ (s. 27) — maximum 2 years and PLA ‘Disobedience’ (art. 17) — 3 to 10 years or death.

There is great similarity in the punishment of these battlefield offences and this should elicit no surprise as the behaviour and conduct required in combat transcends ideological or other differences.

The PLA provides at Art. 21 of the 1981 Punishment Regulations that maltreatment of captives attracts a penalty of three years and Art. 20 plundering or harming innocent residents results in a penalty of seven years. There is no similar requirement within the DFDA.

The next area for comparison is still within the PLA 1981 Punishment Regulations, but for offences during peace-time.

The paradigm offence throughout the armies of the world is arguably Absence Without Leave (AWOL). A member of the ADF found guilty of AWOL could receive a maximum sentence of one year’s imprisonment according to s. 24 of the Act. A PLA soldier could be punished with up to seven years for the same offence per Art. 5 of the 1981 Punishment Regulations. This probably reflects community expectations, in both cases, and a long prison term for AWOL would be seen to be disproportionate in Australian norms. But given the same public confidence the Chinese extend to their military it seems likely a heavy sentence would be held as suitable.
The PLA practice of dealing with disciplinary offences is different from the ADF method and all the more remarkable when the offences and penalties are considered.

Some offences are similar to crimes in the criminal codes supra, but in the context of disciplinary measures are presumably less grave. However, it is difficult to understand how some offences could be anything other than serious and demanding of heavy penalties; ie: threatening superiors with weapons, cowardice in combat and theft. Disciplinary punishments allow warning at the lower end of the scale, through demotion to dismissal from the service.

## Conclusion

The military law of the ADF and PLA has many similarities in the areas which involve active service operations. This is not surprising as all armies at war face the same problems.

It is the area of the position within the national society and community that the most significant contrasts are observed. The PLA is an instrument of the CCP, it does have roles and responsibilities that extend beyond the normal tasks of a defence force and it does have a culture and concepts that would be expected of the armed forces of a communist state.

The Armed Forces of Australia are not an instrument of government in the ideological sense and have no political orientation, with some limited exceptions it has little interface with the civilian community and its law reflects the common law of a well-developed capitalist society with the inherent freedoms and individualism.

It is somewhat disappointing to observe that the ADF military law is so inward looking that it fails to deal with international humanitarian law within the DFDA. An explanation has been offered supra, but Australia should be able to equal the example of the PRC on this important human rights issue.

### Notes

5. Not to be confused with ‘Aid to the Civil Power’ which derives from s. 119 of the Constitution and the Defence Act.
6. Mao, ibid 393
8. ibid 144.
9. ibid 13.
10. ibid 2.
11. ibid 15.
14. JSP(AS)201, 1-2, 1-3. Replacing three United Kingdom acts (two of which had ceased to operate in the United Kingdom; four sets of United Kingdom rules or regulations (all of which were obsolete in the United Kingdom); three Australian Acts and nine sets of regulations derived from the Australian Acts.
17. Rodearmel, op. cit, 7., offences included: divulging state military secrets, unauthorised sale of military material and desertion.
20. Mao, op. cit, 274, ‘... parties which have guns have power, and those which have more guns have more power... Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun.’
22. Ibid 19.
23. Analogy was widely used in the imperial period and allowed magistrates to punish an offence not described in the Codes by the penalties provided for the nearest similar crime.
25. ibid described as ‘70 per cent expansion; 20 per cent skirmishing with Nationalists and 10 per cent fighting Japanese.
26. Ibid 37.
28. Rodearmel, op. cit, 43.
30. Ibid 32 ‘Military law is... a specific legal system, which includes the legislation... military laws and Acts by the National People’s Congress... ordinances and rules by the State Council and the Central Military Commission... [all]... based upon the... Constitution.’
31. Defence Force Discipline Act 1982 (Cth) s. 3(1) applies to civilians officially part of the ADF on operations and who have consented in writing to be subject to such discipline.
33. Ibid, 83, Chinese People’s Liberation Army Discipline Regulations (Promulgated 27 January 1984 by the Central Military Commission of the People’s Republic of China.)
34. ‘WHAM’ programs are widely used in South Vietnam to encourage the civil population to support the government, but history records they were not very successful.
36. Rodearmel, op. cit., 83.
37. JSP(AS)201. 1-3. The Defence Force Discipline Act 1982 incorporates by reference other Commonwealth laws. For example the DFDA creates ‘Territory Offences’ which are offences against the Crimes Act 1900 (NSW) as applied to the ACT, Police Offences Ordinance Act 1930 (ACT) (s.s. 3 and 61), the principles of common law criminal liability (s. 10) and various other Acts dealing with prisoners, narcotics, evidence and so on.
38. JSP(AS)201 7-1
40. Ibid s. 131.
41. Zhang, op. cit. 35-36.
42. Ibid 33, but he, of course, uses the United States Army as his contrary example.
43. Rodearmel, op. cit., 57.
44. Geneva Convention Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War of 12 August 1949, Art 13 and passim.

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Lieutenant Colonel Thorogood resigned from the Royal Australian Survey Corps to become Executive Director of the Australian Red Cross Society, Victorian Division in 1981 and retired in 1991 to study law full-time at the University of Melbourne. He is an honour student and will graduate LLB in 1995. Colonel Thorogood attended the International Institute of Humanitarian Law in Sanremo, Italy, in 1989 and was a member of the directing staff for the course in 1990. This article is abridged from an honours paper for the comparative law legal theory subject of Law and Society in China.
The Art of Targeting – Attacking the Centres of Gravity

By Squadron Leader D. Tramoundanis, RAAF

Introduction

In the ten months between August 1951 and May 1952, US air power prosecuted an air interdiction campaign against the North Korean Peoples Army (NKPA) rail supply effort. The objective was to so isolate and weaken the NKPA frontline forces that they would either be forced to withdraw or risk being routed in an Eighth Army ground offensive. The rail interdiction campaign which later came to be known as Operation Strangle II, was fatally flawed and doomed to failure from the outset.

There were several problems plaguing Operation Strangle II but, two key flaws were that, given the prevailing situation, the wrong centre of gravity was selected for attack and the weapons used were inadequate for the desired purpose. Successful campaigning is vitally linked to these two functions of the operational art. This article will address the first of these functions, target selection.

There have been numerous examples in past campaigns where targeting has been instrumental in deciding the outcome of the campaign and determining the duration of hostilities. Operation Strangle II is but one such example, but it will serve to illustrate some of the key issues associated with targeting.

Operation Strangle II

By late 1951, ground activity in the Korean theatre had significantly decreased and the NKPA had assumed a static defence posture. Consequently the NKPA supply requirements had decreased to a mere fraction of what they had been. As the USAF official history notes, this was not the ideal circumstance for prosecuting an interdiction campaign.

As was the case in World War II, the best time for an interdiction campaign was when the ground situation was fluid, the fighting intense, and the enemy’s logistical needs were greatest.

World War II experience had also shown that cutting railway lines was extremely difficult without the guided bombs that were to be a later development. It was, therefore, questionable whether an air interdiction campaign against the North Korean rail system would so affect enemy sustainment operations as to achieve the desired aim of forcing a retreat.

Operation Strangle II did reduce enemy rail transport to between four and five per cent of its pre-war levels, but the supplies that got through via rail and other means were sufficient to supply the NKPA’s needs, and indeed, some stockpiling was possible. Moreover, the NKPA were particularly inventive in negating the effects of damage to the rail system. They used their not inconsiderable manpower resources not only to transport supplies, but also to preposition teams at vital points that could either repair damaged rail lines or construct by-pass bridges. Most importantly, though, the NKPA moved anti-aircraft assets to defend the rail network. During the operation anti-aircraft fire accounted for 243 aircraft lost and 290 severely damaged.

There are several other examples where inappropriate targeting had outcomes similar to those of Operation Strangle II, ie failure to achieve the objective, unnecessarily prolonged period of hostilities, and high attrition of own forces. Determination of the guiding principles supporting the art of targeting is therefore important.

This article will discuss the principles underlying the art of targeting and will examine how these principles apply in the Australian context.

Back to First Principles – The Classical Theorists

Perhaps it is right that the first word should belong to Sun Tzu. The suggestion has been made that when Sun Tzu addresses target selection, his perspective is the grand strategic and strategic levels of war at a point before actual hostilities commence and where diplomacy and not military force is the mode of conflict. That may be the case but Sun Tzu’s advice does have some bearing on the operational level of war and specifically on targeting.

Sun Tzu explains that the ‘supreme importance in war is to attack the enemy’s strategy... The supreme excellence in war is to attack the enemy’s plans’. We can see the wisdom of these aphorisms by another look at Operation Strangle II.
Operation Strangle II began in August 1951 just as armistice negotiations got under way so the operation was designed to comply with the Joint Chiefs of Staff requirements not to put these negotiations at risk.\(^1\) However, the ineffectual outcomes of Operation Strangle II allowed the Communist negotiators to ‘stall for time hoping that the UN bargaining position would weaken under the strain of mounting casualties and losses’.\(^2\) Although there were other factors at play, the subsequent redirection of the air interdiction campaign from targeting the rail network to targeting the North Korean dams, was a major influence which drove the Communists to begin negotiations in earnest. The reason was that attack of the dams caused flooding of the country’s rice crop (and incidentally the railway system!) posing a threat of mass starvation which the NKPA could not defend against.\(^3\) For as long as the UN persisted with Operation Strangle II, they danced to the enemy’s tune and fought in accordance with his plan rather than working to defeat it.

After emphasising the importance of attacking the enemy’s plans, Sun Tzu advises that the next best thing is to ‘disrupt his [the enemy’s] alliances’.\(^4\) An example of this strategy was Saddam Hussein’s Scud attacks on Israel during the Gulf War. There was grave concern among coalition leaders that these attacks would provoke an Israeli retaliation (as Saddam hoped) and thereby shatter the fragile coalition of Arab nations supporting the UN’s cause. Saddam’s strategy was defeated by the redeployment ex-Europe of Patriot missile defence systems to defend Israel against Scud attacks.

Sun Tzu’s third priority in targeting is attacking the enemy’s fielded forces. By contrast, both Clausewitz and Jomini identify the enemy’s army as the first priority in targeting, indicating that their starting point is post-diplomacy when hostilities have either started or are imminent. But in identifying the enemy’s army as the target of first priority, Clausewitz and Jomini merely reflect the times in which they were writing. Those were the days of massed armies meeting on the battlefield when the only way to reach the enemy’s industrial base, centre of communications, populace or military and political leadership was to first defeat his army.

Clausewitz and Jomini’s theories of war are coloured by the physical limitations in the speed of manoeuvre and reach which applied in those days of massed surface forces where the possibility did not exist of by-passing, circumventing or indeed over-flying the enemy’s fielded forces to attack his other and more important centres of gravity.

Yet at the conceptual level, Clausewitz and Jomini make an important contribution through their development of the idea of centres of gravity. The term 'centre of gravity' was borrowed by Clausewitz from Newtonian physics in an effort to emphasise the criticality of target selection to the success of campaigns. Clausewitz defines the centre of gravity to be ‘...the hub of all power and movement, on which everything depends... the point against which all our energies should be directed’ and adds the rider that 'if the enemy is thrown off balance, he must not be given the time to recover.'\(^5\)

While Clausewitz here conjures up an image of a single all important centre of gravity, Jomini acknowledges the existence of more than one such centre by referring to the attack of ‘decisive strategic points’ or ‘decisive objectives’. According to Jomini a fundamental principle regulating the employment of forces is ‘to strike in the most decisive direction’, that is, in the direction ‘leading straight to the decisive points’.\(^6\)

As previously stated, both Clausewitz and Jomini reflecting the state of warfare of their time, identify the enemy’s army as constituting the single most important centre of gravity. However, their selection of the second priority for attack is of more interest here. Clausewitz and Jomini again agree in selecting the enemy’s capital as the second most important target for attack. In explaining the rationale behind this choice Clausewitz and Jomini echoed one another’s words:

**Jomini:** ‘All capitals are strategic points, for the double reason that they are not only centres of communications, but also the seats of power and government.’\(^7\)

**Clausewitz:** advocates ‘seizures of his [the enemy’s] capital if it is not only the centre of administration but also that of social, professional, and political activity.’\(^8\)

These two statements are quite telling. The importance of capitals as centres of gravity does not reside in their status as national capitals but in their being seats of power and government, and centres of communications and administration etc. These are the true centres of gravity that both theorists recommend for attack. It just so happened that in Clausewitz and Jomini’s times, the seat of government, and the centres of communications and administration were all concentrated in national capitals.

The Air Power Theorists

Douhet opens the first chapter of his text ‘The Command of the Air’ with the words ‘Aeronautics opened up... a new field of action, the field of the air.'
In so doing, it of necessity created a new battlefield.  This new battlefield is characterised by three-dimensional manoeuvre and a quantum leap in the flexibility, the speed of application and the reach of military power.

The new capability to by-pass massed surface forces and ‘strike direct and immediately at the seat of the opposing will and policy’ opened up new vistas for military theorists; among them Douhet, and Liddell Hart.  As the potential for exploiting the third dimension became better understood, doctrine was developed to reflect the contribution that the air component could make to campaigning in the form of air bombardment, control of the air and the tactical application of air power in support of the surface battle.  The targets against which air power is directed continue to be the same centres of gravity identified by the classical theorists, including the enemy’s armed forces, leadership, war fighting infrastructure and population.  The difference is that the priorities are now able to be altered in that the defeat of the enemy forces does not necessarily have to precede attacking the other centres of gravity.

**A Logical Foundation for the Art of Targeting**

The objective of using military force is to coerce the enemy to accede to the demands made of him.  So long as the enemy has the ability to resist militarily, he cannot be forced to comply with any such demands.  Therefore, the purpose of striking at the enemy’s centres of gravity is to convince the enemy to cease hostilities by degrading his ability to resist militarily.  This ability is supported by two factors: the enemy’s capacity to wage war and his will to continue doing so.  The targets selected for attack must be ones which have a bearing on one or both of these two elements of the enemy’s ability to continue to fight.

In selecting targets for attack, the starting point for all considerations must be the grand strategic and strategic objectives.  At the grand strategic/strategic level the Rules of Engagement (ROE) are set and the impact of the Law of Armed Conflict (LOAC) on the conduct of operations is determined.  Hence, not only the strategic objectives, but also ROE and LOAC considerations will impose constraints on the application of combat power and both the objectives and the nature of the constraints can vary as the war progresses.  For example, during the Korean War the US grand strategy vacillated as the political leadership changed.  In June 1950 President Truman’s avowed objective was ‘to restore an independent, non-Communist South Korea to its pre-invasion territorial status’.  Yet to avoid the risk of a world war, Truman limited the employment of American combat power to the Korean Peninsula.  When Eisenhower came to power he was willing to remove the restraints imposed by Truman and even contemplated the use of atomic weapons against the Chinese in Manchuria.  Hence not only the selection of targets but also the selection of modes of attack and the weapons to be used may be regulated by grand strategic and strategic guidance.

**The Enemy’s Capacity to Wage War**

An important determinant of the enemy’s capacity to wage war is the combat effectiveness of his armed forces which depends on the military leadership, and the quality and number of the fielded forces including the effectiveness of their sustainment.  Taking each of these attributes in turn, ways of degrading the enemy’s military capability may be derived.

a. Military Leadership.  In a highly centralised command system, the leadership is an important centre of gravity.  In such a situation, the effectiveness of the leadership may be simply degraded by eliminating the leader.  Saddam Hussein operated a highly centralised system of leadership in the 1991 Gulf War and despite repeated assertions by the US that Saddam was not a target, General Schwarzkopf has since admitted that ‘at the very top of our [the Coalition’s] target list were the bunkers where we knew he and his senior commanders were likely to be working’.  As it turned out, these attacks failed so that a back-up plan was needed.  Where direct attack on the enemy leadership fails or has little chance of success, an alternative course is to attack the leader’s capacity to command and control his forces effectively.  For effective command and control the leader needs information (intelligence) on which to base decisions, facilities to process this information into a useful form for the purpose of decision making and the means to communicate his decisions to his forces.  By degrading any one of these functions of leadership, information gathering and processing, decision making and communication, the enemy leadership can be made ineffective.  The simplest and most direct action can be to simply silence the leader and remove his ability to command forces by destroying the communications system.  In the Gulf War, Saddam’s communications system was a primary target.

b. Enemy Armed Forces.  The enemy armed forces are, naturally, a centre of gravity.  However, a direct
engagement with these forces when they are operating at peak effectiveness carries a significant risk. There would be a higher chance of success and a reduced risk to friendly forces if significant engagement with the enemy is deferred until after the effectiveness of the enemy's forces has been degraded. Several means are available for reducing enemy combat effectiveness. These means include degrading the enemy's air defences, logistics support, and ability to manoeuvre.

(i) **Air Defences.** Destruction of the enemy's air defences (including aircraft, counter-air facilities, and reconnaissance and surveillance facilities) creates an air environment in which friendly land, sea and air forces can operate without prohibitive interference by the enemy. In other words, friendly forces have an enhanced ability to manoeuvre because they are not threatened by enemy aircraft or counter-air forces. In such an environment, friendly forces are free to attack the enemy's centres of gravity with relative impunity. The devastating effect on the enemy of inadequate air defences is evident in several of the Arab-Israeli encounters, particularly in the Yom Kippur War, the latter stages of the October 1973 War and in the Bekaa Valley air battle of 1982. The 1991 Gulf War is a more recent example.

(ii) **Logistics Support.** The function of logistics is to provide the wherewithal for the forces to sustain operations at a necessary level and for the required duration. In doing so, the logistics system operates maintenance facilities and facilities for the storage and movement of ordnance, fuel, spare parts, food and other supplies. Each of these facilities including buildings, vehicles, sea-going vessels and aircraft, and the personnel manning them, are enemy centres of gravity.

(iii) **Ability to Manoeuvre.** The ability to manoeuvre is an important determinant of combat effectiveness. This ability relies in part on the availability of transportation means and the capacity to manoeuvre without risk. Land transport systems may be interdicted as can airfields and seaports, or alternatively in the case of seaports blockade may be appropriate. Interdiction operations can also limit the enemy's ability to manoeuvre by making the risk to his forces too high or the cost of protecting them prohibitive.

c. **Sustainment.** In addition to sustainment operations carried out by the military, discussed earlier under the heading of logistics, civilian industry is an important contributor to force sustainment. Frequently, indigenous civilian industry is the source for ordnance and other essential war-fighting materials. Important also are the key production facilities which provide the fuel and energy required by the enemy forces. Each of these are important centres of gravity which can affect the enemy's combat effectiveness.

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**The Enemy's Will to Wage War**

Factors contributing to the enemy's will to wage war include:

a. **National Leadership.** The enemy's will to wage war also depends on the national leadership (as opposed to the military leadership). Where the national leadership is not cohesive and does not have the overwhelming support of the populace, bringing the war to the people by attacking targets within the enemy's cities can work in either toppling the hostile leadership or convincing that leadership to order a cessation of hostilities. Targets would need to be ones which carry some national importance or significance. Striking targets which provide essential services to the population, for instance the power supply, could serve this purpose.

b. **Popular Support.** The level of popular support that the enemy has for maintaining hostilities, can be an important determinant of the level of military commitment he is willing to make and of the duration of hostilities. President Nixon's decision to withdraw American forces from Vietnam was greatly influenced by the opposition of the American public to the war. The mass media, and in particular the electronic media, bears a strong influence on public opinion. Where the media is a strong propaganda instrument working for the enemy in melding popular support for his actions, silencing the electronic media is one course open. Alternatively, where the media is able to disseminate news of the enemy's losses or foster a perception that the enemy's cause is not just, then it can work to lower the enemy public's morale and hence erode the public's support for the war.

c. **National Economy.** An extension of striking targets within the enemy's national boundaries could be the attack against key national industries which do not necessarily sustain the war effort but are important to the enemy's national economy. The threat against the national economy would be an important impetus for the enemy to cease hostilities.

d. **International Support/Alliances.** Another factor
affecting the enemy’s will to wage war is international support or that of his allies. Following Sun Tzu’s advice and disrupting the enemy’s alliances and support base would be influential in changing the enemy’s mind. Alliances are important not only because they can provide moral support, but also because their support can take a more material form which can help the enemy sustain the war effort, for example weapons and ordnance. Saddam recognised the importance of the Arab support for the US during the 1991 Gulf War and attempted to disrupt the alliance by enticing Israel to take the offensive. Militarily, alliances could be disrupted through direct attack, as tried by Saddam, or the threat of attack including a possible show of intent.

c. **Operational Failures.** Finally, there will be nothing more convincing to force the enemy to abandon hostilities than the imposition of operational failures and the significant degradation of his war fighting effort. The targets for this effect are predominantly military ones including the enemy’s armed forces and their logistical support base.

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**The Warden Model**

One model proposed to aid target selection is that put forward by Colonel John Warden, USAF. Warden proposes a model, illustrated in Figure 1, comprising five concentric rings representing the enemy’s centres of gravity, with the inner ring representing the most important centre of gravity. According to this model, when attack of the enemy command is not feasible, ‘it is possible to render the enemy impotent by destroying one or more of the outer strategic rings or centres of gravity’.

Importantly, Warden stresses that, ‘all actions are aimed at the mind of the enemy command. Thus, one does not conduct an attack against industry or infrastructure because of the effect it might or might not have on fielded forces. Rather, one undertakes such an attack for its effect on national leaders and commanders who must assess the cost of rebuilding, the effect on the state’s economic position in the post-war period,'
the internal political effect on their own survival, and on the cost versus the potential gain from continuing the war.\(^{26}\)

The Warden model is a clear statement of enemy centres of gravity and provides a logical foundation on which to base planning of offensive operations – in a traditional war such as that between developed nation states. A problem arises, however, when, for whatever reason, the war does not fit the traditional war model. For example Warden's model would have had limited application in the Korean and Vietnam Wars where the enemy leadership was not centralised and where the enemy homeland did not have a developed industrial base on which depended the sustainment of the war effort. The bungled Operation Strangle II had also shown that attacking the transportation network can be ineffective when the enemy is not reliant on established transportation systems.

**Application of Warden's Model**

Hence, while Warden's model provides a valuable starting point, there is more to the art of targeting than attacking the five key centres of gravity identified in the model. This is particularly true in situations where particular centres of gravity are not open to attack. Such situations include the following:

a. **Limited Combat Forces.** When the combat forces available for the task are limited in size and capability, the capacity to achieve the requisite critical mass in attacking the centres of gravity may become a serious constraint. In such a circumstance, the prioritising and phasing of operations and ensuring economy of effort became primary concerns.

b. **Absent Centres of Gravity.** Warden's model has little utility in situations where the several centres of gravity identified in the model are either not present or in fact are not genuine centres of gravity in the sense of contributing to the enemy's will and capacity to wage war. Such a situation arose in the Korean and Vietnam Wars where there was no significant enemy industrial base and the transportation systems such as the rail systems were not essential to the enemy's war effort. Moreover, the enemy leadership was not centralised and readily open to attack.

c. **Limited War.** Warden's model has little application in situations where political constraints make certain of the centres of gravity not open to attack and where there is a desire to avoid escalation of hostilities. In such circumstances attacking the enemy's leadership, industrial and transportation infrastructure or the enemy's population would be inappropriate.

**Need for Caution in the Use of Air Power**

The reach, rapid concentration of force, and the potential for air power to strike deep into the enemy's homeland either with surgical precision or to bring indiscriminate destruction highlights a fundamental difference between air strikes and surface strikes (excluding those by surface-to-surface missiles). This attribute, while making the air strike a potent application of combat power, makes it also one liable to misuse and/or misdirection.

A study of Bomber Command strikes against Germany in World War II suggests that the governance of air strike operations should be subjected to very high level military supervision, possibly the highest.\(^{26}\) The purpose of such supervision would be not only to ensure the efficient and effective use of air power, but also to assure that the targets attacked fall within strategic guidelines. During World War II the strategic objective given to allied bomber commanders, Air Marshal Harris and General Eaker, was to achieve the "progressive destruction and dislocation of the Germany military, industrial and economic system, and the undermining of the morale of the German people to a point where their capacity for armed resistance is fatally weakened..."\(^{26}\)

Air Marshal Harris was able to interpret that directive to suit his own theories, which meant he continued to target German cities and civilians. However, at the Casablanca Conference of January 1943, the enemy centres of gravity were identified by the Combined Chiefs of Staff as (in priority order): the submarine bases and yards, the German Air Force and its factories and depots, ball bearings, oil, synthetic rubber tyres and military transport.

Therefore, it would seem to be necessary for the targeting process to be controlled at the highest levels to ensure that the operational focus is not shifted from that required by strategic guidance. Arguably, this applies more so to the application of air power than to other forms of combat power. The reason for saying so is that, with the exception of surface launched missiles, air power is the only combat force that has the reach to strike enemy strategic targets which comprise the four inner rings of the Warden centre of gravity model.
The Art in Targeting – An Australian Perspective

Although the target selection process stems from a centre of gravity analysis, potential targets must be put through several filters before they are selected for attack. These filters will test each potential target to determine whether it is viable in terms of constraints imposed by strategic guidance, the Law of Armed Conflict, force capability and force employment principles.

During the 1991 Gulf War, the coalition forces, through sheer weight of available resources and because of the nature of weapons and ordnance in their inventories, were able to continually and concurrently attack most of Iraq’s centres of gravity. The one exception was that the population was not directly targeted. However, the ADF being a much smaller force with a much more limited range of weapons and ordnance would be forced to more carefully prioritise allocation of effort.

Several considerations would have a bearing on which target and which force elements to task. Each target and force element option must then be tested against each of these considerations.

a. Strategic Guidance. The starting point is the grand strategic and strategic objectives. These will define the bounds of authorised actions and the limitations placed on the nature of targets authorised for attack. The grand strategic and strategic objectives will also define the required time within which the objectives must be achieved, the desired end-state after the war and hence the effect that needs to be created on the enemy. Strategic guidance will also include requirements with respect to LOAC and ROE compliance. Given the strategic guidance, the operational commander and his battle staff can then identify the target options available for attack and those not available for attack and he can also identify any force elements debarred by strategic guidance from taking part in the operation.

b. Target Set Selection. Once the centres of gravity available for attack have been established, the selection of the ones to be targeted is based on the following considerations:

(i) Support of Strategic Objectives. The first point that must be considered is the degree to which attacking the potential target supports the strategic objective. If attacking the proposed target is only going to have a marginal effect on the overall outcome of the campaign, then consideration must be given to identifying higher priority targets.

(ii) Effect on the Enemy. There must be a valid analysis of the effect that attacking the proposed target will have on the enemy; that is both the direct impact of the attack and how this will influence the enemy’s will and capacity to wage war including the time over which these effects are expected to be felt by the enemy. In addition, the analysis must also include assessment of the enemy’s capacity to mitigate the effects of the attack and hence defeat the purpose of attacking the proposed target. Such an analysis would have shown that the Operation Strangle II rail interdiction campaign was an ineffectual operation.

(iii) Australia has ratified international obligations to comply with the Law of Armed Conflict (LOAC). Consequently, targets must be assessed to determine if there will be any LOAC violation. Similarly, potential targets must not contravene the Rules of Engagement (ROE) approved by the government.
Although, if deemed necessary, ROE changes may be requested.

(iv) **Achievability.** Naturally the intent of attack is to achieve some effect at the target. The probability that the desired effect will be generated must be assessed before a potential target is approved. Factors determining the achievability of the desired effect at the targets include:

(a) **Suitable Weapon/Ordnance Available.**

The inventory must be examined to determine whether or not suitable delivery platforms and appropriate ordnance exists to give a high degree of assurance of achieving the desired effect at the target, given the constraints imposed by strategic guidance. In considering the suitability of available weapons and ordnance, planners need to be satisfied that the weapons-ordnance combination proposed for use provides a cost-effective means of attacking the proposed target. For instance, the number of sorties required to ensure an acceptable level of success and the risk to the tasked force element need to be balanced against the importance of attacking the target.

(b) **Availability of Trained Aircrew.**

Depending on the proposed mission profile, a determination needs to be made that adequately prepared aircrew are available or that there is adequate time for preparatory training and rehearsal.

(c) **Target Accessibility.** The accessibility for attack of the potential target needs to be established. For example, it would be pointless to identify a target beyond the reach of available forces. The suitability of the prevailing weather and the level of protection afforded to the target will also be considerations here. For example, highly fortified targets may not be susceptible to attack with available weapons and ordnance.

(d) **Currency/Accuracy of Intelligence.** The adequacy of available intelligence on the potential target needs to be established. For instance the currency and accuracy of intelligence will be prime considerations where mobile targets are contemplated for attack.

(e) **Measure of Success.** An important element of the achievability of a target is to have a statement of what constitutes success. This is to enable an assessment to be made of the success of the mission and to determine subsequently if the outcome of the attack did indeed have the expected effect on the enemy. Without such a yardstick or the means to make an assessment of the impact of the attack, attacking the target could be a futile exercise.

(v) **Weight of Effort Required.** Depending on the other commitments of forces and the need for an appropriate balance between prosecuting offensive and defensive operations, the relative priority of each potential target needs to be assessed based on a determination of the weight of effort required to be launched against it and the expected end effect. For well-fortified targets, repeated attacks may be necessary to ensure success. Alternatively, the attacking force may need to be accompanied by other elements to suppress enemy air defences, provide air-to-air refuelling, early warning and jamming of enemy target acquisition and tracking systems. Hence, depending on the target, the force package required to defeat it could comprise a significant part of available resources. Therefore, the relative priority of each target versus the weight of effort required needs to be carefully considered.

(vi) **Risk to Own Forces.** Another consideration that needs to be made is to determine the level of risk to which the tasked forces will be subjected. There is a need to ensure that the potential cost is adequately compensated by the expected benefit of conducting the attack.

(vii) **Enemy's Response.** The final step is to assess the enemy's reaction to the attack. The courses of action open to the enemy must be evaluated and his most likely course should be determined, whether this be a retaliatory action or a change of strategy. This will assist in further validating the targets selected and in retaining the initiative of manoeuvre.

Once the above steps have been completed for each of the potential targets, the selection of targets for attack and the prioritisation of these targets should be made on the basis of selecting those which will make the greatest contribution towards achieving the strategic objective with the most effective use of forces and the lowest risk of failure and loss.

### Conclusion

The target selection process is a key determinant of success in war. Poor target selection can lead to a failure to achieve the strategic aim, dissipation of war fighting resources or, at the very least, protraction of the war.
While the logic behind the centre of gravity approach to target selection is sound, difficulties can arise in unconventional warfare where the enemy is not a developed nation having the centres of gravity such as key production facilities and communications and transportation systems that are essential to its war fighting effort.

Equally, difficulties arise when the enemy’s centres of gravity as discussed by the military theorists and depicted by the Warden model, are excluded from attack by strategic guidance and authorised ROE. Moreover, where the available war making resources are limited in either number or capacity, knowing the centres of gravity does not necessarily make them open to attack.

Hence, there is need for a process for assessing and comparing the relative merits of targets which are open to attack. This article has proposed such a process which can be used to provide a basis for target prioritisation.

NOTES
1. *Operation Strangle* was the codename of the road interdiction campaign which preceded the rail interdiction campaign discussed here. A separate codename was not assigned to the latter campaign and *Operation Strangle II* appears to have been adopted by writers in an effort to distinguish between the two interdiction campaigns.


3. Statistical analysis showed that only 12.9 per cent of ordinance dropped during *Operation Strangle II* had any effect on the rail system.


8. Message, 98713, Joint Chiefs of Staff to CINCFE, 11 August 1951 stated in part, ‘If armistice discussions fail, it is of greatest importance that clear responsibility for failure rest upon the communists.’ Quoted in Kirtland, M.A., op cit, p 39.


21. *Loc cit*

22. In the 1991 Gulf War General Schwarzkopf required the air campaign to achieve a 50 per cent attrition of enemy forces before the ground offensive would start.


26. The author acknowledges the significant contribution of Dr Alan Stephens to this discussion.

27. Unpublished correspondence from Dr Alan Stephens held by the author.


29. For a detailed account of the targeting process employed by President Johnson see Clodfelter, M., *op cit*, pp 120-122.

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Squadron Leader Tramoundanis is a RAAF Armaments Engineer with nearly 13 years’ service. She has served in 481 Squadron, No 1 Central Ammunition Depot, Headquarters Logistics Command and in the Directorate of Armaments Engineering-Navy. She holds a BE and an MSc in Explosives Engineering and is a graduate of RAAF Command and Staff Course. This article is part of a larger work on air planning at the operational level of war which she is undertaking during her current posting as a CAS Fellow at the Air Power Studies Centre.
Australia in the War of 1939-45

The theme of this commemorative year is Australia Remembers; the nation will remember the veterans who served in World War II, and the Australians who remained at home and kept the home front running.

Great Britain declared war at 11am on 3 September 1939. Within hours, the Australian Prime Minister Robert Menzies signed the official proclamation of Australia’s state of war with Germany. The Australian declaration was prompt and unequivocal, principally because of sentimentalities but also because of consciousness that Australia was a member of the British group of nations and that membership carried responsibilities. When the Commonwealth Parliament met three days later, the Leader of the Opposition, John Curtin, declared on behalf of his followers that as Australia was part of the British Commonwealth, his party would do its utmost to maintain the integrity of that Commonwealth.

Bardia and Tobruk

Australia announced on 15 September 1939 that it would raise a special military force, Second AIF, for service either at home or abroad. The first convoy of the Second AIF steamed under the Sydney Harbour Bridge on 10 January 1940 bound for the Middle East. Less than a year later the Australians assaulted Italian held Bardia on 3 January 1941, which was captured the next day. 40,000 Italians were taken prisoner and 500 field and anti-tank guns, 120 light tanks and 700 motor vehicles were captured. The Australian losses totalled 130 killed and 326 wounded. Following the capture of Bardia, the 6th Division attacked Tobruk before dawn on 21 January. By nightfall, most of Tobruk had been taken and on the morning of 22 January, all resistance collapsed. The Australian casualties were 49 dead and 306 wounded. Over 25,000 Italian soldiers were taken prisoner.

The Siege of Tobruk

The German Africa Corps led by Rommel went on the offensive in March 1941. Tobruk was to be held even if isolated and the main part of the garrison consisted of the three brigades of the 9th Division and the 7th Division’s 18th Brigade. During the German attack on the night of 13/14 April, Corporal J.H. Edmondson of the 2/17th Battalion fought on after being severely wounded. He died the next day and was awarded the first Victoria Cross won by an Australian in the 1939–45 war. The Royal Navy kept open the supply line to Tobruk. All the Australian destroyers in the Mediterranean, including the new Naper, Nizam and Nestor took part but it was one of the old Australian destroyers, Vendetta, that made the record number of 39 trips. Lost on the supply run were 3 destroyers including HMAS Waterhen, three sloops including HMAS Parramatta and 21 smaller vessels. The Australians were replaced by British and Polish troops from August to October and the 2/13th Battalion was the only Australian unit left in Tobruk when the siege ended on 10 December. In Cyrenaica, the 9th Division suffered 3,349 casualties including 749 killed.

Greece and Crete

By 6 April 1941, the date Germany attacked Yugoslavia and Greece, 50,000 British and Commonwealth troops including the 6th Australian Division commanded by Major General Ivan Mackay had arrived in Greece. The ill-prepared Yugoslav Army and the Greeks on the Bulgarian border took the shock of the German attack on 6 April. The Australians held their positions until the night of 12 April before withdrawing. The Australian and New Zealand units withdrew about 100 miles to a shorter line from Thermopylae to the Gulf of Corinth by 19 April. Evacuation from Greece commenced on the night of 24/25 April and was completed on the night of 27/28 April. Australian losses on Greece were 320 killed, 494 wounded and 2030 captured. About 30,000 of the troops embarked from Greece landed in Crete, most without vehicles and heavy weapons. The Germans launched Operation Mercury on 20 May with airborne troops landing at Maleme and Canea. The loss of Maleme airfield threatened the whole allied position in Crete since the Germans, with air-superiority, were able to bring in reinforcements and supplies. Despite the Australian success at Retimo and Heraklion, German pressure continued to rise and the Navy, including the Australian cruiser HMAS Perth and destroyers HMAS Stuart, Naper, Nizam and Voyager was ordered to embark the Commonwealth forces. 274 Australians were killed, 507 were wounded and 3,100 were captured including most of the 2/1st, 2/7th and 2/11th Battalions.
Syria

The 7th Division was by far the major element of the British, Indian and Free French forces which defeated the Vichy French forces during this five week campaign, waged in summer heat and mountainous country. The crossing of the Litani River was stubbornly contested by skilful, well-led enemy, but an Australian artillery force drove off Vichy destroyers which had come inshore to shell Australian positions. Beyond the Litani, there was much stalking and close-quarter fighting in the jagged ravines. Lieutenant A.R. (later Sir Roden) Cutler of the 2/5th Australian Field Regiment won the Victoria Cross in Syria. The Australians who fought the long and sometimes costly battle around Merdjayoun had held a pass which could have allowed the enemy into Palestine, with dire results. The 7th Division was reinforced by units from the 6th Division whose 2/3rd Battalion gallantly stormed the high ground near Mezze which ensured the surrender of Damascus. Australian casualties were 1,600 including 416 killed.

El Alamein

The 9th Division moved to Egypt on 4 July and mounted four attacks on 10, 17, 22 and 26/27 July. In the attack on 22 July, Private A.S. Gurney of the 2/48th Battalion won a posthumous Victoria Cross. The Battle of El Alamein opened at 9.40 pm on 23 October 1942 when 900 medium and field guns fired an intense barrage against the enemy gun lines. The extensive minefields, despite valiant efforts of the engineers, prevented a break through and while a new strategy was prepared the main brunt of the battle, which increased in intensity daily to a climax on 1 November, fell on the 9th Division. Two men from the 2/48th Battalion, Private P.E. Gratwick and Sergeant W.H. Kibby were posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross during this fighting. On 2 November, with the Axis reserves concentrated against the 9th Division, Operation Supercharge was launched in which overwhelming British aerial and armoured strength ensured success. The 9th Division losses between 23 October and 4 November totalled 2,694, including 620 dead, 1,944 wounded and 130 taken prisoner.

Malaya

The Japanese invaded Malaya on 8 December 1941. The 8th Division had begun moving to Malaya in March 1941 but did not see action until 14 January 1942 at Gemas by which stage most of the Malayan peninsula had been lost. The Australians fought well at the Maur River but the Japanese advance along the coast trapped two Australian battalions. Lieutenant Colonel C.G.W. Anderson of the 2/19th Battalion led the breakout and was awarded the Victoria Cross for his gallantry. At the end of January all forces in Malaya withdrew to Singapore which the Japanese invaded on the night of 8 February. A week later, Singapore surrendered. In the defence of Malaya, 1,789 Australians were killed and 1,306 were wounded with 15,384 becoming prisoners of war. Three battalions of the 8th Division had been earmarked to go to Malaya, but instead formed the main elements of forces sent to defend Rabaul, Ambon and Timor, but after resisting the Japanese invader, all three battalions were forced to surrender. The 2/3rd Machine-gun battalion and the 2/2nd Pioneer battalion landed in Java to help resist the Japanese advance but were forced to surrender on 12 March.

The Coral Sea

The Battle of the Coral Sea was fought between 4 and 8 May 1942. The US lost the aircraft carrier Lexington, the oiler Neosho and the destroyer Sims. Another US aircraft carrier, the Yorktown, was also damaged. The Japanese lost a small aircraft carrier and achieved a material victory but the Coral Sea was a strategic allied victory. The Japanese operation to capture Port Moresby was thwarted and the Australian eastern coast was not attacked and the only serious bombing threat during the 1939-45 War to major towns on the Queensland coast was eliminated. The Americans were able to repair the Yorktown in time for Midway less than one month later. At Midway the Japanese lost four aircraft carriers, which they could not replace, and the initiative swung decisively against Japan.

Kokoda Track

In 1942, a seldom used track climbed from the small village of Buna on the north coast of Papua, over the Owen Stanley Ranges and on to Port Moresby. The Japanese landed in the Gona area on the night of 21/22 July 1942 and had built up a force of 13,500 troops by the end of July. The Japanese pushed the Australians back along the Kokoda Track towards Port Moresby and broke through the Australian lines on 29 August. This threatened the entire 2/14th Battalion position which was only saved by a counter
attack for which Private Bruce Kingsbury was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross. The Australians made their stand on Imita Ridge where the Japanese advance was stopped. On 28 September the Australians resumed the offensive and Kokoda was recaptured on 2 November. The Japanese were pursued and on 13 November, the 2/31st Battalion crossed the wide, swift Kumusi River with the coast 60 kilometres away. The four-month Owen Stanley Ranges campaign involved four Australian Brigades with 12 infantry battalions which lost 605 killed and 1015 wounded.

Gona, Buna and Sanananda

From 20 November 1942 until 22 January 1943, Australian and American troops cleared the Japanese beach-heads at Gona, Buna and Sanananda. Because of swampy terrain and poor land communication, the struggle for the beachheads developed into three separate battles. The land was so flat and overgrown that observation of the well-dug and timbered Japanese positions was difficult. The Japanese resisted fiercely and their positions were only taken after repeated attacks and heavy fighting. Seven Australian battalions suffered 750 killed and wounded in capturing Gona which fell on 9 December. There were 1,400 Japanese buried at Buna which was taken on 2 January 1943. The Americans sustained 1,954 casualties including 306 killed. Organised resistance in the Sanananda area was broken by 22 January. Australian and American casualties in the Sanananda area, totalled 2,100 including 600 Australian and 274 American dead.

Salamaua

In the Battle of the Bismarck Sea in early March 1943, the RAAF and USAAF destroyed a Japanese convoy which attempted to reinforce Lae. All eight transports and four of eight escorting destroyers were sunk. Nearly 3,000 Japanese were killed and only 850 troops were landed at Lae. Throughout March, the RAAF continued its air attack on the Salamaua Isthmus during which Flight Lieutenant William Newton of 22 Squadron, RAAF, was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross. On 23 April, the 3rd Division under command of Major-General Savige assumed control in the Wau-Bulolo area. The Australians inched towards Salamaua along Bobdubi Ridge, Old Vickers, Mount Tambu and Ambush Knoll. The 5th Division conducted the final operations around Salamaua which was occupied on 11 September.

Huon Peninsula

The Australian task in 1943 was to advance along the New Guinea coast as far as Madang. The capture of Lae on the south west of the Huon Peninsula was the first objective. There were few beaches on the Huon Peninsula and those that did exist were short and narrow and backed by mangroves. The mountain tops were often covered in rain mists and the humidity was oppressive all year round. On 4 September 1943, the 9th Division began landing on Red and Yellow Beaches. The US 503rd Paratroop Infantry Regiment was dropped into Nadzab next day and on 7 September two brigades of the 7th Division were airlifted into Nadzab. The 7th and 9th Divisions converged on Lae which was captured on 16 September. The 9th Division lost 77 killed and the 7th Division 38 killed in the advance towards Lae. The 7th Division then moved towards the Ramu Valley while the 9th Division pushed along the coast towards Finschhafen which was taken on 2 October. The Japanese launched a major counter-attack on 16 October which was defeated. Sattelberg was captured on 25 November after eight days of fighting through a well-developed Japanese defensive scheme. For his gallantry in the final assault, Sergeant Tom Derrick of the 2/48th Battalion was awarded the Victoria Cross.

Shaggy Ridge

The 7th Division, on the other side of the Finisterre Range, captured Shaggy Ridge after fierce hand-to-hand fighting which completely eliminated Japanese domination of the Ramu Valley. The link up of Australian troops with American troops at Saidor on 10 February 1944 marked the end of the five month Huon Peninsula campaign. The 5th Division, taking over from 9th Division at Sio pursued the Japanese along the coast. On 8 April, the 11th Division had assumed command from 7th Division of all units in the Ramu Valley. On 25 April a patrol of the 57/60th Battalion, with one platoon from the 30th Battalion, entered and occupied Madang. The 30th Battalion entered Alexishafen on 26 April. The capture of Madang and Alexishafen put the Australians in possession of two first-class, deep, well-sheltered harbours.

D Day

600 Australian servicemen contributed to the Normandy landings. Australian officers commanded some Royal Naval vessels and smaller craft such as
motor torpedo boats and officers and ratings served among the complements of three British cruisers and three destroyers present off Normandy. About 25 Australian Army officers posted as observers to British formations in 1944 served in the Normandy invasion. By mid-1944, some 14,000 members of the RAAF were serving in squadrons based in Britain, 12,000 as aircrew. Some 10,000 Allied aircraft participated in or protected the actual sea and airborne landings, involving 292 RAF and dominion air force squadrons, including ten RAAF. In addition to aircrew in Australian squadrons, another 1,500 Australian aircrew were dispersed among RAF squadrons.

Bougainville

The Australians, under Lieutenant General S.G. Savige, Commander of the II Corps, assumed responsibility for Bougainville in November/December 1944. General Savige had five Australian infantry brigades – the 7th, 15th and 29th of the 3rd Division as well as the 11th and 23rd. The Australians took over from the Americans on the Numa Numa trail which stretched across the centre of Bougainville and by 30 December Pearl Ridge was in Australian hands. The central sector remained quiet for the next few months and by mid July Australian positions had been established on the far side of the dividing range. In the southern sector the Australians advanced from positions at the Jaba River against the main Japanese concentrations in the south. The Australians defeated the Japanese attacks on Slaters Knoll and moved south along Buin Road making successive river crossings. From 11 July until early August very heavy rains restricted further advances. The northern advance commenced in January 1945. The Japanese fiercely resisted at Tsimba Ridge where the Australian advance was held up for three weeks. In March the Japanese were cleared from the Soraken Peninsula. On the afternoon of 24 July the 8th Battalion ran into heavy fire from well-camouflaged bunkers and Private Frank John Partridge on his own initiative single handedly assaulted the Japanese positions. He was the last Australian to win the Victoria Cross in the 1939-1945 War.

New Britain

The Fifth Australian Division, commanded by Major-General A.H. Ramsay relieved the Americans on New Britain in October/November 1944. The Australians were based at Jacquinot Bay and planned to advance along both sides of the island to establish a holding line at the entrance to Gazelle Peninsula. This was a narrow neck of land with Open Bay on the north coast and Wide Bay on the south. Intelligence established that the Rabaul garrison was the Eighth Area Army commanded by Lieutenant General Imamura consisting of about 38,000 troops. In fighting at Waitavalo during March 1945 the Australians seized the entrance to the Gazelle Peninsula. On the 4 April, Major-General H.C.H. Robertson took over command of the Fifth Division. On 11 August, a few days before the Japanese surrender, the headquarters staff from Fifth Division were relieved by the Eleventh Division.

Aitape-Wewak

The 6th Division, commanded by Major-General J.E.S. Stevens took over from the Americans at Aitape in October/November 1944. The Australian battalions pushed the Japanese inland from the coastal area and other units advanced south along the coast. On 21 March the 2/2nd Battalion captured the Dagua airstrip, which was littered with wrecked planes. After the fall of Wewak on 11 May and its airstrip infantry patrols pushed forward to the next strongpost, Wirui Mission, from which the Japanese had been shelling Australian troops during the advance on Wewak. The 2/4th Battalion attacked towards Wirui Mission on 15 May. When the attack was help up Private Edward Kenna took the initiative and was awarded the Victoria Cross for his gallantry.

Borneo

On 1 May 1945, the 9th Division’s 26th Brigade landed at Tarakan Island to establish air and naval facilities to support forthcoming Australian operations in Borneo and to conserve oil installations. The Australians encountered stiff resistance from Japanese in strongly entrenched bunkers and tunnels but organised resistance ended on 15 June. 1,600 Japanese were killed on Tarakan and 314 were taken prisoner. Australians killed totalled 233, wounded 644, while 1,434 were evacuated through sickness. The 9th Division landed in North Borneo and Labuan Island on 10 June 1945. Brunei was captured on 13 June and Limbang on 18 June. After further landings Beaufort was captured on 28 June. The 7th Division landed in Eastern Borneo on 1 July and captured the port and oilfields of Balikpapan the following day. Heavy fighting continued for the next two weeks as Australians pushed up the Milford highway and overcame Japanese resistance at Batuchampar. After the Japanese withdrew into the hills the Australians conducted deep patrolling where some clashes occurred. The Japanese suffered over 2,000 casualties while 229 Australians were killed and 634 wounded in what was the last invasion of the 1939-1945 War.
THE BATTLE OF MARYANG SAN
Fought by 3rd Battalion RAR. KOREA 2-8 October, 1951. Published by HO. Training Command, Army. Edited by Colonel Bob Breen. Price – $16.50 from AWM.

Reviewed by John Buckley, OBE ED.

At the outset I must say that I have known the CO of the 3rd Battalion RAR (then Lieutenant Colonel Frank Hassett) since we were Lieutenants together in Darwin in 1939. We have been close friends ever since. I have always admired this great soldier.

This book has been very well researched by Bob Breen and his associates. Several members of the Battalion have written about their experiences in this important battle. These bring life and authenticity to this book. It is true to say that the Battalion has never been given the credit it so richly deserves for its excellent performance at Maryang San, in spite of the fact that Australia’s most important living historian, Professor Robert O’Neill, regarded it as; ‘The greatest single feat of the Australian Army during the Korean War.’

Robert O’Neill is now Professor of ‘The History of War’ at Oxford University and is regarded as an outstanding international war historian. My research about Maryang San leads me to the same conclusion as O’Neill. It had to be a fine Battalion, because its officers and soldiers were of high quality and experience. Frank Hassett was renowned for his courage and soldierly qualities in World War II. He was a Lieutenant Colonel at age 24 and served with great distinction in the Middle East and New Guinea. Sturdee, Berryman, Rowell, Bridgeford, Pollard, Garrett and Wells all regarded him as one of the brightest of younger Staff Corps Officers in World War II.

Hassett did not have to push himself forward for promotion, nor did he ‘knife’ any of his peers. A man of unusual stature, integrity, compassion and with Slim’s definition in mind – a born leader – with courage as his most important talent.

Hassett’s leadership at Maryang San is not described in detail in the book, possibly because his well known modesty had some influence on the Editor. Hassett was well supported by some other gifted officers including Hughes, Rofe, Shelton, Keys, and excellent Warrant Officers, including Morrison and Rawlinson (each had a DCM and BAR).

Jim Hughes went on to become Major General, with the AO., DSO, and MC. Rofe and Shelton became Brigadiers, Keys became Sir William Keys AC, MC, and was the National President of the RSL. All told there were two DSOs, ten MCs, two DCMs and ten MMs, awarded in the period.

The actual battle of Maryang San was fought against a resolute enemy of at least two ‘crack’ Chinese Battalions who were entrenched in rugged mountainous terrain. It is almost a miracle that the 3rd Battalion was able to overcome the fanatical defenders. Later, the Battalion fought off a determined counter attack by 3 Chinese Battalions. Hassett, as usual, was always forward with his courageous troops. His performance was noted by his superiors. He went on to become General Sir Francis Hassett AC, KBE, CB, DSO, MVO. He must rank as one of the best of post-World War II Generals - certainly the most decorated.

The Battle of Maryang San was a classic performance by a great Australian Battalion where courage and dedication were the hallmarks of its success. It was led by a brilliant and courageous CO.

The study of this book should be compulsory reading for all officers in the Army.

The 3rd Battalion RAR was an elite Battalion much admired by Field Marshall Sir James Cassells and other top military leaders, and this book, plus Robert O’Neill’s Official History of the Korean War, tells us why.

Bob Breen and his helpers should be proud of The Battle of Maryang San and so should any soldier who served in the battle.

I salute the Battalion and its brilliant and most courageous CO – a born and gifted leader of excellent Australian fighting soldiers.