NO. 116

JANUARY/
FEBRUARY
1996

Australian Defence Force Journal
Journal of the Australian Profession of Arms
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© Commonwealth of Australia 1995
ISSN 1320-2545
Published by the Department of Defence
Canberra 1995
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Receiving the Governor General’s banner  
prior to presentation to the Australian Defence  
Force Academy.

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The Leadership Style of General Sir Brudenell White

Dear Editor,

Having not read a great deal about General White (DFJ Mar/Apr 95), I will defer to Major Young on the subject. If only half of what he claims were true (and I have no doubt of the truth of any of it), the General would have indeed been a remarkable man.

However, I question the value of White’s collection of fine characteristics as a basis for leadership development in the Australian Army, or in any organisation for that matter. While we would all want to be led by people of White’s calibre, of the five characteristics described, only one – professional competence – is within the Army’s power to affect.

The problem with the other four is that they are qualities, rather than abilities. As an educator of officers myself, I would like to believe that I could exert some influence on my students’ attitudes. Unfortunately, while the experts differ slightly on the age by which an individual’s attitudes/values/standards are firmly established, none whom I have studied would argue that there is much chance of achieving fundamental changes in those characteristics after the age of ten!

While we can influence the quality and quantity of an officer cadet’s knowledge and skill, ie professional competence, and perhaps modify that cadet’s behaviour, we can do little more than scratch the surface of the qualities underlying them. This is a rather sobering thought for those of us involved in officer training/education; it also serves to emphasise the critical role of recruitment in officer education.

By all means let us develop strategies to identify and reward people who display those four desirable qualities – we could do with a lot more people like White. However, we should devote our training energy and resources to those things which are amenable to change, rather than wasting valuable training time on the futile pursuit of things such as character development.

J. R. Leonard
Squadron Leader

The Loss of HMAS Sydney

Dear Editor,

Major question marks still hang over the sinking of HMAS Sydney. For a tragedy that etched itself so deeply in our national psyche very little is known for sure about what happened off the Western Australian coast on November 19, 1941.

Despite detailed research carried out here and abroad the absence of a single survivor from Sydney to describe the action through Australian eyes means that the prospects of solving the mystery will always be limited.

This country owes the surviving family members of those who lost their lives on HMAS Sydney the consideration of a public search for the vessel and the erection of a memorial.

On another front I also fully support any moves to approaching the British Government to lift its 70-year moratorium on releasing its war file on the sinking of HMAS Sydney, so that we may know more of the facts and circumstances.

It was a very great loss to Australia, in a very dark period in our history, and it would be very important to know more about what happened.

Sandy Macdonald
NSW National Party Senator
Australia Remembers records many of the activities of Australian Service men and women who served overseas and at home during World War II. It also records the role played by the men and women of the Australian Defence Force in ensuring that the ceremonies for the pilgrimages of the “Australia Remembers” program were conducted in the most fitting and solemn way.

This is the 8th in a series of books produced by the Australian Defence Force Journal commemorating anniversaries of Australia’s participation in war.

Australia Remembers is available from the Office of the Australian Defence Force Journal at a cost of $49.95.
A Revolution in Military Affairs — The Stuff of Fables?

By Wing Commander K. Given, RAAF

"As he began to polish the lamp a genie slowly appeared and declared: 'I am the genie of the lamp. I will obey your every command'."

— Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp

Warfare and Wishes

War is the ultimate act of political discourse but the means by which war is pursued make democracies recoil from that ultimate act except in the most necessary of circumstances. These circumstances are not confined to direct threats against the national interests of democratic nations, they may include involvement in a "just war" in support of altruistic or moral, rather than national, interests.

Despite the continuation of numerous conflicts around the globe, generally speaking democratic societies display a strong wish to continue, when necessary, their political intercourse by means other than war because of the particular nature of war's effects, which include significant demands on the national purse and the unpredictable, often heavy, loss of life, so the democratic "wish list" on war includes having available an avenue for continuing political intercourse which is less expensive, and less violent, than conventional warfare.

The possibility that the means of conducting war will change, the lethality of war will decrease and the expense of war will reduce is surely too much to expect. But somewhere in my mind I recall a fable about an unnamed, benevolent genie being only too willing to grant wishes to the fortunate soul who released him from the restricting confines of an ageing lamp. A fable it may be, but the attraction of the story line continues to be strong and the tale of Aladdin and the Genie of the Lamp, revisited by generation after generation, attests to that attraction.

In some quarters the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) is being viewed as just such a benevolent genie, released by the wonders of modern technology, who is going to "obey every command" of the politicians, the military strategists and the warfighters by granting a number of very important wishes relating to the conduct of war as we move into the 21st century. Among these are wishes for a new means of conducting warfare (non-lethal, disengaged combat) and for a reduction in expenditure on the military machine whilst maintaining or even improving its capability. In fact, our generous RMA genie may even grant more than we can reasonably hope for, such as the reduced likelihood of conflict, greater control on the uncertainty in war, and more coherent and decisive operations.

However, to be realistic, fables are subject to various interpretations, and not all strategists see the RMA genie in the same way. Most acknowledge that the RMA genie (or something) is emerging, but is he benevolent and acting exclusively for our good, or is he playing deceptive tricks on us by promising much but delivering little? Additionally, there are doubts concerning the genie's integrity; will he be loyal to a particular master or subject to the commands of all who ask? So while he waits patiently for the enunciation of our "wish list", in the light of such doubts, the genie is restrained in the lamp because the value of the potential benefits he offers is not fully appreciated by the proponents of conservatism, caution and scepticism in the defence bureaucracy.

Like Aladdin, before the genie emerged so dramatically from the lamp, the ADF appears to be content with its tried and true ways; it has a secure existence in its present comfort zone, so although the RMA genie appears to promise much he is not being embraced with any degree of enthusiasm. Why is this so? Perhaps many in the ADF do not quite understand the genie's potential, perhaps people are afraid of being forced out of their comfort zones, and perhaps the ADF, like many other nations in the post-Cold War world, is confused as to the directions it needs to take in the future. Whatever the reason, as much as the genie strives to break out of the lamp and provide the ADF with endless possibilities for the future, many appear to be striving with equal determination to make sure that his magical influence remains "bottled up".

Evolution or Revolution — What's in a Name?

The RMA's basic problem is that it suffers from an identity crisis. In its genesis it was called the Military
Technological Revolution (and is still referred to as such by some) but more recently it has been known as the RMA. However, the description of the RMA as a "revolution" is a bone of contention and many want to debate the appropriateness of that description, arguing that perhaps it should be called an "evolution" instead. There is even the paradoxical suggestion that the RMA is still in its evolutionary infancy but over time will mature into a genuine revolution.

How confusing: we appear to have as much unanimity about the description of the RMA as we have from blind men describing different parts of an elephant! However, if we defer to the RMA genie and ask him how we should properly describe or refer to him, I am confident the answer would be, "I don't really care how you describe me or what you call me, just make use of what I have to offer because I am here to help you". What a refreshing attitude.

One should remember that other genies have offered their services to military organisations in the past and have either been rebuffed totally, or have not always had their value recognised, often at significant cost. "Major General John K. Herr of the US Army, for example, said in 1938, 'We must not be mislead to our own detriment to assume that the untried machine (especially the tank) can displace the proved and tried horse.' This statement was uttered just as the mechanised armies of Germany were preparing to roll across much of Europe. Not to be outdone, Rear Admiral Clark Woodward of the US Navy assured us in 1939, just two years before Pearl Harbor, 'As far as sinking a ship with a bomb is concerned, it just can't be done.'" Not wishing to appear parochial, I am sure that Army and Navy readers can provide their own examples of Air Force's lack of understanding of the ability of the genie: will the bomber really always get through?

In the above examples one could argue whether the development of the tank exemplified an evolution or a revolution in land warfare, and whether the tactic of bombing ships precipitated an evolution or a revolution in maritime tactics. However, essentially it does not matter what we call the changes that occurred or how we choose to describe them; what is important is what the tanks and the bombs were able to achieve. We could debate this "revolution/evolution" point for some time without coming to an agreed conclusion, but the significance of the impact of tanks in the battlefield and bombs in the marine environment, seen from an historical perspective, forces us to conclude that they caused something different and important to happen. For reasons such as this Mazarr refers to the "revolution/evolution" debate surrounding the RMA as a "largely semantic question" and I would agree.

There is also an element of relativity; for those nations struggling out of the third world into the 21st century the developments offered by the RMA may appear to be revolutionary, whereas to those nations with already sophisticated military forces it may well appear to be another incremental improvement, an evolution. Essentially, how we describe the RMA depends to some degree on our perspective as much as it does on logical argument (it depends on which part of the elephant we are in contact with).

The description of the RMA is further complicated by the fact that there are those who suggest that we are only at the start of the revolution (the RMA is yet to reveal its full potential) which will evolve into reality over the next 50 years; again the paradox of an evolving revolution, if you will. There are others who believe that the revolution, or perhaps Stage Two of the revolution, is still in the future, when war will move into the realms of cyberspace (the RMA is not yet with us).

How can it be that many people are observing the same phenomenon and yet appear to see and describe quite different things? It is like witnesses to a crime giving disparate descriptions of the same incident to the bewildered police. How can the civilian community and the warfighters trust the strategists when there is so much confusion and lack of agreement?

**The Potential of the RMA**

Well, in fact, the lack of agreement is more imagined than real. Although, as we have seen, there is little agreement over the description of the RMA or what to call it (there is some difficulty in describing what the RMA actually is), we can more easily understand it simply by appreciating what it can do, or what it promises to.

Perhaps, therefore, to clarify our thinking we need to distinguish between what the RMA can do (will do) for the "nature of war" and what it can do (will do) for the "nature of the way we conduct war". The first is problematic. The nature of immediate future wars will probably not be too unlike the nature of recent conflict, therefore we need to exercise extreme caution lest we relinquish "the kind of military culture that would be needed to pursue warfare at the gut level". It is concerning the nature of the way we
conduct war that the impact of the RMA is most obvious. On this point there is a degree of unanimity and what follows illustrates some of the promises the RMA is holding out to us.

The RMA will allow for the concentration and integration of firepower in a manner not previously possible. Fire will be brought to bear on enemy forces simultaneously from every direction and every environment (land, sea, air and even space) with the most appropriate source being chosen from a range of possible options by the theatre commander. An enemy target, for example, may be engaged by a cruise missile launched from a land, sea or air based platform, or from all three if overwhelming force is required.

This concentration and integration of firepower is possible because of the alteration of the relationship of accuracy and distance in the application of military force. Stand-off and long-range weapons are no longer synonymous with inaccurate weapons, with Circular Error Probability (CEP) for long-range missiles and artillery often being measured in metres rather than kilometres. In fact, the improved accuracy and range of current and future weapons will mean that the principle of war calling for the concentration of force will most probably be replaced by the principle of the concentration of fire, and could well lead to a reassessment of the importance of manoeuvre.

The success of the integration of firepower will depend to a large extent on the application of integrated Command, Control and Communications (C3). The weapons and weapon systems available in the field can have their effects multiplied when their activities are coordinated through effective C3. However, successful C3 ultimately depends on intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) not only to decrease the “fog of war” but especially to provide the targeting information which is essential to the commander. Again RMA is promising both enhanced ISR and C3 capabilities.

This, in fact, leads on to what some perceive to be the most important aspect of the RMA, namely its increased emphasis on information and information warfare, and the need for information dominance in the battlespace of the future. In the past, information was regarded as a tool, essential to the pursuit of successful operations. In the future, information warfare may become a strategy in its own right with information already being referred to as the fifth dimension of warfare (land, sea, air and space being the other four).

Unfortunately, information warfare is not well defined. Presently it remains a multi-dimensional concept with the phrase being variously used to refer to the data that is available and to the systems used to process that data. The phrase is also used with reference to one’s ability to pursue warfare against an enemy’s information and information systems and to defend one’s own information and information systems from possible enemy attack. Another dimension involves the information warfare strategy or tactics to be used before the outbreak of hostilities and those to be used subsequent to the start of conflict.

Information warfare, in its broadest interpretation, combines reliable ISR with effective C3 and will lead to an increase in the tempo of warfare. No longer will we have to take the time to physically concentrate our forces as fire will be able to be concentrated in an instant. No longer will the fall of darkness lead to a cessation of activity as night vision equipment will enable us to pursue our efforts around the clock. Future war will generally be disengaged and non-linear, where the ability to maintain the advantage regarding the tempo of operations will have a major impact on the outcome of the conflict.

There is also an expectation that one effect of combining the various elements of the RMA will be to reduce casualties and collateral damage in war: information dominance, reliable intelligence, accurate weapons systems and effective C3 will enable military forces to “wage war bloodlessly and delicately”. The possibility exists therefore, that political intercourse will be able to be pursued by what could become essentially a non-lethality activity. However, we must avoid the suggestion that somehow or other the RMA will make war, even war with reduced casualties and conducted at lower cost, a more acceptable means of pursuing political intercourse. The nature of the way we conduct war may well be significantly affected by the RMA, but the nature of war itself is likely to remain unchanged.

Lest these examples suggest that the RMA is simply about the application of advanced technology to the military environment, let us beware; it is much more than that. To be successful the RMA needs to impinge on the organisation, its doctrine and its people as well as on its technology, and it needs to do this in a synergistic way.

It is not the technology itself, but the way in which one thinks about and applies the technology, that is the essence of the RMA. The way in which the ADF thinks about and applies the technology available to it will be seen in the development of appropriate organisational structures and doctrinal guidance, and it is these which will eventually unleash the magic of the RMA. “Technologies may drive the RMA, but people and organisations will carry it out. In addition to smart weapons, therefore, the RMA calls for smart organisations and smart personnel”.
Promises, Promises

An intangible genie who cannot be named and cannot be defined, offering to obey everyone’s every command, is liable to generate confusion and be treated with suspicion, and that is exactly what is happening with the RMA. Despite the benefits inherent in the promises outlined above, there is a great deal of confusion about aspects of the RMA; the spotlight tends to focus on technology, and what it can achieve, rather than highlighting the equally important organisational, doctrinal and personal considerations.

Undoubtedly technology can be an edge but “technology is not a panacea and... at best, superior military technology is a necessary but never a sufficient condition to win wars. Clearly the answer must lie elsewhere.” Perhaps it lies with the RMA, which is surely offering us something more than technological superiority.

What does one make of these promises: can the RMA deliver an edge to the ADF? This is really the wrong question to ask. What we should be asking is what the ADF is going to do to get the most out of the potential the RMA has to offer before someone else does. To paraphrase a well known quotation, this is not the revolution the ADF is necessarily going to have, it is the revolution the ADF has to want; an RMA will not just happen without hard thinking and hard work.

Harnessing the Magic

The essence of the RMA is in intangibles. It is about the synergy which results from organisational change, doctrinal development, technological advances and the proper selection and training of our military personnel. It is about limiting the uncertainty in predicting just what the nature of future conflict is likely to be and, therefore, just what the ADF will need to be able to do and the capabilities it needs to do it. It is about the need to think laterally in the long term so the ADF can be pro-active rather than simply reactive to the tidal wave of advances in technology, thinking, and conflict that will arrive as inevitably as will the 21st century. To summarise the views of the U.S. Army Chief of Staff, General Gordon R. Sullivan, “It is not just about changing what we think, it is more about changing how we think”.

The military is, however, much more used to dealing with tangibles than intangibles, simply because the demands of conflict require a pragmatic approach to real problems. However, even the pragmatist appreciates that the future will not be like the past, and that the nature of the way future conflict is conducted will differ in many respects to recent conflict. This is not to say that all future conflict will be futuristic or “third wave”. Especially in the regional context, or when acting in a peacemaking or peacekeeping capacity, in the foreseeable future the ADF is likely to operate at the “industrial” or even the “agrarian” levels of conflict. None the less, the ADF simply cannot ignore the RMA, it demands some reaction.

Conclusion

The genie in the fable of Aladdin and his Wonderful Lamp was never given a name and was described in little detail because such factors were not relevant to the story. The important element in the story was what the genie was able to do for Aladdin: perhaps this is the lesson the ADF needs to extract from it. Defending Australia 1994 emphasised capabilities (what the ADF needs to be able to do); the RMA is all about the enhancement of capabilities. Therefore, the ADF should investigate what it is that the RMA is able to do, or what it is that it wants the RMA to do for the ADF. There is little to be gained in agonising over its name and how best it can be described.

Undoubtedly discussion on the pedantics of evolution versus revolution will continue, as will the search to determine the defining characteristics of the RMA and the debate over whether the RMA is just another tool or a new strategy. The genie is already out of the bottle and his influence appears to be developing much faster than such debates can hope to move. What the ADF needs to do, despite the natural reticence to believe in magic, is to rationally prioritise its “wish list” to ensure that the ADF retains a military advantage, because it may well only get a limited number of wishes before others seek to take advantage of the RMA genie.

The genie brought great prosperity to Aladdin, but only after Aladdin made his wishes known and had the confidence to expect that his wishes would be met. For the ADF this means that it needs to be pro-active in considering the promise held out by the RMA; it needs to take control of the situation rather than letting the development of the RMA, and its associated technologies, take control of the ADF. Relevant doctrine and appropriate organisational
structures and dedicated people, more than technology alone, should dictate the direction in which the ADF of the future will develop. Perhaps this means there is no real magic after all, just the hard work involved in polishing up the old lamp and maintaining its shine, but I still find the attraction of the fable, and the RMA, hard to ignore.

NOTES
1. The ideas presented in this article have been distilled from numerous journal articles, papers, books and personal discussions. In particular, the Strategic Studies Unit at the U.S. Army War College has produced an excellent series of papers which discuss various aspects of the RMA. I am particularly grateful to GPCAPT John Harvey and SQNLDR Jim Walker at the APSC, and to LTCOL Bill Houston and Dr David Horner at the SDSC for their constructive comments on an earlier draft of this article.

Wing Commander Ken Given joined the RAAF in June 1976 and has enjoyed a range of training and policy development postings. He is currently the RAAF’s Visiting Fellow at the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre at the Australian National University where he is reviewing the impact of the Revolution in Military Affairs on mid-level powers in general and the ADF in particular. Prior to this he served as the Defence Adviser to the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade in Parliament House.

He holds a Master of Arts from Trinity College (Dublin), a Master of Educational Studies from the University of Newcastle and a Master of Defence Studies from the University of New South Wales at the Defence Academy. He is completing his doctoral thesis, The Strategic Impact of Experimental Learning on Military Leadership Training, at Charles Sturt University.
The Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA)

There is currently a widespread debate in the defence community on the subject of a revolution in military affairs (RMA). The notion grew from Soviet writings in the 1970s and 1980s. An RMA is defined as a ‘major change in the nature of warfare brought about by the innovative application of technology which, combined with dramatic changes in military doctrine and operational concepts, fundamentally alters the character and conducts of operations’.

While in the ‘information age’ it is argued that micro-processors and precision guided weapons is fostering a revolution, RMAs and rapid advances in technology are not always related. The essence of a revolution is not in the invention of new technology, but in the discovery of ways to organise, operate and employ it.

The Australian Defence Studies Centre (ADSC) in cooperation with HQADF Development Division is conducting a conference on the RMA in Canberra over the period 27-28 February 1996. This conference is the first major one of its kind in the region and has attracted international speakers such as Andrew Marshall, Carl Builder, Drs Steven Metz and Stan Weekes and Mr Ted Warner. The central objective of the conference will be to introduce the concept of an RMA in a regional context, and the latter sessions will attempt to define a suitable way ahead for the ADF to embrace the RMA and integrate it into planning and force structures.

The conference is being held at the Australian War Memorial and is being coordinated by Lieutenant Colonel Keith Thomas, ADSC Tel (06) 268 6251. Because of limited seating, early registration with the ADSC (Tel 268 8849, Fax 268 8440) is recommended.
Time x Technology x Tactics = RMA. Why We Need a Revolution in Military Affairs and How to Begin it!

By Brigadier Peter J. Dunn, AM

Have We Missed The Change?

The Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) has become the subject of considerable discussion since the end of the Cold War. There is however, a school of thought that would suggest that the RMA is a figment of the imagination in some fertile minds. Certainly, many new weapon systems have been introduced in recent years and the precision and lethality of these systems have reached new heights. In short, these systems do the job better than their predecessors, but have they collectively generated a “revolution” or are they just more efficient tools of trade? If they have generated a revolution then what is the nature of the new battlefield we will be facing and what should be done to our approach to operations in the future?

In the last 30 years the wars in Vietnam, Afghanistan and Kuwait serve as examples of what can, and cannot, be achieved by sophisticated armed forces. The North Vietnamese Army (NVA), the Viet Cong (VC) and the Mujahideen defeated forces that were superior to them in almost every military way but especially in technology. In the Gulf War, the massive weight of the technological sophistication of the Coalition forces was applied with awesome effect to liberate Kuwait. Much of the enthusiasm for the notion of the presence of a RMA seems to have developed in the euphoric aftermath of the Gulf War. The vagaries of nature were potential sources of degradation of the effectiveness of some of the systems introduced into the theatre, however, in the short period of the conflict, this did not seriously affect operations.

To make the task of the Coalition forces easier, the Iraqi forces chose to seize and hold ground. I say easier because the Iraqi choice of this strategic aim placed their forces firmly on the many display screens in command centres throughout the theatre and kept them there. It was just a matter of time before they were targeted and engaged. When Iraqi ground forces did move, they moved in numbers and were plotted as they went. The overt seizure of ground and the subsequent holding of that territory by the classical method of “digging-in” held within it the seeds of the defeat of the Iraqi ground forces.

In the Vietnam War, the North sought to dominate territory and resorted to military means to do so. The Generals in Hanoi did not, however, seek to seize and hold ground in the South except for some occasions where they did so for very short periods of time only. The NVA and the VC attacked opposing military units in the South and infrequently allowed themselves to be targeted in large numbers by sophisticated weapon systems. General Giap, by avoiding the tactic of holding ground, was successful against all odds and defeated the world’s most powerful nation and many of its allies. The conclusion of the Vietnam War saw the North taking control of the South without ever resorting to the need to seize and hold ground until its main adversary had withdrawn.

Into this quite small area were jammed some 545,000 Iraqi troops and these were confronted, eventually, by some 440,000 troops of the Coalition. The terrain was such that the Iraqi forces were readily detected by surveillance and reconnaissance assets. Once detected, the Iraqi forces were easily targeted and engaged by the Coalition’s air forces and subsequently by ground forces. Throughout the operation, Coalition naval forces applied strong pressure on Iraq through application of the UN mandated embargo and threatening presence.

These circumstances were almost ideal for the application of high technology detection and weapon systems. The vagaries of nature were potential sources of degradation of the effectiveness of some of the systems introduced into the theatre, however, in the short period of the conflict, this did not seriously affect operations.

The Kuwaiti theatre was only about 400km x 400km. Into this quite small area were jammed some 545,000 Iraqi troops and these were confronted, eventually, by some 440,000 troops of the Coalition. The terrain was such that the Iraqi forces were readily detected by surveillance and reconnaissance assets. Once detected, the Iraqi forces were easily targeted and engaged by the Coalition’s air forces and subsequently by ground forces. Throughout the operation, Coalition naval forces applied strong pressure on Iraq through application of the UN mandated embargo and threatening presence.

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In Afghanistan, yet a different set of circumstances prevailed. The then USSR, in attempting to prop up a puppet regime, applied high levels of sophisticated weaponry against the Mujahideen. They tried to extend the areas of government control throughout the country and were harassed and pin-pricked to the extent that morale suffered markedly. When this situation was exacerbated by some very successful ambushes conducted by the Mujahideen the scene for defeat was set. Eventually, the forces of the USSR were withdrawn having suffered substantial casualties and still failing to seize and hold sufficient territory to claim even partial restoration of government control in Afghanistan.

The common denominator in each of the three conflicts I have briefly mentioned is that those military forces that attempted to seize and hold ground were defeated. Additionally, the level of technological sophistication that was in place in the forces involved did not in itself assure success or defeat. The key would appear to be the tactics that were applied. Tactics that have previously proved so successful in defensive operations consistently failed. The security associated with holding ground has been eroded to the point where ground has itself become a military liability. A major change has occurred and it would appear that we have not noticed it. A RMA is required as the basic defensive tactic of seizing and holding ground may now be a recipe for defeat.

The ability of ground (and maritime forces?) to seize, hold and control areas of territory (and sea?) has been seriously reduced by modern weapon systems. Should forces seize and hold ground and remain fixed, modern technology is such that those static forces will almost inevitably be annihilated by precision weapons. Conversely, combat forces that do not oblige by seizing and holding ground can effectively reduce the effect of high technology weapon systems to the point where they can defeat a sophisticated adversary. The “revolution” that is required is to find an alternative tactical method of conducting defence instead of “seizing and holding ground”. This applies not only to the seizure and holding of large tracts of territory but equally to occupying “vital ground” or any other piece of terrain.

“Oscillating” Revolutions in Military Affairs

Throughout history writers can point to the introduction of new technologies that effectively generated a RMA. The invention of the chariot in the 18th century BC and the accompanying development of the composite bow, the invention of gunpowder, the development of firearms and simple artillery pieces, the development of rifled weapons and machine guns, the invention of aircraft and tanks and later missiles and nuclear weapons all represent technologies that changed the face of warfare. In short, they allowed the generation of a RMA.

The RMA that was produced with these new technologies was not simply generated by the new weapons. Rather, the revolution occurred when new tactics were developed to utilise the opportunities presented by them. It took some 500 years to develop the tactics that lead to the chariot becoming a dominant force. In its early days the chariot was used to “transport aristocrats to the scene of battle where they would dismount and fight on foot”. Tactical developments later saw the chariot being used “to carry archers in mobile assaults on the flanks and rear of enemy formations”. Used in this fashion the tactics of the charioteers dominated for centuries. The Assyrians added cavalry to their chariots to employ innovative tactics that also lead to great success in battle. The importance of infantry declined.

The Romans, however, favoured heavy infantry and developed tactics and weaponry that allowed them to dominate the battlefield for 500 years. Although they relied on heavy units the “Roman infantry formations were the most tactically flexible and manoeuvrable of all the infantry formations produced by armies of the ancient world”. Cavalry units became secondary in importance when faced with these tactics and it was not until the Barbarian cavalry defeated the Romans that cavalry tactics regained a superiority that they held for centuries.

The introduction of gunpowder and the subsequent development of portable firearms saw the pendulum swing once again. The development of infantry tactics that allowed the full power of the musket to be brought to bear against cavalry halted army’s domination of the battlefield. When mobile artillery was introduced the development of manoeuvre warfare tactics began.

The pendulum has continued to swing with the introduction of Napoleonic offensive tactics and organisations, defensive tactics employing the machine-gun and barbed wire, offensive tactics using combinations of tanks and aircraft, carrier aviation and amphibious assault. Currently, both technology and tactical application favours offensive operations as exampled by the campaigns cited earlier.

The rate of change of the frequency of the pendulum swing is in direct proportion to the rate of technological change. In turn, technology forces tactical change to first, maximise its impact and second, to retain the technological advantage. If new technology is not accompanied by new tactics then little advantage will
be accrued (as was the case with the chariot that took some 500 years to have its military potential realised). Changes in tactics that capitalise on technological change have historically followed behind the development of the technology allowing the change. In short, a tactical lag is the result and force vulnerability is increased if an opposition force has the capacity to also exploit the new technology.

The rate of technological change is now exponential. As a consequence, the rate of change of the frequency of oscillation of the defence/offence tactics pendulum can therefore be expected to be increasing at a similar rate. In an exponential environment successful combat forces will require the ability to switch from one tactical phase to the other almost instantaneously if tactical lag is to be avoided. The rate of change will soon be such that no respite will be possible. Future tactical thinking and organisations that encompasses both offensive and defensive phases of warfare simultaneously will be required.
Is it Easier to Deny Success than Achieve it?

The Australian Army has contained within its roles the requirement to "seize and hold ground". Given that the Army is a predominantly infantry army it can be argued that unless changes are made either to the balance of force elements or to the tactics that are employed, or both, defeat in combat is a real prospect in the future. Australian Army tactics still place considerable weight on the use of area defence where static positions are occupied for extended periods of time. Terms such as "all round defence, defence in depth, mutual support, defensive fire, vital ground and key terrain" are all a part of the current Army lexicon.

The Principles of War have stood the test of time. It is interesting to note, however, that they emphasise offensive operations rather than defensive. It is in the application of these principles that we do not acknowledge the RMA. In the Australian Army's capstone manual The Fundamentals of Land Warfare a key flaw in conceptual thinking is implicit in the statement: "As it is easier to deny success than achieve it, defence is regarded as the stronger form of war." This assertion will only remain true if defensive operations do not rely on seizing and holding ground.

Defence in its traditional forms is typically a linear process. As Lind has observed commanders strive to generate a linear battlefield with which they are familiar. The reduction in the utility of traditional area defence as a phase of war requires new tactics that embrace small, mobile forces that exhibit agility and lethality.

The use of conventional coordinating techniques such as boundaries serve to reinforce a ground commander's perception of the linear nature of the battlefield. Given that these boundaries are placed by the commander himself, they immediately serve to constrain operations rather than facilitate them. The enemy rarely obliges by operating in the same parcelled sections of real estate. If an enemy can identify our boundaries he may even choose to exploit them as "seams of opportunity".

Techniques need to be developed to overcome these self-imposed limitations. If defence can be lifted from a static concept relating to mass and the self limiting features of existing coordinating measures removed, the need for a RMA that developed quietly in the 1960s and 1970s can be embraced and turned into an opportunity to gain significant tactical advantage.

Minimum Mass Tactics

Builder has observed that: "Historically ... military technical developments have produced revolutions in military affairs only when they were combined and integrated with changes in military concepts and doctrine." To date the Australian Army has not responded to technological change with changes in
the way it does its business. Current doctrine is focused on the lessons of past wars and does not recognise the need for a RMA. A new approach is required that projects doctrinal and tactical thinking forward to encompass the impact of new technologies and the rate of technological change.

If technology has made "seizing and holding ground" a risky business what alternatives are open to us to conduct successful defensive operations? It would appear that some method of reducing target signature and maintaining constant movement in a defending force is required. Target signature could be reduced by decreasing the physical size of units and continuing the trend towards dispersion. However, there is more to this than simply cutting numbers of personnel and dispersing. The combat capability of the elements of the Army needs to remain high if they are to survive combat and there are physical limits to the amount of dispersion that can be achieved while conducting effective defensive operations.

The increasing frequency of change on the battlefield means that deployed combat elements must be able to transition from mobile defensive operations to offensive operations almost instantly. Traditional methods of altering force architecture such as re-grouping are simply too slow. Rapid transition can only be achieved if capabilities applicable to both offensive and defensive operations are held in each deployed combat element.

The current linear approach to the battlefield reflects the compartmentalisation that is evident in the manner in which combat resources are allocated and employed. Fire support and the use of aviation and armoured assets are good examples of this. Usually considered "scarce resources" these are controlled centrally and allocated as necessary to stationary ground forces. Flexibility is claimed to be achieved by the speed with which these key combat elements can be switched from one area of the battlefield to other areas where they may be required. Given the impact of the current tactical lag on forces that attempt to "seize and hold ground", this support may no longer be effective and the elements providing fire support should expect to be targeted accurately as well.

The Army needs to move towards more capable, independent units. The evolution of such a unit would require a totally different approach to the control of resources from that which exists now. Smaller numbers of independent, high capability units would be created. These units would be extremely mobile, capable of extending their influence over large areas of terrain and able to rapidly switch from defensive to offensive operations. Overall they would be much more difficult to target as their signature would be smaller and not as clear. By the use of mobility, they would be harder to engage.

Figure 4: Historical Dispersion Patterns (Source: Dupuy)
The soldiers that comprise the proposed units would themselves represent a comprehensive combat system. A need would exist for individual soldiers to be able to integrate themselves into the process of battlespace management and to have much higher lethality and survivability than is presently possible. 24 hour operations will be the norm.

Our doctrine for holding ground needs to shift from static paradigms to embrace fluidity as the means to succeed in preventing enemy control of territory that we wish to dominate. To obtain this fluidity, concepts need to be developed which allow units to operate more independently and employ movement and minimum mass as basic methods of avoiding destruction by precision weapons. Such independent movement should not be constrained to linear thinking and therefore a fresh approach to coordinating measures should be developed.

New, small units, which I will label Combat Task Teams (CTT) for ease of description, should be allowed to move constantly in accordance with their commander’s mission. Directive Control would be essential for such an approach. Rather than constraining CTT to operate within defined boundaries, they could be coordinated by managing the interaction of their areas of influence. This technique would require a very high degree of situational awareness in, and between, CTT. Protocols could be developed to allow rapid decision making by CTT commanders in the event that their areas of influence intruded on one another. Such interactions could be cued by employing relational data bases with embedded digitised terrain data and coordinating protocols.

Deconfliction between weapon platforms and small tactical groups could also be achieved by Identification Friend or Foe (IFF) devices that allow the automatic resolution of whether a detected platform or patrol is friendly or not. Clearly, the communication links between CTT would need to be sufficiently wide to handle the constant exchange of data to allow a sufficiently high level of situational awareness to be maintained across a given area of operations.

A fully integrated C3I system would be required if the necessary situational awareness was to be achieved. Based on digitised data and smart maps (vector data) battlefield information and intelligence would be progressively directed downwards from sensor platforms to strategic and operational headquarters then to operational and tactical headquarters and finally direct to CTT that were capable of prosecuting the mission. An “all informed” secure wideband tactical broadcast system operating down to CTT level would be essential.

The provision of logistic support to CTT would require a fresh approach also. The existing system of providing combat service support (CSS) through various lines of support to CTT would require a fresh approach also. The existing system of providing combat service support (CSS) through various lines of support mirroring the existing chain of command would be inadequate and too inflexible to provide the required support. Additionally, CSS units would be
targets for the new capabilities likely to be placed against our forces.

CSS could be provided by mobile supply "outlets" that could be accessed by any number of CTT. Given that CTT would all look essentially the same a number of CSS outlets could be inserted into a given Area of Operations (AO) to provide support to the CTT operating there. A CTT may resupply from a different CSS outlet every time. There would be no habitual relationships. CTT may move to a CSS outlet for resupply or the reverse may occur.

A replacement, recovery and repair system could operate for specialist equipment such as helicopters, electro-optical equipment and other specialist items. The actual repair of such items obviously needs to be carried out in a static environment and therefore it would need to be located well outside the AO. However, given the independent nature of the CTT, rapid replacement of mission essential equipment would be essential.

A number of factors that significantly affect our capability of conducting defensive operations are becoming coincident. The combined effect of timing in relation to where our doctrine and tactics stand today compared to the technologies that can be applied against our forces has resulted in a serious degradation in the ability of defending forces to be able to succeed. A tactical lag has occurred. A reflection on military history brings the current situation into stark reality.

The rate of change of the frequency of the swing from offensive to defensive tactics as the superior form of combat has increased to the point where the ability to change from one form of warfare to the other must be near instantaneous. New organisations that emphasise independent operations in a non-linear battlefield are required. New methods of coordinating forces are necessary.

Defending forces that persist with the notion that they must "seize and hold ground" will be both surprised and disappointed as they will lose the next battle, whether it be large or small. Old tactical solutions have become liabilities in the defensive phase of war. New tactical solutions are required if defeat is to be avoided and these solutions should optimise the opportunities that have now been presented by modern technologies.

The pillars on which Minimum Mass Tactics are built comprise six elements:

- a pervasive, automated, joint command support system operating from the strategic level to the CTT level;
- a secure, wideband, all informed, joint communications network linking all levels from strategic headquarters to CTT;
- digitised data bases and vector map data;
- an independent CSS system;
- highly lethal and mobile CTT, and
- access to joint sensor data at all levels.

Figure 6: Coordination of CTT Operations
Each pillar provides an element of a suggested new approach to tactical operations which, when mastered, could constitute the next RMA.

The challenge is not whether we are capable of employing Minimum Mass Tactics but whether we can recognise the need to do so. The issue is not if there has been a RMA, but rather, the urgent need for a RMA. Without a RMA, the existing tactical lag will negate the technological edge we possess and our ability to conduct defensive operations will be prejudiced. RMA, however, do not “happen” by themselves. Rather they are the product of three factors: time, technology and tactics. The first two of these are not controlled by the military, tactics are, and change is required now if the necessary RMA is to be achieved.

NOTES
1. This article is the result of a series of impromptu, stimulating debates and discussions that I have had with the many talented officers that currently are posted to the Director General Force Development (Land) Branch in Development Division, Headquarters Australian Defence Force and the Defence Science and Technology Organisation (DSTO). It represents a view of where land forces should be heading in these times of rapid change and why.
2. Roland, Alex, The Technological Fix: Weapons and the Cost of War, Strategic Studies Institute, United States Army War College, April 1995, p4.
3. Ibid. p5.
6. Defence includes mobile defence, area defence, delaying defence and possibly withdrawal.
10. Vector data allows the interrogation of data displayed on the map and the extraction of further information such as the number of bridges between two points on a road and their weight classification.

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Deterrence – An Essential Element of Preventing Terrorism

By Lieutenant Colonel R. M. Boyd and Colonel J. J. A. Wallace, Australian Army

Introduction

The Standing Advisory Committee – Protection Against Violence (SAC-PAV) of 1993 noted that a successful counter-terrorism strategy should give equal weight to three components: prevention, response and the ability to recover should an incident occur. While noting that capabilities and procedures for the second two elements were in place, the review was critical that insufficient focus had been given to the first – prevention.

The SAC-PAV Review described “prevention” as “… both the machinery to prevent entry to Australia of suspected terrorists and activities within Australia aimed at reducing the incidence of politically motivated violence”. While the emphasis in this statement is to reducing, if possible to zero, the incidence of terrorism in Australia, equally important is to achieve a reduction in the scale and intensity of violence should an incident occur.

In the interests of a complete strategy for countering terrorism in Australia, therefore, the ADF welcomes the emphasis that ‘prevention’ is now being given. It should be noted, however, that in military terms prevention ‘per se’ is a defensive posture. To be fully effective, any emphasis on prevention dictates that it be complete, encompassing the full range of both practical and theoretical countermeasures available.

Perhaps most importantly, long-term prevention of terrorism in this country, relies on a continuation of policies which encourage a free and fair system of government. This will allow the potential terrorist to air his grievances in a non-violent manner, while other policies focus on practical measures. These can be aimed at preventing entry of terrorists; enabling early warning of their intent; and at denying them the means to strike. Regrettably, however, even all of the above are unlikely to be enough. Regardless of how efficiently these and other practical prevention measures are applied, history has shown that within a relatively narrow range of standard methods of operation, terrorists are highly adaptable to changing circumstances. To complement these practical measures, therefore, a fully effective approach to prevention should also be directed against the terrorists’ intentions, including the propensity to strike and the methods of operation they intend to employ. This is deterrence – the psychological element of prevention.

The Nature of Terrorism

Politically Motivated Violence (PMV) encompasses the continuum of activity, from violent protest at one end of the scale, to acts of “terror” at the other. Through such basic measures as the presence of a police officer at a protest rally, violent activity at the low end of the scale can be and is deterred on a daily basis. Such simple deterrence works easily because it reinforces a self-imposed upper limit on the level of violence likely to be deliberately used by political protesters. This is founded in an underlying respect the average protester holds for our democratic system of government, even if occasionally this protest activity steps outside the bounds of the law.

Terrorism Defined

Much more difficult is the question of extreme politically motivated violence – terrorism. There is no single widely agreed definition of terrorism, however for the purposes of this article, the definition used by SAC-PAV will suffice. That is:

“… acts or threats of violence of national concern, calculated to evoke extreme fear for the purpose of achieving a political objective in Australia or in a foreign country.”

Terrorists will not have the same degree of self-imposed restraint as the protester, though many will still be conscious of not adversely affecting public sympathy for their cause. By the extremes of violence and the innocent nature of the victims, terrorists have shown they hold no respect for democratic principles or the rule of law. This raises the question of whether deterrence theory can be applied to counter terrorism at all – a question this article intends to address.
Internationalisation of Terrorism

A feature of terrorism which accounts for its proliferation in modern times is its internationalisation. This can be explained by two factors:

• Firstly, a proliferation of targets. A nation’s interests now extend well beyond its own borders. These may be, for example, diplomatic representatives, business enterprises, or simply tourists; and

• Secondly, technological advances, particularly in the telecommunications, media and air travel industries. These enable terrorists to strike a particular country’s interests anywhere in the world, and achieve almost the same effect as if it occurred within the country being directly attacked.

The key deduction to be drawn from this is that no country can expect to be immune from terrorism, even if there are no terrorists or sponsors with a particular grievance against it.

Terrorist Groups

Until the 1960s, the vast majority of terrorist groups were motivated by single issues. Generally they operated within the societies they wished to attack and achieved little if any outside moral or material support. Single issue independent terrorist groups still exist, frequently as radical fringe groups, disillusioned with pursuing their cause through peaceful democratic means.

In the past 30 years, an increasing trend has been the growth of terrorist groups acting on behalf of or with the assistance of state sponsors. Unable to achieve national objective through peaceful means, or even through recourse to conventional warfare, some states have turned to the sponsorship of terrorism as an alternative course. The US compiled list of state sponsors of terrorism in 1994 includes Iran, Syria, Libya, Sudan, Cuba and North Korea.

Characteristics of Terrorist Groups

Each terrorist group will have different objectives and each individual terrorist will have a different psychological make-up. Nonetheless, acts of terrorism share some common characteristics:

• Terrorism is the use of criminal violence to force a government to change its course of action.

• Terrorism works by putting pressure on governments through direct action or the threat of it, and by instilling fear in the population.

• In general, terrorists prefer to target people rather than installations, though frequently, security measures will force them to attack the latter.

• Terrorist attacks are often carefully choreographed to attract maximum media attention.

• The victims themselves may mean nothing to the terrorists – terrorism is aimed at the people watching, not the targets.

Terrorist Measures of Success

From these characteristics can be derived those measures of success likely to be used by terrorists themselves. Among others, these may include the following:

• The government has been forced to accede to their demands.

• The population has been instilled with a sense of fear and helplessness, particularly if this has translated into a loss of confidence in the authorities.

• The government has over reacted to the level of threat posed, thereby unnecessarily inconveniencing the general public and lending the terrorist a measure of recognition.

• The terrorist organisation has derived widespread media coverage of their actions and of the cause which motivates them, particularly if it shows the latter in a favourable light.

Methods

It has been observed that six basic methods of operation account for 95 per cent of all terrorist incidents. These are:

• bombing;

• armed assault;

• assassination;

• kidnapping;

• hijacking; and

• siege/hostage.

Looked at another way, terrorists blow up things, kill people, take hostages. Together these six basic methods provide ample scope for the terrorists to achieve their aim and also help to explain why terrorists have traditionally displayed very little tactical innovation. As Hoffman noted in 1992, "...while terrorists were undeniably more active and considerably more lethal [in the 1980s]; the targets they chose, the weapons they used, and the tactics they employed remained remarkably consistent."

The frequency of these types of attack over the last three decades is shown in Figure 1.

Of the six methods described, the first three: bombing; armed attack and assassination are probably more easily mounted by the terrorist. There is much less chance of direct confrontation with the authorities and this probably accounts for the relative popularity of these methods with terrorists.
DETERRENCE – AN ESSENTIAL ELEMENT OF PREVENTING TERRORISM

Fortunately in some ways, these tactics are also less manipulative than the others. Bombing and assassinations, unless part of a deliberate protracted campaign, are over so quickly that they generally prevent widespread media coverage from reaching its full potential and importantly do not require intimate or continuous government management. To the contrary, the other three methods; kidnap, hijack and siege/hostage, achieve maximum media coverage and are strongly manipulative, by effectively placing great pressure on a government to comply with a group’s demands.

It can be seen from Figure 1 that despite their attractiveness to the terrorist, the frequency of aircraft hijacking and siege/hostage incidents has declined significantly since the 1960s. An explanation of this will be offered later in this article.

The Terrorist’s “Home Base”

A conventional and all too common approach to conflicts of all kinds, is to regard an adversary’s “home base”, solely as a physical target and preferably one which should be destroyed. This rather narrow perspective epitomises the “attritionist” approach to conflict; nowadays a largely discredited approach even in war. If applied to combating terrorism, this theory soon leaves the authority despondent at the lack of terrorist “home bases” to target. The inevitable result is the abandonment of pro-active strategies and recourse to purely responsive measures. Instead the terrorist “home base” should be viewed much more laterally; as an amalgam of “bases” which are mostly non-physical in nature. These may include, for example, his ideological base; financial base; leadership and group dynamics base; recruiting base; motivational base; popular support base; etc.
Each base is vulnerable in its own way. Each may be attacked, in some cases by physical military means, but more frequently through counter-ideological, economic, political, military-politico, diplomatic and/or psychological means – in fact through all the means of national power at the disposal of the afflicted government. This point is demonstrated by the vulnerability some terrorist groups have to their ‘Financial Base’. This vulnerability has led the authorities in some countries to target their fund raising as an effective counterterrorist weapon. Clearly, non-physical threats may be just as effective as the threat of violence against a terrorist or sponsor.

The Nature of Deterrence

Due to its position as the major paradigm underlying international relations during the Cold War era, literature abounds on the subject of nuclear deterrence. While there are a great many differences between theories of nuclear deterrence and deterrence of terrorism, there is one important lesson to be drawn. The thought of nuclear war created an overwhelming fear in the populations of the Cold War superpower adversaries. This fear permeated to government decision makers with such force, that it effectively deterred the use of these weapons. In this case, the psychological element of “prevention” was all pervading.

With this in mind, however, the arguments for and against nuclear deterrence theory tend to cloud consideration of deterrence in other contexts. “Nuclear deterrence” saw the “home bases” of the competing nations as physical entities, and their destruction provided the largest component of deterrence. As we have seen, the terrorists’ physical base is only one of their vulnerabilities. Deterrence of terrorism must acknowledge the metaphysical nature of the “home base” and its many component parts. A strategy to defeat it, must be designed as much around the psychological as the physical. In this sense, deterrence is a strategy for peace, designed primarily to persuade the potential terrorist that violent action of any kind is the least attractive of all alternatives.

In the context of terrorism, deterrence can be defined as any actions or policies intended to eliminate the propensity of terrorists to strike, particularly in Australia or against Australia’s interests. This would be the ideal result. However, even where deterrence fails to avert an incident from occurring, it can still be said to have been effective, if the scope, intensity or duration of a terrorist’s actions have been constrained. This last point is important, because it provides some assessment by which the effectiveness of deterrence can be reasonably gauged – an otherwise illusive aspect of the theory.
Psychological Property of Deterrence

It therefore follows that psychological pressure is the prime property of deterrence, for it targets intentions rather than the physical capability of terrorists to strike. This psychological pressure can be derived from two rather simple notions. The first—"offensive deterrence", is the notion that if I learn of your ill-treatment I may pre-empt you with action of my own; and if you do hit me I will certainly retaliate. In either case you will regret the exchange. The second—"defensive deterrence", is the notion that if you hit me I will successfully protect myself; it will be impossible for you to win and any gains you make will be greatly outweighed by your costs. The exchange will be so expensive that you will regret having hit me in the first place.

To enhance the psychological effect, therefore, deterrence policies should have two broad objectives:
- to maximise the terrorist’s potential costs, and
- to minimise his possible gains.

Of course, one possible flaw in deterrence theory is that it relies for its effect on a rational assessment of costs and benefits by those being deterred. It is also complicated by the consideration that what may be assessed as irrational conduct in Western eyes, may be considered entirely rational to persons from a different culture, motivated as they may be, by religious or political fanaticism. Provided, however, that these factors are taken into account by those developing the deterrence policy, it does not render the concept irrelevant. It merely demonstrates that like all other prevention measures, deterrence can never provide a total solution in isolation. Rather, it must constitute one strand of a multi-strand preventive strategy, and as importantly, because irrational or unpredictable behaviour is likely to be a factor, there must be a capable and effective response option.

Can Terrorists be Deterred?

A fundamental question, therefore, is whether or not it is actually possible to deter individual terrorists? This gives rise to a myth which needs to be dispelled. Not all terrorists are so fanaticical that they are willing to sacrifice their lives or freedom in order to advance their cause. Of course the suicidal fanatic does exist, as was seen, with the Hamas bus attack in Tel Aviv in October 1994. Nonetheless, persons who can be manipulated so completely by the real terrorist power brokers are very small in number. This view is borne out by a number of observations:
- Many terrorist groups draw heavily on revolutionary doctrine. "Political power grows from the barrel of a gun", wrote Mao, a phrase contemporary terrorists are fond of repeating. Mao also taught that "the first law of war is to preserve ourselves and destroy the enemy". Another revolutionary, whose teachings have been adopted largely by urban terrorists, Che Guevara advocated, "...at the start, take special pains that no guerrilla needlessly gets himself killed".
- Suicide attacks by terrorists are very rare. Searches of terrorist hide-outs have frequently uncovered numerous feasibility studies and detailed plans for attacks that never occurred. Emphasis in planning has been on minimising the risk of failure. This explains why many terrorist plans are never implemented.
- The most common terrorist tactic is bombing. One reason is that this method entails possibly the least chance of detection or harm to the terrorist. Notably, post incidence analysis reveals that "...most terrorists ... share an aversion to travelling on the aircraft that they intend to destroy."

Most terrorists see merit in remaining alive or free, if only as a means to further their cause through direct action on subsequent occasions. It therefore follows, that the majority of terrorist's actions can be deterred to some degree, either from conducting an operation totally, or where this fails, by constraining the scope and significance of the incident.

A Deterrence Policy for Terrorism

Deterrence has been officially recognised as a means to control terrorism in several countries. Before examining the effectiveness of these policies, it is worth briefly considering the types of measures employed. Under the framework already established, these are either offensive or defensive in nature.

Offensive Deterrence

Israel and the United States are the greatest proponents of offensive deterrence. Measures which have attracted the most publicity include pre-emptive and retaliatory airstrikes against known or suspected terrorist training camps and the kidnapping of terrorist leaders. Occasionally, state sponsors have also been subject to military attack, as in the case of the US airstrike against President Gaddafi in Tripoli in 1986. Though unproved, there have also been suggestions that some western countries may have authorised assassination and bombing attacks against known or suspected terrorists. This was certainly a tactic of the USSR.

Though less dramatic, non-military measures have frequently been taken using other elements of
national power. These have been aimed at the non-
physical 'home bases' mentioned earlier. In the case
of state sponsors, offensive deterrence measures have
included the publication of a "State Sponsors of
Terrorism" list by the US State Department,
economic and trade sanctions, and the withdrawal of
diplomatic representation. Australia has supported
many of these measures, as have other states in the
international community. For individual terrorist
groups, non-military offensive deterrence measures
have included the above actions against state
sponsors; the refusal to recognise their political status
or to negotiate their grievances until terrorist activity
has ceased; and the refusal to grant travel visas to
persons suspected of terrorist involvement.
Collectively these measures have threatened the
sponsor's economic, ideological and leadership bases
and the potential terrorist's physical, financial and
sponsorship bases.

Defensive Deterrence
Defensive deterrence policies have been widely
employed to both maximise the potential costs and
minimise the possible gains likely to be achieved by
terrorists. The cost to the terrorist has generally been
increased by a three-fold approach involving:

- **Increasing the Chances of Failure.** This has been
achieved by a wide array of counter-measures
aimed at enhancing the authority's ability to detect,
neutralise and apprehend the terrorists either before,
during or after an incident. These include:
  - improved barrier control measures to identify
    suspect persons;
  - the establishment of dedicated intelligence
databases and analysts to examine terrorist
groups and their methods of operation;
  - international agreements to exchange intelligence
    on terrorists;
  - improved security measures and awareness,
    particularly at airports, diplomatic premises and
    mail exchanges;
  - enhanced "last resort" military operations to
    resolve an incident;
  - improved government response machinery and
    capabilities; and
  - the growth of public and private 'think-tanks',
dedicated to the intellectual analysis of the
phenomenon;
- **An Effective System of Punishment.** This has
been achieved through the threat of long term
imprisonment and the possibility of death during
the course of an incident. While there are
arguments against capital punishment, this form of
punishment has also been reintroduced in some
countries. The effectiveness of the judicial system
has also been achieved through international agreements to simplify extradition procedures for
terrorists.

- **Determination of the Government.** With varying
degrees of success, governments have exhibited a
determination to resolve an incident on their terms
rather than those of the terrorist. Perhaps one of the
best examples of this determination was that
shown by Great Britain, particularly in the period
under the Prime Ministership of Margaret
Thatcher. In 1985 she declared:

  "We in Britain will not accede to the terrorists'
demands. The law will be applied to them as to all
other criminals. Prisoners will not be released.
Statements in support of the terrorists' cause will
not be made. If hijacked aircraft land here, they
will not be allowed to take-off. For in conceding
terrorist demands the long term risks are even
greater than the immediate dangers."

Such statements and the will to enforce them, have
contributed equally to minimising the terrorists' gains,
as have more specific measures, including
policies to achieve responsible media reporting and
for avoiding the temptation to overreact when isolated
incidents occur. Collectively, defensive measures in
these categories would threaten the physical well-
being of the potential terrorist. In deterrence terms,
these can be directly related to threats on his
leadership, group dynamics and his recruitment bases.

**Have Deterrence Policies Worked?**

The SAC-PAV Review recognised that judgements
on deterrence were somewhat like trying to prove the
negative. This has always been a problem of the
proponents of deterrence theories. The difficulty is
illustrated by "the elephant syndrome" in the dialogue
below:

  "When the doctor asked his nervous patient, ‘why
are you snapping your fingers?’ the ‘snapper’
answered: ‘To keep the elephants away!’ ‘Relax,’
said the understanding doctor in a fatherly tone,
‘there are no elephants around.’ ‘You see doctor,’
said the patient victoriously, ‘it works!’

Due to its nature, proving the theory tends to rely
on abstract rather than empirical evidence.
Nonetheless, on the basis of statistical data derived from historical analysis, it can be shown that offensive and defensive deterrence measures have enjoyed some success, depending on whether they were targeted against the state sponsors of terrorism or independent terrorist activity. The effectiveness can be summarised in the following matrix:

**Offensive Deterrence**

While military action against independent terrorist activity appears not to have been effective, the other forms of offensive deterrence have, both against the independent terrorist and state sponsors.

**Independent Terrorist Activity.** Since one purpose of terrorism is to induce reactions, retaliation by the victim may actually serve the terrorists' purposes, particularly if collateral damage is caused. As the Israeli scholar Hanon Alon has noted, [military] retaliation to terrorist attacks serves the terrorists' purposes in two ways: "... first, through their overwhelming impact as well as the media coverage of both the strike and the retaliation; and secondly, through the terrorists' ability to recruit new members from those who were effected by the collateral damage."23

Added to this is the effect of retaliation on the terrorist's group dynamics. Psychological studies indicate that retaliation may be counter productive for it serves to "... exaggerate the importance of the group, justify its actions, reduce ... group tensions and promote group unit".21

Alon has also noted the efforts of Palestinian organisations to capitalise on these factors. They have for example, intentionally established offices and headquarters in densely populated areas in order to increase the chances of collateral damage should an attack occur.24

**State Sponsors of Terrorism.** Despite the obvious difficulties of proving beyond reasonable doubt the responsibility of the supporting state and the risk of inciting war as a result of counter measures, offensive deterrence against the state sponsors of terrorism has enjoyed success:

- Israel's threats against Jordan, effectively caused that country to expel Palestinian terrorist organisations operating from within its borders in 1970.

### Figure 3: Effectiveness of Deterrence Measures

<table>
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<th>OFFENSIVE DETERRENCE</th>
<th>DEFENSIVE DETERRENCE</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>STATE SPONSORS OF TERRORISM</strong></td>
<td>EFFECTIVE</td>
<td>NON-EFFECTIVE</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>INDEPENDENT TERRORIST ACTIVITY</strong></td>
<td>NON-EFFECTIVE (1)</td>
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1. NON-EFFECTIVENESS APPLIES TO THE USE OF MILITARY OFFENSIVE MEASURES ONLY
noted that: defensive in nature, the organisations acting independently or on behalf of the Australian deterrence measures, which are primarily state sponsors. Commenting on the effectiveness of defensive deterrence has influenced terrorist attraction to the sponsor. Any way if a sponsored terrorist fails to achieve his specific objective; and herein lies its greatest effect. As noted earlier, by raising the personal costs to the terrorist, they have effectively targeted the terrorist's leadership, group dynamics and recruiting bases. Some specific measures which have been effective are detailed below.

Security at Airports. In 1968, the numbers of aircraft hijackings suddenly exploded, reaching a peak of 91 in 1969. Initially, 80 per cent of these hijackings were successful, as authorities lacked the means to prevent or respond to these incidents. A number of measures were subsequently introduced:

- Sky Marshals. Though controversial for the additional risks they were believed to have posed to passengers in the event of a shoot out, Israeli and some US airlines began using armed sky marshals aboard aircraft on selected routes in the 1970s. Writing in 1986, Brenchley noted that in the cases cited, "... they have been very successful, chiefly as deterrents to terrorists, and have sharply reduced the number of attempted hijackings of the aircraft on which they travel." From the statistics shown at Figure 4, there may have been some benefit from the introduction of sky marshals, however it was not as dramatic as Brenchley suggests.

- Airport Security Measures. Enhanced airport security measures pioneered in the United States and later adopted by airports throughout the world, subsequently made a significant difference to the incidence of aircraft hijacking. As Figure 4 shows, the introduction of 100 per cent baggage and passenger searches, and the use of X-Ray machines and metal detectors at airport check-ins, in 1973 caused an immediate, substantial and sustained reduction in the incidence of hijacking. In each of these examples, an element of national power has been successfully applied against one of the state sponsor 'home bases'.

Defensive Deterrence

State Sponsors of Terrorism. There is little evidence to suggest that defensive deterrence has dissuaded state sponsors of terrorism from conducting their activities. The prime reason for this, is that defensive deterrence measures are not targeted to do so. A state sponsor 'home base' will not be effected in any way if a sponsored terrorist fails to achieve his specific objective; and herein lies its greatest attraction to the sponsor.

Independent Terrorist Activity. There is, however, a considerable body of evidence to suggest that defensive deterrence has influenced terrorist organisations acting independently or on behalf of the state sponsors. Commenting on the effectiveness of Australian deterrence measures, which are primarily defensive in nature, the SAC-PAV Review noted that:

"... it is a reasonable assumption that the existence in Australia of police and ADF capabilities for countering terrorism, the aviation security arrangements and the system of dignitary protection would figure in international terrorist assessments, although it is not feasible to judge their effect." At an international level there are several historical examples which show established prevention measures have been effective in reducing the incidence or scope of individual terrorist or terrorist group activities through their defensive deterrent effect. As noted earlier, by raising the personal costs to the terrorist, they have effectively targeted the terrorist's leadership, group dynamics and recruiting bases.
[m]ost hijacks are from airports with a low reputation for security ... such as Athens and Cairo, because this reputation attracts the hijackers. Terrorists appear to prefer to seek out softer targets rather than totally abandon a method, unless it is absolutely necessary to do so.

**Hardline Policy Towards Terrorists.** The number of hostage taking incidents in embassies peaked in 1980, with 42 embassies being seized worldwide. This involved hundreds of hostages, including 22 ambassadors being held and 53 people killed. As Figure 1 indicates, the popularity of the tactic declined rapidly in the 1980s. Why the change? Part of the explanation is the resolve shown by governments. Where they may initially have been inclined to yield to terrorist demands, over a series of incidents their resolve hardened as the frequency of incidents increased. A chronicle of this new hardline approach began with the Israeli refusal to offer concessions to the terrorists holding their athletes at the Munich Olympics in 1972. In 1973, the US refused to yield to the demands of terrorists holding American diplomats at Khartoum. In 1975, the German Government refused to yield to terrorist demands holding hostage diplomats at their embassy in Stockholm. Other incidents in which governments stood firm were those of Ireland in a siege involving Dutch businessmen and the Dutch to terrorists who had seized the Indonesian consulate. However policy without the means to enforce it is meaningless.

**Elite Hostage Rescue Units.** In the wake of the disastrous outcome to the Munich Olympics shoot-out in 1972, governments soon realised, that if they were to maintain a hard-line 'no concessions' policy against considerable media and constituent pressure, they had to expand the range of options available, to deal with an incident without meeting the terrorist demands or having hostages executed for failing to do so. In response, governments began to raise specialist
rescue units. The dramatic and successful CT operation mounted by the British SAS in the Iranian Embassy siege incident in London 1980, demonstrated to governments and terrorists alike, that these units offered the authorities the ability to successfully resolve incidents by force.

This particular operation was not an isolated one. An analysis of commando warfare and operations by small raiding parties since 1945, undertaken by Hoffman in 1985, provides a useful insight into the overall effectiveness of hostage rescue operations. Out of a total of 19 rescue operations undertaken, 14 proved to be successful, a ratio of 74 per cent. Significantly, however, 100 per cent of operations in domestic, permissive environments were successful. This may well have been a factor in the increased use of overseas kidnapping and hostage taking by terrorist groups in the 1980s and early 1990s. While some may see this as a failure of deterrence, the real test is whether governments would rather face an external or internal incident. The externalisation of terrorist activity has arguably decreased its potency, particularly if it is targeted against a middle-power such as Australia. In such circumstances, this country faces a much lower “response expectation” compared to that which is experienced by a super-power like the US. A middle-power will have the opportunity, indeed be expected, to seek resolution through negotiation. By comparison, the imperative for governments to do something when the incident is under the full glare of the media in downtown Sydney would undoubtedly shift the initiative back to the terrorist. By encouraging the externalisation of hostage taking in this way, elite forces play an essential element of any preventative deterrence strategy.

**Defensive Deterrence**

Australia’s use of defensive deterrence measures has immediate and on-going application to exert psychological pressure against the potential independent terrorist. This will counter the tendency of the terrorist to merely shift his basic method from one form to another and also ensure that in the absence of an identified and immediate threat, our strategies are pre-empting potential ones.

More important still, our policies and capabilities must be of world standard or better and encompass the full range of measures likely to increase the costs and reduce the potential gains to the terrorist contemplating an operation in Australia. This consideration becomes more critical when one considers that if we fail to keep up with the full range of prevention measures being used internationally, there is always the potential, in the eyes of the terrorist, for Australia to become the “soft target”. While the absence of an immediate identifiable threat will rightly cause us to restrict the resources applied to counter terrorism, we must not allow it to constrain or limit the scope of our strategies.

The potential terrorist is likely to be sensitive to the balance of costs and gains and to the vulnerabilities of each of the “home bases” identified earlier. To be most effective, our deterrence strategies should target each of these, be they physical or abstract in nature. This will provide the greatest chance of convincing the potential terrorist to seek his quarry elsewhere.

**Conclusion**

The recent focus of attention on a prevention strategy for the NATP is entirely appropriate. Such attention will serve to complement Australia’s extant capability to respond to and recover from an act of terrorism, should one occur in this country.

Terrorism is unlikely to go away. Terrorists are also likely to continue using their six basic methods of operation, adjusting their application to meet changing circumstances, including counter-measures by the authorities. Terrorists will continue to chase the “soft target”, wherever in the world it may present itself. A prevention strategy must therefore be complete, incorporating both physical prevention measures and those which deter through psychological pressure.
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The Australia Remembers 1945-1995 year was one of commemorating, celebrating and educating. Australia will now leave a physical legacy to remember the freedom we all enjoy today.

On 11 November 1995, Remembrance Day, the Minister for Veterans’ Affairs, The Honourable Con Sciacca and the Lord Mayor of Brisbane, Mr Jim Soorley laid the foundation stone for the National Australia Remembers Freedom Wall. The site for the Wall is in the Brisbane Botanic Gardens, Mt Coot-tha, marking forever the 50th Anniversary of the end of the Second World War.

The National Australia Remembers Freedom Wall will be adorned with tens of thousands of spectacular bronze Freedom Plaques each with the Australia Remembers logo embedded on the left side of the plaque. On the remainder of the plaque will be engraved a special message by the individuals, families, schools and other organisations who buy the plaque; a message that will live on to inform and educate the next generation.

These messages could be engraved to remember uncles, aunts, mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, grandparents and friends who contributed either on the home front or fighting front between 1939 and 1945. The message can be written in any form from a verse of poetry to the more standard wording on remembrance plaques.

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ADDRESS FOR DELIVERY OF PLAQUE: .............................. (POST CODE): ........................................

Please supply AUSTRALIA REMEMBERS FREEDOM PLAQUES (Quantity) at $9.95 ea Total: $ ...........

Please find enclosed my □ Cheque or □ Money Order payable to DEPT. OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS.
(Payment by Cheque or Money Order for mailed orders only)

Please debit my □ Bankcard □ Mastercard □ Visa. Name shown on card: ........................................

Expiry Date: .......... Signature: ..................................

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The National Australia Remembers Freedom Wall recognises the contribution made by the generation of 50 years ago who gave us the freedom that we enjoy today.

Each bronze plaque mounted on the Wall contains a message of thanks symbolising the legacy that Australia now leaves.

The bronze plaque is inscribed with the following:

The National Australia Remembers Freedom Wall located in the Brisbane Botanic Gardens Mt Coot-tha Road, Toowong, Queensland will be officially opened on 15 August 1996.
Australia Remembers

records many of the activities of Australian Service men and women who served overseas and at home during World War II. It also records the role played by the men and women of today’s Australian Defence Force during the ceremonies for the pilgrimages of the “Australia Remembers” program.

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This article has identified two categories of actions which can achieve deterrence – offensive and defensive. It has shown that each has a part to play in preventing terrorism, either through a focus on state sponsors or against individual terrorist groups. An effective deterrence policy must take account of the rationality and culture of those being deterred. Provided this is done, deterrence remains a viable strategy. It should also be remembered, that even if deterrence fails to prevent an incident from occurring, it can still be said to have been effective, if it has constrained the scope or intensity of the terrorist attack.

Recognition of the fact that like other elements of prevention, deterrence cannot always be guaranteed, reinforces the point that it must not be relied on in isolation. Rather, it should form one part of a comprehensive prevention strategy. Ultimately though, regardless of its completeness there will always be a need to retain the national capability to effectively respond and recover should an incident occur.

Deterrence cannot exist without recognised world class policies and capabilities. Nor is deterrence achieved solely, or even primarily through the threat or application of national military power. It is achieved whenever any element of national power can be applied to maximise the costs and minimise the benefits to the ‘home bases’ of any terrorist or sponsor who may be contemplating an operation in Australia.

A final observation – ironically in some ways, offensive and defensive deterrence are already being achieved in Australia, but merely as a bi-product of practical CT prevention and response capabilities. It stands to reason, that the effect would be significantly enhanced, if it were to be done as the result of a deliberate and cogent deterrence policy. SAC-PAV must have a deliberate deterrence component in any national prevention strategy and each department and agency in the programme should realise that it has a part to play in achieving deterrence – an essential element of preventing terrorism.

NOTES
2. Ibid., p. v.
3. Ibid., p. 5.
4. Comments by Ms B. Boden, Head of the US delegation to Australia for bilateral discussions on counter-terrorism, Canberra, 27 April 1994.
6. Ibid., p. 12.
9. Data is derived from the RAND Corporation, Chronology of International Terrorism, as cited by B. Hoffman, Ibid., pp. 1-2.
17. The main argument against is that it may display the convicted terrorist as a martyr.
20. Ibid.
22. Ibid., p. 128.
29. Ibid., p. 77.
31. Ibid., p. 190.

This article was originally presented as a paper to the National Counter Terrorism Conference held in Canberra in November 1994.
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The Police and the ADF: A Discussion of Differences and Similarities

By Lieutenant Colonel I.G.R. Wing, Aust Int.

"An armed disciplined force is in its essence dangerous to society; undisciplined, it is ruinous to society."

Introduction

To the casual civilian observer, police personnel serving with the Australian State and Federal police may appear very similar to the personnel of the Australian Defence Force (ADF). They generally both serve in uniform as part of official organisations and they are usually both armed. Police involved in high-risk operations frequently wear Australian military pattern camouflage uniforms and carry automatic weapons which make them appear very similar to ADF personnel. Likewise, ADF training for short warning conflict operations in northern Australia and counter-terrorism included the study of aspects of civil law such as powers of arrest and search which are traditionally police responsibilities. For these, and other reasons, the distinction between the police and the ADF is becoming increasingly blurred.

The informed observer would probably appreciate that armed forces exist to defend the nation, while the police exist to maintain law and order within it. Other differences between the armed forces and the police are less well understood.

This article will consider the differences between the armed forces and police in modern western society. This consideration will shed light on the extent of the difference between them and show that the difference is the result of historical, institutional and societal factors. The law, which has developed in response to similar factors, serves to regulate the different roles between the armed forces and the police. The article will deal principally with Australian society, and its British heritage, and use examples drawn from them. Specific detail will relate to the police forces of the Australian states and territories and the ADF. The discussion of differences will also identify similarities of which there are several. The article will conclude with some thoughts on the future development of the blurred area of responsibility between the police and the ADF.

The Social Contract

A social contract exists between the Australian Government and the Australian people. Our understanding of this contract is based on the writing of Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau and it places obligations on both government and people. The foremost obligation of the Australian Government is to maintain the security of Australia. Ultimately the ADF is responsible for providing this security.

The second obligation of the Australian Government is the maintenance of law and order. In the Australian federal system of government this obligation is largely met by the state and territory governments, and it assumes the position of their foremost obligation. If governments fail to provide law and order they are unlikely to be able to provide any of the other services for which they are responsible. Australian law and order is maintained in Australia by the State and Federal police forces in conjunction with the judicial system of courts and the legal profession.

Historical Factors

The Petition of Rights signed in 1627 removed the right of the King to rule by martial law and the Bill of Rights signed in 1688 forbade the raising of armies without the consent of Parliament. These early limitations on the right of the executive to employ the armed forces for internal security are reflected in current interpretations of the Australian Constitution.

Prior to these limitations, the armed forces which had been raised in England were often private armies which owed loyalty to their commander. That loyalty generally exceeded loyalty to the Crown until the late fifteenth century.

The next three hundred years witnessed the further restriction of the role of armed forces within society and the development of a second force, the police. Three factors contributed to this evolution.

First, the rise in the notion of democracy and the right of Parliament to govern. Belief in this right led
to the English Civil War and the temporary removal of the crown from the English system of government. The period of hardship under the military government of the commonwealth, increased English suspicions of military rule. It also contributed to the philosophy that a genuine democracy cannot be completely reliant on the support of force used on its subjects.

Second, the transformation of armed forces from ad hoc groups raised to fight particular wars into professional standing armies and navies. Such forces existed for the role of the defence of the realm and this generally involved defence against external enemies. The last three hundred years have witnessed a gradual decline in the involvement of the armed forces in the suppression of insurrection and riots and other duties such as the apprehension of felons and guarding of convicts.

Third, the creation of government-sponsored police organisations, such as the Metropolitan Police raised by Sir Robert Peel in London in the 1830s. These organisations existed to provide security to persons and property in the increasingly dangerous cities of the industrial revolution. The army was preoccupied with its primary role of making war on the continent and guarding the Empire. It was recognised that soldiers, armed with muskets and bayonets and with little or no local knowledge, were often unsuitable for duties such as the investigation of crime.

**Roles and Legal Aspects**

These duties are a major element of the role of the police. This role is to prevent crime, detect and detain offenders, protect life and property; enforce the law; and to maintain peace and good order. The principal role of the armed forces is quite different: to defend the nation against external enemies. If a police force is unable to perform its duties it may call on other police forces to provide support. If the support required by a state police force cannot be provided by another police force, support from the armed forces may be requested.

Other roles of the armed forces include **defence aid to the civil community (DACC)**, such as fighting bushfires, and **defence force aid to the civil power (DFACP)**. DFACP generally involves the provision of armed personnel to perform duties in support of law and order within the civil community. Before considering the nature of aid to the civil power it is necessary to discuss the principal legal difference between police and armed forces personnel.

It is fundamental to Australian law that the preservation of law and order is a police responsibility. Police personnel are citizens who possess authority derived not from delegation from a superior but from their appointment to the ancient office of constable. This appointment gives them powers of arrest and detention although these powers are often not codified and exist as a result of public acceptance. The police themselves must obey all laws and are held personally responsible in court for their actions especially relating to the use of firearms.

The armed forces, on the other hand, derive their authority for operations in aid to the civil power from a **call out** originating from either a request from a State Government to the Federal Government or from direction from the Federal Government. Armed forces personnel always remain under command of their military superiors and must continue to obey orders unless they are “manifestly illegal”. For this reason they can be ordered to fire their weapons and punished if they do not do so. But they have no special powers of arrest, search or detention and from a strict interpretation of the law become merely lawfully-armed citizens, albeit acting under military discipline as a result of Commonwealth Government decisions. In addition to the **Defence Force Discipline Act**, they are subject to most civil laws, with minor exceptions such as those which restrict the carriage of firearms. Service personnel are advised that they are subject to the primacy of the civil power, must use only minimum force, must remain under military command and must follow rules for opening fire based upon ADF **rules of engagement**. This advice is intended to protect both society and the service person who is likely to be operating in a quite unfamiliar environment.

It is this unfamiliarity which leads to the next area of difference. Police are trained in the operation of the legal system and experienced in exercising authority within the civil community and which dwarf those of the police which are frequently based on contracted support. The armed forces are able to muster large numbers of disciplined personnel at short notice and the use of these personnel is not restricted by shift limitations and overtime payment considerations which may limit the use of police personnel. In the particular area of military assault, not surprisingly, the ADF remains superior. Sir Robert Mark found that “...close quarter battle is a task for the most sophisticated soldiery, not for police, whose role should be that of containment until military aid arrives”. As a result the ADF is responsible for providing the Commonwealth’s capability to resolve terrorist incidents by force.
Institutional Factors

A number of institutional differences exist between the armed forces and police but it must be stated that these are generalisations based upon observation rather than empirical data. The armed forces receive a great deal more training in their employment-related skills than the police. These skills are rarely actually used in peacetime and without regular training would be lost. The police receive less training but use many of their skills on a daily basis and, for that reason, become competent.

The armed forces possess the flexibility to perform aid to the civil power operations due to several differences relating to personnel. The commissioned officers of the armed forces are generally better educated, younger and fitter than their police counterparts. Overall, the level of fitness of the armed forces, their experience of being posted to many varying locations and their policy of emphasising promotion on merit rather than seniority enhance their ability to quickly adapt to the unfamiliar environment of the civil community.

Another area of difference can be seen in the approach of the military decision maker as compared to the police decision maker. Military personnel are trained to make decisions very quickly and often with limited information. This limited information is processed into useful intelligence but it is acknowledged that it will be incomplete and risks must therefore be taken by the military decision maker. They tend to concentrate upon the end result and to disregard minor setbacks. Police personnel are required by the rules of evidence to take a more methodical and thorough approach to decision making. Information is seen primarily as contributing to the body of evidence which is essential to the overall aim of securing a conviction. These different approaches are the result of their differing roles and training, each fulfils its purpose, and neither is inherently superior to the other.

Societal Factors

It is in a comparison of the relationships of the armed forces and the police with society that the most fundamental difference exists. The police must operate within the community continuously and rely upon favourable public opinion to gain information during investigations. Society reluctantly accepts that the police are armed but does so in the belief that the firearms will only be used for defensive purposes. Incorrect behaviour by members of the police, if detected, is heavily penalised. The police are well aware that they require the trust and approval of society to operate efficiently.

In contrast, the armed forces are only to be introduced into a situation when traditional police methods are insufficient. Recourse to the armed forces in an aid to the civil power situation is an admission by the Government that a more efficient method of administering deadly force is required and that for a short time at least the weapons of the battlefield may be within the community. The Government has the right to employ its armed forces in this manner to suppress violence for the general good. The clearest example of a justified use of the armed forces is in dealing with terrorists. Terrorists have chosen to operate outside the norms of human behaviour and society is justified in dealing with them using extraordinary methods. At the resolution of the aid to the civil power situation the police are able to be restored to their normal position within society and the perpetrators of deadly force are withdrawn back to the sanctuary of their barracks. The police benefit from such a system by being freed from the stigma of taking human life, as such a stigma could place barriers between them and the community.

Similarities

Despite these differences the armed forces and police possess many similarities. They are both subject to the control of Parliament but do not owe allegiance to a particular party. They are both hierarchical, bureaucratic and authoritarian organisations. Both require obedience from their members although the armed forces are more demanding in this regard. Both are armed, although the armed forces are by far the most heavily armed (it is worthy of note that during peacetime the armed forces are generally not armed in public or if armed do not carry loaded weapons, while the police do so).

The members of both the armed forces and the police tend to consider themselves as separate from their parent society. This separation is the result of many factors including the unusual nature of their work and the pride which they take in performing it. An example of this separation is the police reference to members of the general public as “civilians”. This term is used even though the police, not being members of the armed forces, are actually civilians themselves.
The police may also withdraw from participation in general society because of a ‘seige mentality’. This syndrome results from performing tasks such as enforcing traffic laws which are generally unpopular (albeit very necessary) and regularly attending shocking incidents such as vehicle accidents which normal citizens rarely see. The police form a subculture which is often more arcane than that of the armed forces.

It is possible that the police, in certain circumstances, may become less part of their society than the armed forces. Clearly this is a contradiction of the requirement for the police to operate within society and with its favour. For example, the paramilitary law enforcement activities of State Police special operations units have made them tantamount to a third force; filling a role somewhere between conventional police and the ADF. This role requires the frequent use of armed force within the community and has resulted in criticism by the media and civil liberties groups over the alleged use of excessive force by the police.

Conclusions

The issues raised by the activities of police paramilitary units return this discussion to its start point. Clearly the distinction between the ADF and police is becoming increasingly blurred and several possibilities exist for future developments.

The first of these possibilities is that the police will continue to expand their capabilities in the more violent end of the law enforcement spectrum. This may lead them to assume responsibility for counter-terrorist operations from the ADF but may also lead to a loss in public support for more threatening police services. In contrast, a second possibility is that the ADF will assume additional law enforcement responsibilities. The surveillance operations performed by the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) in the coastal waters of northern Australia provide current examples of this type of responsibility. A third possibility is that other Government agencies may assume responsibility for operations which fall in the blurred area between the police and ADF. For example, an expanded coast watch or customs service could conduct increased coastal surveillance tasks and relieve the RAN. A fourth possibility, and the most likely, is that the police and the ADF will continue to feel their way through their blurred responsibilities and to perform their tasks as efficiently as possible. They are also likely to maintain their complementary and sometimes symbiotic relationship. The maintenance of this relationship depends on the continued cooperation of both players and will benefit from frank discussion of their differences and similarities.

This discussion of the difference between the armed forces and police shows that they are very different in role and nature but similar in organisation. The most significant differences are in their legal powers and in their relationship with the community. The conclusion is that they are very different but that similarities exist between them. For this reason and the necessity for combined ADF and police operations, it is prudent for both players to seek to understand the other.

Overall, as a cautionary note against the increasing use of force in our community, this article concludes that:

**Within our community, the police should use armed force as the last resort; and the use of armed force by the ADF should be the last resort of the Government.**

NOTES

3. Under section 119 of the Constitution, a state may request assistance from the Commonwealth if a condition of domestic violence exists and the Commonwealth may accede to the request. Article 51 of the *Defence Act* of 1903 describes a method of call out in accordance with Section 119 and this provides for Armed Forces to operate in support of the civil authorities.
4. Under Section 51, 61 and 68 of the Constitution, the Commonwealth may exercise its executive power to protect its own interests and commit troops to conduct operations in the states (although the experience of the call out of forces to protect the CHOGRM in 1878 suggests that the concurrence of the State Government will also be sought).

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Lieutenant Colonel Ian Wing is a graduate of the Royal Military College, Duntroon and Command and Staff College, Queenscliffe. Following service as an infantry officer, he has served as an intelligence officer in a variety of tactical, strategic, special forces and overseas postings. Lieutenant Colonel Wing is currently posted to the Defence Intelligence Organisation and he holds a BA(Hons), GDip Mngt and MDefS. He was awarded the Petro Fedorczenko Prize for the most outstanding academic record of a student completing the Master of Defence Studies Course. His PhD thesis which will deal with criminal violence, terrorism and Australian defence policy is in preparation.
"The Battle of Leyte Gulf" is a brief history of Australian participation in the Liberation of the Philippines and the 50th anniversary commemorations in 1994. The text is supported by numerous illustrations in colour and black and white which capture the spirit of the events.

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By Major Andrew Drayton, RAEME

India’s Security Perspectives and its Military Build-up – A Cause for Concern?

Introduction

There are a number of contributing elements to India’s current security perspective. These range from those issues it considers fundamental to its continued existence as a power in the South Asia region, which includes rivalry with Pakistan and China, through its role as a regional policeman to the smaller states, to internal security concerns based on religious and ethnic rivalries.

Superpower involvement in the region has occurred to varying degrees over the years, which itself has played a role in shaping the Indian security perspective. Unrest in neighbouring regions such as the Middle East has also played a part in shaping the Indian perspective given India’s dependence on oil from that region, and closer to home, instability in countries like Sri Lanka, the Maldives and Nepal have contributed to some cause for concern within defence and security planning areas of the Indian administration.

Much of what has happened in the South Asian region over the last four decades has been overshadowed by Cold War rivalries between the USA and the former USSR, although attention was brought to the region because of the 1979 Soviet/Afghanistan conflict, which has been described as a proxy to the Cold War conflict. The conclusion of Cold War hostilities has led to more attention being focussed upon regions like South Asia, and this has been accentuated most recently in India’s case because of a concurrent liberalisation in diplomacy and trade policies (Gordon, 1995, p1).

Renewed interest in the region has specifically highlighted India’s military build-up of recent years and has raised concerns in neighbouring regions about motive and designs on extra-regional influence. Indeed, one of the key strategic issues in the decade ahead within the Asia-Pacific region is how India will develop its strategic policies and military forces and what impact this will have on the South East Asia nations and their reaction to an increase in Indian power (Dibb, 1994, p11). This article will describe India’s main security perspectives and it will discuss the principal determinants behind India’s drive to build its military capabilities.

Indian Security Considerations

The Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade paper commissioned in 1990 called Australia-India Relations – Trade and Security gives a brief insight into India’s history since independence. It claims that India’s history has been characterised by turbulence and instability, partly derived from internal issues, but mainly caused by external rivalries with Pakistan and China. Both internal and external problems have arisen because of ethnic and religious diversity in the region and disagreement over territory. Internal considerations have included threats from within by a large Muslim community, threats from Chinese backed insurgents in the Northeast during the 1960s, and Tamil threats from Chinese backed insurgents in the Northeast during the 1960s, and Tamil pressures in India’s south during the insurgency in Sri Lanka. As well as these internal concerns, India has been a party to numerous border clashes and skirmishes, and of most note, it has fought four wars since 1947. Three of these against Pakistan (1948, 1965 and 1971) and the other against China in 1962 (Cloughley, 1995, p72).

Against this background, it is worth considering each of the major concerns that have contributed to India’s security perspective.

Pakistan

Many of the communal problems encountered both within India, and between it and Pakistan (initially East and West Pakistan) grew out of the British partition of the region such that Hindu-Muslim rivalries over land were caused. The most notable areas in which problems have occurred are Kashmir, the Punjab and Assam (Cohen, 1993, p84). Both of the 1948 and 1965 India-Pakastani wars were fought over control of Kashmir. The latter war, regardless of the outcome, played a significant role in focussing
India's attention on its lack of a credible naval capability. Despite the fact that the war was primarily fought on land Pakistan was able to take advantage of India's maritime weakness and raid Indian ports (Senate Report, 1990, p55). This led Indian defence planners to developing a plan that would take the battle to the enemy rather than depending upon its previously ill-founded strategy of deterrence that was hinged upon a weak naval force.

The 1971 Indian-Pakistani War was fought over independence for Bangladesh (formerly East Pakistan). In this case, India quickly saw an opportunity to improve the strategic balance in the region in its favour by assisting Bangladesh in gaining independence. An improved Indian naval capability played an important role in this conflict by denying the Pakistani's an ability to resupply and reinforce via Indian waters. This strategy has remained an important part of subsequent Indian naval and strategic thinking.

Today, the Indian-Pakistani conflict of interest still remains a serious problem which is wide ranging and comprehensive in nature (Cohen, 1993, p85). Not only does the conflict have the potential for nuclear exchange, but any kind of conflict could prove extremely unsettling to the remainder of the South Asian region, especially if China were to supply Pakistan with arms (Dibb, 1994, p18). It is important to note that India and Pakistan have come to the brink of war twice since 1987 (in early 1987 and in 1990) which illustrates the continuing security concerns of South Asia (Malik, 1994, p143).

Despite these concerns, Sandy Gordon suggests that the geopolitical shifts relating to China (discussed later) will steadily reduce Pakistan's ability to challenge India. This may cause Pakistan to pursue its nuclear program further in an attempt to retain some kind of strategic parity with India, but India will remain far more powerful both militarily and in economic terms (Gordon, 1994 p14). India's economy is six times that of Pakistan's, and its population is over seven times as large; it accounts for 77 per cent of South Asia's total population (Thakur, 1995, p10).

China

The Chinese dimension to the Indian security perspective is less significant than that of the Pakistani problems, however, it is substantial and is considered to be the second most important external threat (Malik, 1994, p145). The 1962 Sino-Indian War saw the Chinese defeat the Indians in a humiliating way which has left India with an underlying suspicion about Chinese future intent.

This suspicion has been justifiable in Indian eyes, given the Chinese invasion of Vietnam in 1979; its support to communist insurgents in other parts of Asia; and its ascendency to nuclear power status (Senate Report, 1990, p62). All of these issues, together with the close relationship China had developed with Pakistan provided Indian strategic planners with defence concerns.

The new multi-polar world order has opened up opportunities for India to compete with countries like China and Japan for the establishment of spheres of influence (Dibb, 1994, p14). As China's economic strength grows it will become a more powerful factor in the Asian security equation. Even though Chinese interests in territorial expansion are not apparent, major domestic changes in the near future could cause instability and a change to these policies. As Paul Dibb has stated, a growth in Chinese interests in South East Asia will cause India to 'look east' more in the coming decade (Dibb, 1994, p16).

On the other hand, Sandy Gordon believes that the pace of rapprochement between India and China has been rapid since December 1988 when Rajiv Ghandi visited Beijing and that a significant peace dividend has been achieved in the context of competition with Pakistan. Gordon suggests that China has adopted a position of 'careful neutrality' on Kashmir partly based on rapprochement with India, but also because of concerns over the possibility of a break-away movement that might be inspired in Muslim strong Xinjiang by success in Kashmir (Gordon, 1995, p3). Overall, however, India is more likely to continue to consider China with nervous suspicion rather than with open arms.

The Superpowers

Since Indian independence, and during the Cold War period, India's preferred policy in relation to the superpowers was one of non-alignment and it saw itself as the leader of the Non-Alignment Movement (NAM). Its policies have been critical of western imperialism and colonialism, and it has championed the rights of newly formed states for freedom from superpower interference and pressure in their decision making processes (Senate Report, 1990, p58). Thus, when the United States commenced providing support to Pakistan under the guise of support against possible communist threats, and when the US despatched an aircraft carrier group to the Bay of Bengal during the 1971 India-Pakistan War, Indian strategists took great insult from what it saw as unnecessary interference by a superpower. Not only this, but the latter action exposed India's real vulnerability to superpower strength (emphasised by
the nuclear capability of the USS Enterprise) and proved to be a severe blow to Indian pride (B. Vaughn, 1992 p21).

The US carrier group incident proved to be a significant impetus for India to vigorously pursue a goal of preventing such a situation occurring again. India’s long term goal therefore became to develop a naval capability that would lessen the likelihood of further unwanted interference by the superpowers.

Today, the end of the Cold War has significantly changed the roles of the superpowers and has rendered NAM somewhat obsolete. Domestic economic pressures in the US have forced a reduction in military spending and a revision of its role as the world’s policeman. Economic problems have also reduced Russia’s dominance in world affairs. The effect of these changes is that they may allow India to consolidate its domination of the South Asian region with reduced interference from external powers. However, India seems to be taking a softer line in relation to its naval policy of decrying extra-regional naval presence in the Indian Ocean. India is now conducting more joint exercises with other navies than in the past. India has also recognised that a US naval presence could be desirable in terms of providing security to oil tankers from the Gulf (Gordon, 1995, p6).

Recent developments in US-Indian relations suggest that the US is more inclined towards advancing its relationship with India based upon the opening of economic opportunities created by India’s trade liberalisation and more outward looking foreign policy (Thakur, 1995, p8). The US seems to be taking a more favourable position with India on issues such as it developing a nuclear capability and in relation to regional disputes over territory such as Kashmir. This is probably underwritten by the fact that direct foreign investment in India rose from US$73 million in 1990 to US$3 billion in 1993 of which 42 percent was US sourced (Gordon, 1995, p5). One issue that remains contentious between India and the US is that of nuclear proliferation in South Asia. India argues that given that China has a nuclear capability, that it is only proper that it has a similar deterrent capability. The US is an active proponent of Non-Proliferation in unstable regions like that of South Asia.

The relationship between India and the former USSR has also changed. Firstly, no longer is Russia able to continue its arms trading relationship with India as was the case during the Cold War. However, despite this change, Sandy Gordon believes that Russia will become more favourably disposed to sharing military technology and establishing joint ventures with India because of the potential economic benefits to both parties (Gordon, 1995, p4). Ramesh Thakur is far less optimistic in his assessment believing that Russia will continue to have major problems for a number of years before it will be able to contribute to India as it has in the past (Thakur, 1995, p7). Shekhar Gupta also alludes to the unpredictable nature of the Russian supply line suggesting that Indian strategists need to reassess their relationship with Russia (Gupta, 1995, p5). Finally, Mohan Malik succinctly captures the new reality of Indian-Russian relations by stating that ‘India can no longer count on diplomatic, economic and military support from Moscow’ (Malik, 1994, p154).

Raju Thomas suggests that one significant change brought about by the break-up of the former USSR is that a secular India will have an increased security concern over encirclement by Islamic states. As Thomas indicates, the loss of control over some of the poorer Central Asian states like Tajikistan and Uzbekistan by communist leaders could lead to a Pakistan-lead Islamic bloc of nations designed to counter India’s dominance (Thomas, 1993, p70). However, Gordon does not agree with this concept, suggesting that there are very few mainstream Indian foreign policy players who believe this possible (Gordon, 1995, p8). Whatever the theory, one thing is for certain and that is that India is no longer able to play off one superpower against the other to gain favoured status.

Other Security Concerns

Other Indian security concerns revolve around two major themes: firstly, Indian geography; and secondly, Indian internal concerns. In the first case, India has seen itself as a regional power with a requirement for it to play a “policing” role in South Asian disputes. It has played a role in several neighbouring countries’ problems under the auspices of maintaining regional stability. As alluded to earlier, India has concerned itself with Sri Lankan, Nepalese and Maldivian affairs (Vaughn, 1992, p16). It has also seen a requirement to closely monitor developments in the Persian Gulf because of its dependence on oil from the Middle East of which it imports between 30 and 40 per cent of its domestic and industrial oil requirement (Senate Report, 1990, p64). Continuing instability over the years in the Persian Gulf has provided India with further justification for building its naval capability just in case there is a requirement for naval escort duties of oil tankers.

Two other Indian security considerations relating to geography relate to India’s size and shape, and its location. Firstly, India’s land mass protrudes into the
Indian Ocean like a giant wedge, which by virtue of its shape, has meant that India has a coastline of no less than 7500 kilometres and an extensive maritime Economic Exclusion Zone (EEZ) (Gupta, 1995, p5). It could be argued that India's right to defend this area provides the reasoning behind possession of a large naval fleet. This is especially true today as India attempts to develop economically and compete for greater recognition world wide.

Secondly, in terms of location, India is just one of a very diverse range of countries that make up the Indian Ocean littoral grouping of nations. These nations range from South Africa through India itself to the South East Asian nations, and finally includes Australia. In terms of population, the Indian Ocean grouping accounts for approximately one third of the world's total, which when coupled with the vast ethnic, cultural and religious diversities, provides a very un-homogeneous backdrop to the development of a common security outlook. This grouping is reasonably benign in comparison to some of India's other security considerations, however, it is worthy of note.

Lastly, but by no means least of all, and as well as the external security issues above, India has had continuing internal security threats since it gained independence. Domestic turbulence has been endemic and has constituted a major threat to India's very existence. Without delving into the details of these concerns, the main threats have come from religious strife between Hindus and Muslims (Malik, 1994, p146). The main problem for India has been that these issues have not been isolated from external influence which has tended to compound the Indian perception of threat.

All of the issues above combine to make up a unique Indian security perspective. Likewise, all of them contribute to India's current military and strategic policy outlooks. Having briefly described the main elements of India's security perspective, the principal motives behind which an Indian military build-up will now be considered.

### India's Military Build-up

There is little dispute about the fact that India has undertaken a military build-up in the last fifteen years. Today, India possesses the fourth largest military power in the world (Malik, 1994, p143). However, despite this, it is important that this whole issue is considered in perspective. Australia's Strategic Review 1993 paper indicates that India's defence posture has been weakened by the loss of its relationship with the former USSR and by slower than expected economic growth (White Paper, 1993, p10). Ross Babbage refers to the technical limitations to India's force projection capability given its lack of long range air or missile forces and its lack of logistic support for a naval force conducting offensive operations at extended distance (Babbage, 1992, p162). This opinion is supported in Strategic Change and Naval Roles (Bruce, 1992, p131) where the expectation is that this situation will last for at least another ten years.

The Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade paper commissioned in 1990 called Australia-India Relations - Trade and Security, suggested that there was little evidence that India had developed any new doctrine or foreign policy that would suggest an expansion of India's areas of military interest (Senate Report, 1990, p85).

Further to these remarks, Chris Smith's India's Ad hoc Arsenal suggests that the speed and size of the military build-up is related more to the symbolism and prestige of military power rather than a conscious desire for a more capable and greater reaching defence force (Smith, 1994, p130). In fact, both he and Joshi suggest that poor defence planning and a lack of clearly defined strategic objectives has tended to undermine India's military build-up in any case (Joshi, 1992, p90). Ross Babbage sees an over-emphasis being attached to India's military build-up as it has occurred concurrently with a decrease in relative strength of the two superpowers, the US and the former USSR (Babbage, 1992, p1).

Shekhar Gupta believes that there has been a significant turnaround in defence spending which undermines the perception that India is on a spending spree. He believes that the current trend in spending is indicative of the constraints it now faces. Granted, defence spending did rise rapidly for the five years between 1984 and 1989 (expenditure rising from 9.9 to 10.3 per cent of total government expenditure), however, the budget was cut back for the next four years. By 1994, defence spending had been reduced to 2.44 per cent (Gupta, 1995, p38).

Nevertheless, it is worth considering in more detail some of the possible motives behind India's actions.

### Genuine Security Concerns?

It could be argued, as it is by Indian strategic planners, that India has continuing concerns over Chinese and Pakistani military threats as well as a multitude of other regional issues and that its military build-up reflects these concerns. Raju Thomas describes a change in India's defence posture from...
maintaining a defence force designed to contain a minimal threat to it. The former scenario depicts a force capable of opposing one full and one half wars: the full war being against Pakistan on land, air and sea; the other half war being a land-based border war against China. The latter perspective describes a force prepared and able to contain three full and three half wars, including the two wars just described. It also accounts for two more full wars; a conflict involving nuclear weapons and a major conflict against a naval power in the Indian Ocean. The extra two half wars include defence of the maritime zone and proximate island interventionism (Thomas, 1992, p44).

However, as described earlier, relations between India and China have thawed somewhat recently; Pakistan remains a threat, but over time is likely to become less credible (either conventionally or in nuclear terms); and the possibility of a naval confrontation in the Indian Ocean seems less likely. It would seem, however, that the smaller regional disputes and internal ethnic problems are likely to continue to cause concern.

Indian defence planners would also argue that modernisation of defence equipment should not be ruled out as part of the explanation as to India's military build-up. They would cite the upgrade of old and obsolete equipment as an ongoing challenge of retaining a credible defence force as many of the other developing countries in Asia are arguing at present. In terms of spending, the upward spiral of arms prices over the last two decades and the declining value of the Indian rupee could be used to counter criticism of high defence expenditure and outlays (Joshi, 1992, p82).

**Domestic Pressures**

Another explanation of India's defence drive that has been proffered is the effect of pressure rising from within India generated from the new nationalistic sentiment growing from an increasing middle class, currently numbering some 180 million, who see great prestige and status tied to the possession of nuclear capabilities, naval might and ownership of technically advanced aircraft (Smith, 1994, p111).

Likewise, it has been suggested that India as a nation, second to only China in terms of population, sees itself as the recipient of far less respect and international recognition than it deserves (Thomas, 1992, p38). Finally, on the domestic front, it could be argued that once upward military momentum is generated within a country like India it is difficult to reverse those decisions because of vested interests and investment commitments. In this regard, Shekhar Gupta explains that during the 1980s there was a particularly aggressive body of military officials which resulted in excessive defence spending. However, the ambitions of this group were throttled by 1991 when India was declared bankrupt (Gupta, 1995, p5).

**Observations and Assessments**

Besides the explanations alluded to above, there are a number of other points that should be taken into account, some of which are detailed below. Firstly, critics of India's military build-up believe that there is an increasing gap between the real threat to India and the capabilities that it is attempting to acquire (Thomas, 1992, p35). They cite the long period of peace since 1971 as being the longest since Indian independence as a reason for cutting back rather than expanding expenditure on defence. This is especially significant considering the need for government spending in other domestic areas such as health, employment and education. Ramesh Thakur explains that the infant mortality rate in India was much higher than that of China and many of the developing South East Asian nations (Thakur, 1995, p5). Finally, they argue that India is not responding to the strategic changes in its region but that it is causing them through its military build-up. Allegations fall just short of causing an arms race in the South Asian region.

Proponents of India's defence spending highlight that there has been no relative increase in military growth and that there was even a decrease in the 87/88 annual budget allowance. Not only this, but, India's defence spending per capita is low compared to other countries like Pakistan, Israel, the US and Iraq. Finally, the supporters of a continued Indian military build-up argue that the era of relative peace in the South Asian region has been a direct consequence of Indian military dominance - the peace through strength argument (Thomas, 1992, p37). Indeed, Bruce Vaughn sees a common theme running through contemporary thinking amongst India's authorities that would envisage India having a broader region with which it should become more fully engaged (Vaughn, 1992, p20).

Sandy Gordon makes some general points in his concluding remarks in India's Strategic Future (co-edited by himself and Ross Babbage) as follows. Firstly, that India is an emerging power in Asia based on comparatively strong economic growth which
underwrites its growth in military power. Secondly, that this growth in military power, coupled with reduced superpower roles in the region, leave it stronger both relatively and absolutely. Thirdly, that there will continue to be troubles in the region varying from smaller scale domestic problems to larger conflicts that could at worst case entice superpower intervention (Gordon, 1992, p171).

Finally, Gordon says that India will continue to have a number of quite specific security interests in the region: containment of superpower intervention in South Asia; concerns over supply of oil and hence a keen interest in the Persian Gulf; and a pre-occupation with smaller regional disputes. Given these interests closer to home, and given that there is a lack of capability and political will to pursue influence at a distance, it is unlikely that India will pose a threat to South East Asia and Australia (Gordon, 1992, p173).

Overall, it can be seen from the discussion above that the reasons behind India’s military build-up are not as clear cut as analysts would like. It may be true that India has pursued a build-up of its military capability over the last decade, particularly during the 1980s, however, how long this build-up will continue and how effective it will be is difficult to judge. Recent indications suggest that India is more likely to pursue economic progress rather than military expansion. Recent spending patterns seem to suggest that India will not be able to afford high spending on defence and there is some doubt about Russia’s ability to continue supply of weapons systems as it has in the past. Despite India’s defence spending there is also wide debate about the co-ordination and therefore effectiveness of such policy. Finally, there is also some disagreement over what constitutes a credible threat to India and this tends to confuse the whole issue of what India should be spending on defence.

Conclusion

Based upon the discussion, it seems as though the major aspects of the Indian security perspective that have existed since its independence will continue to play a part in future analysis. These include both external and internal threats. Concerns include ethnic and territorial disputes, particularly those involving Pakistan and Kashmir which revolve around Hindu-Muslim rivalries. Secondly, concerns about instability brought about by insurgency groups such as Sri Lankan Tamils and Sikh separatist movements in the Punjab will continue. Finally, India will continue to have concerns over the continued supply of oil from the Gulf region.

The most significant changes to occur to India’s security outlook seem to be a direct result of two major factors. Firstly, the end of the Cold War has made India’s non-alignment perspective obsolete, which has helped to reduce tensions between India and the US. At the same time, tensions between India and China seem to have simmered somewhat. Secondly, India’s new trade liberalisation policies and its more outward looking foreign policy has strengthened its overall standing on the world stage. The superpowers seem more inclined to deal with India, albeit more likely because of opportunism rather than goodwill, and it seems as though in the longer term this will reduce Pakistan’s ability to challenge India militarily or economically. It would seem less likely that either the US or China would sacrifice its relations with India by supporting Pakistan in future disputes.

The logic behind India’s military build-up is not a cut-and-dry issue. Not only this, but, there is some conjecture about the effects of such an increase in military spending. Firstly, India can easily justify its spending on military equipment based upon its perceived threats, both from within and from outside its borders. Domestic turbulence based upon religious strife and threats from both Pakistan and China (especially a nuclear threat) provide a foundation for Indian defence planners. As well as this, one cannot rule out influences such as prestige and status, a large middle class, and a requirement to upgrade obsolete equipment. On the other hand, it is difficult to justify large military budgets in the face of other considerations such as health and living standards.

Finally, consideration needs to be made of India’s actual capability. There is a significant difference of opinion about India’s actual capability for force projection and the threat India poses to other Indian Ocean littoral sates such as Australia. Military spending should be considered in conjunction with measurement of political will and aspirations. At present, I believe that India has more interest in economic development rather than military expansionism, and that it will continue to seize the rewards on offer from countries like the US for furthering its development. Any form of expansionism could place these other considerations at risk, which would be undesirable for India. For these reasons, India is less likely to continue its spending on military equipment in the near future.
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Major Andrew Drayton graduated from RMC in 1985 and completed his Bachelor of Science with honours in Physics in 1986. In 1987 he completed the Officers' Long Aeronautical Engineering course with the British Army and has subsequently been posted to aviation units. Major Drayton spent 1992 as the Escort Officer to the Minister for Defence Science and Personnel. He completed a Graduate Diploma in Defence Studies in 1994, and is now undertaking the Masters course.
The guided-missile destroyer HMAS Brisbane prepares to come alongside at the HMAS Sterling fleet support facility in Western Australia enroute to the Persian Gulf, November 19, 1990.
Beaten Before H Hour – An Analysis of the Iraqi Defeat in the Persian Gulf War

By Major Murray Davies, Aust Int

In the Cold Light of Defeat

In the early morning of 24 February 1991, the main body of the Coalition Forces crossed their Lines of Departure and entered Kuwait and Southern Iraq. In the 100 hours that followed, the Iraqi armed forces were defeated and virtually destroyed. Since the end of the Persian Gulf War there has been considerable study, discussion and debate about the various weapons systems, pieces of equipment and tactical doctrines that helped the Coalition Forces to win this spectacular victory. Indeed, many of the “Lessons Learned” by the Coalition have been noted for the future development of defence forces world-wide.

Among all of this there is one important factor that has received very little analysis or attention, that is, what can be learned from the role the Iraqis played in their own defeat?

The Iraqi armed forces in the Persian Gulf War have too easily been dismissed as being cumbersome and ineffective, restricted by significant command and operational problems. Whilst this is essentially true, a more critical analysis of their actions in the war can identify a series of weaknesses that provided the conditions for their defeat well before the first Coalition bomb was dropped. This analysis, conducted in the cold light of defeat, can provide some basic and equally valuable lessons of war.

Background to Defeat

There are three fundamental factors that are essential to an understanding of the Iraqi approach to the Persian Gulf War. The first is the influence of Soviet involvement in the development of the Iraqi armed forces. Although the Iraqi military doctrine was originally based on British doctrine, there had been substantial Soviet influence since the 1960s. This influence could be seen in most aspects of their operational doctrine, command and control, equipment and training. Iraqi offensive and defensive tactics, particularly at regimental and divisional levels, virtually mirror those of the Soviets in areas such as echelons, objectives and reserves.¹ The Iraqis, however failed to fully apply the doctrine by accepting the mobile or fluid nature of Soviet operational doctrine, particularly defensive doctrine.²

A previous Gulf war was also a key factor in the Iraqi approach. The devastating Iran/Iraq War of 1981 to 1988 was still fresh in the minds of most Iraqis. They were guilty, like many other armies in history, of fighting “the last war”. Echoes of the Iran/Iraq War can be seen throughout the Persian Gulf War with a number of Iraqi tactics and procedures. The eight years of largely defensive operations against Iran also further reinforced aspects of the Iraqi’s rigid application of Soviet defensive doctrine.¹ It is also likely, given that there were only three years break between the two wars, that the Iraqi military machine, both men and equipment, must have still been suffering some fatigue.

The final factor to consider is Saddam Hussein himself. Much of the blame for the defeat in Kuwait rests upon the shoulders of Saddam Hussein, not simply because he was the head of state of the losing side, but because of his overwhelming involvement in the planning and conduct of the battle. The command-and-control structure of the Iraqi armed forces of 1991 reflected all the rigidity of the Soviet model on which it was based, as well as the hierarchical political structure of the Iraqi state.³ At the top of both structures was one man, Saddam Hussein. He quite clearly saw the armed forces as both the guarantor of and the greatest threat to his power. To satisfy both concerns, he ensured that the command-and-control structure of his forces was centred on him. Any form of independent thought or initiative was ruthlessly stamped out as a threat to his authority. A number of Iraqi generals in the Iran/Iraq War were executed for deviations from his orders, or for simply becoming too successful as leaders in their own right and thus possibly representing a threat to him at a later stage.³ In the conduct of the Persian Gulf War this created a situation where commanders at all levels were unwilling to make
even the simplest tactical decisions without authority from their superiors.

The Iraqi Plan

Against this background, the Iraqis were to conduct the largest conventional defensive operations by a single force against an international alliance since Korea. The Iraqi plan for the defence of Kuwait was based on a linear deployment consisting of three belts or layers. The first layer was based on a series of infantry divisions deployed along the southern borders of Iraq and Kuwait and along the eastern coastline of Kuwait. Infantry-heavy and with little integral mobility, this force was supposed to absorb the initial shock of the Coalition attack and stall long enough for a counter-attack to be mounted. The counter-attack, in turn, would be mounted by the second defensive layer based on a mobile reserve located in central Kuwait. Finally, the Republican Guards, supported by the heavy armoured divisions of the regular Iraqi army, were to be the theatre reserve and defend the approaches to Baghdad. (See Annex A).

Why Did the Plan Fail?

Essentially, there are three reasons why the Iraqi plan failed. They are:

- A defensive appreciation that virtually ignored the factors of enemy and ground;
- Major structural weaknesses in their defensive techniques; and
- The Iraqi soldiers lacked the will to fight.

The Defence Appreciation

“Extraordinary as it seemed, the Iraqis still had not appreciated what was happening, their attention was firmly focussed on their southern front and they had not realised that VII Corps’ (Coalition Forces) big left hook was gathering momentum, about to deal a hammer blow from the West.” (General Sir Peter de la Billière describing the British attack).

In the Iraqi’s defence of Kuwait they demonstrated an almost complete lack of concern for the influence that the enemy and the ground might have on their plan. Initially, it seems that Saddam Hussein did not even expect to have to fight the Coalition Forces at all. This was based on the belief that his own abilities as a statesman and a military leader would mean that war could be avoided altogether. Crucial to this, was a complete underestimation of the resolve of the Coalition Allies. With the growing realisation that the West would commit troops to combat, he further underestimated the capabilities of those troops to defeat his battle hardened army. “Those who have smelled gunpowder are different to those who have only watched Rambo movies”.

Factor Enemy.

This almost casual regard for the Coalition Forces as an enemy, was more than just bravado. The Iraqi’s do not appear to have fully comprehended the huge difference between the Coalition Forces, as an enemy, compared to the Iranians. Saddam’s actions in the period between the invasion and the Coalition “100 Hours War” provide no evidence that he was aware of the structure and capability of the forces facing him. For example, although the Iraqis possessed an extensive intelligence network throughout the region, they made no significant attempt to employ basic Human Intelligence (HUMINT) resources, such as agents, to gather information about Coalition preparations. Further, no attempt was ever made to disrupt these preparations at any stage.

This failure to make any effort to understand the capabilities of their enemy gave them an unfounded over-confidence in their own defensive abilities. Saddam was preoccupied with simple quantitative analysis of troop numbers. Believing that this analysis gave him the “quantitative advantage” over the Coalition, he neglected the “qualitative advantage” of the Coalition’s superior training, operational doctrine and technology. This failure to understand the enemy meant that the Iraqis surrendered the initiative to the Coalition Forces before the first shot was fired.

Factor Ground.

Closely linked to the failure to understand the enemy was the failure to understand the ground. This point has two aspects. Firstly, the Iraqis failed to appreciate that the ground over which the battle would be fought did not favour static defensive operations. There was little or no natural concealment or cover, no significant natural obstacles and no identifiable key terrain. Although they were later to develop some clever protective
obstacles, the ground still suited fast-moving manoeuvre warfare.\textsuperscript{12}

The second aspect was that the Iraqis restricted their thinking regarding the limitations of the ground. Perhaps they took the Coalition's aim of forcing them from Kuwait too literally, as they did not appear to have considered the possibility of de la Billière's "hammer blow from the west".\textsuperscript{13} This assumption would leave the Iraqi defence dangerously unstable as their western flanks were left open while their basic defensive layout was orientated on a Coalition attack from either the south or the coast.\textsuperscript{14} (See Figure 1.\textsuperscript{15}) The blind acceptance of such an assumption was a failing that the Coalition deception planners were to use to great effect.

Summary.

The combination of these factors resulted in an Iraqi plan that was based on engaging the Coalition Forces in a costly war of attrition. A war that would force the Coalition to a slow and bloody attack on strongly defended Iraqi positions and thereby produce "politically" unacceptable casualty figures to the Coalition governments.\textsuperscript{16} A better understanding of the terrain and the enemy would have lead the Iraqis to realise that the entire premise of such a defensive plan was flawed.

Structural Weaknesses in Iraqi Defensive Techniques

At this point, it is worthwhile to reiterate that Iraqi tactics and procedures were strongly influenced by both Soviet training and equipment and their experiences from the Iran/Iraq War. This combination of factors was to produce a series of defensive techniques that were wholly unsuited for the circumstances of the battle for Kuwait in 1990-91. The following points highlight the key failures by the Iraqis in their defence of Kuwait. They were not an army completely without strengths. Some real initiative was shown in areas such as tactical deception and major engineer obstacles. Unfortunately, these were the exception rather than the rule.

Figure 1 – Iraqi Defensive Plan – Cloth Model

A photograph of a cloth model found in the HQ of 3 Iraqi Corps in Kuwait city after liberation.

US Army Intelligence and Threat Analysis Centre.
Command, Control and Communications (C3).

As previously stated, the Iraqi command and control system was inherently weak because of its reliance on the directions of one man, Saddam Hussein. In the contest of the Persian Gulf War this meant that many senior commanders were simply unwilling to make any decisions without Saddam’s direction. This, of course, meant a heavy reliance on communications. The Iraqi communications system was, in theory, quite sound. Major systems had built-in-redundancy and overall communications procedures were good. However, the system was complex and relied heavily on the interface of a variety of Soviet and European equipment between tactical, operational and strategic levels. Such circumstances created a communications network that was both easily exploitable and easily destroyed. In fact, the breakdown that occurred as a result of the Coalition actions against communication nodes was so great that many Iraqi divisional commanders were not aware that the ground phase of the war had started until it was too late.

Defensive Layout.

Annex B gives an example of a typical defensive layout used by Iraqi troops employed in the first belt or layer of defence discussed previously. In both cases, the influence of both poorly applied Soviet tactics and the experiences of the Iran/Iraq War can be seen. As the experience of the 100 Hours War was to show, such positions were totally unsuitable. Some key reasons for this were:

Depth and Flank Protection

Defensive positions such as these were designed primarily to defeat the “human wave attacks” of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards. As such, there was a heavy emphasis on being able to provide direct fire along the most likely axis of frontal assault. Whilst tactics such as these may have been suitable for the defence of Faw or Khorramshahr during the Iran/Iraq War, they simply did not provide either the depth or flank protection to defeat the fast-moving, mobile Coalition Forces.

Construction

Although the Iraqis had some six months to prepare their defences in Kuwait, their standard of construction of unit level defences was poor. Individual fighting pits and trenches were shallow and did not appear to consider arcs of fire or mutual support. In most cases these pits were also uncovered. In the event of artillery attack, Iraqi troops would have to move back along uncovered communications trenches to squad bunkers. (See Figure 2).

Obstacles

Major defensive works, on the other hand, were good and showed some understanding of both terrain limitations and enemy capabilities. In a land where there were no significant obstacles, the Iraqi Corps of Engineers built high sand berms to slow advancing armour. They also constructed “flame trenches” radiating out from their positions which they filled with oil that could be set alight so as to blind the enemy. (See Figure 3) Whilst these works showed some imagination and initiative, they failed because of a simple tactical principle: they were not covered by observation and fire. Iraqi troops do not seem to have conducted any sort of defensive patrolling plan that would either “dominate no-man’s land” or secure these obstacles. As such, the Coalition Forces were able to breach these obstacles with limited interference.

Fire Support

Iraqi defensive positions also lacked effective indirect fire support. One reason for this is that Iraqis did not (or could not) register their targets in advance or adjust fire during a mission. This again stems from the Iran/Iraq War where the aim was to bring massive fire onto the advancing waves of Iranian troops. Such a philosophy caused a reliance on static ammunition dumps and meant that Iraqi artillery was restricted in its ability to move quickly to avoid pre-emptive strikes or counter-battery fire.

Logistics.

Finally, the defensive plan was further weakened by a cumbersome and inefficient logistic system. The static defensive approach taken by the Iraqis was reflected in their supply policy, as the majority of their stock was deployed in huge dumps. Some awareness of the potential target that these dumps would have presented to the Coalition caused the Iraqis to push the supplies back as far as possible. The overall effect of this being to greatly extend their lines of communication. The failure of the Iraqi logistic system is graphically illustrated by the television footage that showed starving Iraqi soldiers begging for food and water from their Coalition captors.
A photograph showing typical Iraqi squad shelters. The poor state of Iraqi defences is amazing given that they had almost six months of uninterrupted preparation time prior to the commencement of the Air War.

The Will to Fight

The Coalition Forces leaflet shown at Figure 4 is one of several dozen different types that were dropped on Iraqi positions leading up to the ground phase of operations. This particular leaflet uses the threat of further B-52 bombing raids to weaken the will of Iraqi soldiers to continue fighting. The interesting thing to note about this type of psychological operation is that, in itself, it is not a reason for surrender. Its aim is to highlight existing conditions and create doubt in the mind of its reader; doubt in the validity of the cause or the ability to survive the consequences of pursuing the cause. From the preceding discussion it is easy to see how the seeds of such doubt would have existed in the minds of the Iraqi soldiers even before the first B-52 visit.

The Commander-in-Chief of the Coalition Forces, Prince Khalid bin Sultan, summed this aspect up as follows:

"I'm not underestimating the Iraqi soldiers' ability and professionalism in fighting... But there is one thing that they are lacking, they don't believe in what they are fighting for right now."

Specific conditions that would have contributed to this doubt include:

The Fulfilment of Expectations

As previously discussed, it appears that Saddam did not initially expect that he would actually have to fight the Coalition Forces at all. Certainly Iraqi international propaganda would have painted the same picture on the homefront and to the soldiers in the field. This may account for the largely improvised and piecemeal approach that the Iraqis took to the defence of the Kuwait. The growing realisation that
such a fight would be necessary must have caused some Iraqi soldiers to doubt what little information they had been given. Such doubt would have been further heightened when other beliefs were challenged. For example it appears that many Iraqi soldiers were not told (or it was denied by their superiors) that they would be facing Western troops in the coming battle.\(^28\)

**The Maintenance of Needs**

The question of logistics arises again. Maintaining morale and the will to fight must be extremely difficult when soldiers are hungry and thirsty. Unless such basic needs as these are fulfilled, more intangible aspects of combat power such as morale will be impossible to achieve.

**Discipline**

The occupation of Kuwait saw a planned campaign of looting, theft and human rights abuses by Iraqi soldiers. Virtually all attractive items that could be moved were stolen and sent back to Iraq. Such state-sponsored action would bring into doubt the whole question of discipline in the army.\(^29\)

**Leadership**

Also as previously discussed, the dynamics of the Iraqi political and military relationship did not reward good military leadership. The ineffective leadership displayed from strategic to tactical levels would hardly have inspired confidence in the troops.

As a result of all of these doubts, the ill-fed, uninformed and poorly-lead Iraqi soldiers simply lacked the will to mount a spirited defence against the Coalition. Actions such as the B-52 bombings, artillery raids and psychological operations would have developed this doubt even further. In such circumstances, calls by Saddam for his soldiers to fight to the death or to become martyrs would have fallen on deaf ears.\(^30\)

**Conclusion – What Can Be Learned from the Iraqis?**

In many respects the lessons that can be learnt from the defeat of the Iraqis are more valuable than those which can be drawn from the Coalition’s victory. This is primarily because the assessment of
the “lessons learned” can be made in a less complicated environment. An environment that is free from the distractions of glossy technology such as Stealth Bombers and the newest of smart munitions. The lessons that can be learned are also so fundamental as to be readily applicable to defence forces in any circumstances of war. This article has raised a variety of lessons worthwhile for consideration. These include the use of the siting of obstacles, construction of defensive positions, the employment of artillery and the maintenance of morale. All of these lessons can, however, be broadly summarised as follows:

**C3 Systems and Procedures Must be Flexible.** Systems that are flexible enough to provide firm and clear direction as well as to allow room for independent actions by tactical commanders. Such systems must be structured around good communications, clear guidance and the mutual trust between commanders at all levels.

**Battlefield Focus.** The shape and direction of a plan must be based on a clear focus of the battlefield. Factors such as the nature of the enemy and influence of terrain cannot simply be ignored or assumed away. They must be the principle considerations in determining any tactical plan.

The preceding discussion has not been intended to degrade or insult the efforts and sacrifices, some ultimate, of the Coalition Forces. Success in war will always be the result of not just identifying the weaknesses of the enemy but in exploiting them. This exploitation must be based on accurate and timely intelligence and characterised by both detailed planning and rapid execution. The Iraqis failed in all these instances. The lack of coherent and capable C3, the failure to read the battlefield and determine a plan that suited its particular circumstances and the lack of willing manpower left the Iraqis vulnerable to the Coalition Forces well before the first bomb was dropped.

**Annexes:**
A. Iraqi Plan for the Defence of Kuwait
B. Iraqi Defensive Techniques
Iraqi Defence Techniques

The appendices provide a view of one type of defensive position used by the Iraqis during the Persian Gulf War. The "Soviet Style" defence would have been effective in the Iran/Iraq War against the largely frontal, human-wave style attacks used by the Iranians on a number of occasions. In these circumstances, this type of defence would have provided considerable fire-power forward, as well as have broken-up the frontage of the assaulting force. Within the context of the Persian Gulf War, however, this type of position was not appropriate as it could easily be out-flanked and lacked depth.
DEFENCE TECHNIQUES - STRUCTURAL WEAKNESSES

In the latter stages of the air war the other side of the berm was essentially in dead-ground to the main position as Iraqi recon patrols did not patrol past the sand berm.

APPENDIX 2

1200 M
Given that the effective ranges of the RPG-7 and the SPG-9 are 900m (stationary) and 1000m (effective), these arms could not cover the obstacles with direct fire.

NOTES
3. ibid.
11. Cigar, op cit., p. 15.
15. US Army Intelligence and Threat Analysis Centre, Courtesy of CPT Brian Lesieur, US exchange officer, School of Military Intelligence, Canungra, Queensland Australia.
16. ibid., p. 4.
17. Gregory, op cit., p. 16.
18. N. Munro, "Enemy Silence Hampers Army Intelligence Effort", in Defence News, 15 Apr 91.
19. ibid.
22. A berm was a sand wall that was constructed in front of defensive positions to slow direct assaults or firepower. These berms could be either several metres high, in the case of unit defences, or much smaller for individual fighting pits.
23. Major General E. B. Atkeson, "Iraq's Arsenal: Tool of Ambition" in Army, Mar 91. General Atkeson quotes two articles from the New York Times that indicate that part of the reason why the Iraqi engineers were more successful was that they were better quality troops. Saddam's logic was that he did not want imaginative officers in his infantry or armour as they could use their assets to mount a coup. Engineer units were considered less threatening.
27. N. Cigar, "Iraq’s Strategic Mindset and the Gulf War: Blueprint for Defeat", in the Journal of Strategic Studies, Vol 15, No 1, Mar 92.
30. Cigar, op cit., p. 5.
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Imagery

Satellite photography provided courtesy of SPOT Imaging Services, Sydney.
US Army Intelligence and Threat Analysis Centre. Courtesy of CPT Brian Lesieur, US exchange instructor at the School of Military Intelligence Canungra.

Appendices

1. Defence Techniques – An Iraqi Company in “Soviet Defence”.
2. Defence Techniques – Structural Weaknesses.

Reviewed by Wing Commander E. E. Casagrande, Air Power Studies Centre

This book has just been released in Australia, its appearance in local bookshops has been eagerly awaited by military students and just about anyone who enjoys a good story about personal relations and how such relationships can be critical to decisions made at the military-political interface. One US reviewer commented about the book that: “While the authors may have set out to do a hatchet job on Norman Schwarzkopf: the result is an axe murder.” While I would not entirely agree, the result is an intriguing tale of how General Colin Powell, applied his own theory of warfare to the Gulf crisis, while the most senior US politicians played an active part in the operational level of the Gulf War, and General Schwarzkopf tried to keep control in theatre. That the ultimate campaign worked out so well seems to be in spite of the documented human failings of the people involved.

Overall, this publication represents a complete and well documented inside story of how the higher levels of the US command and control system operated during the Gulf War. It is certainly a well rounded account and while it focuses on the strategic and operational level of commands it provides further interest by examining some of the tactical engagements that were crucial to higher level decisions.

The book took four years to produce and is extremely well researched, with extensive notes and acknowledgements. The authors had access to senior officials, military personnel and many classified and only recently released, US Government documents. That the book reveals so much of what went on behind the scenes is perhaps a reflection of how willing the senior people involved in the campaign were to discuss their part, experiences and opinions, including the performance of their peers.

These candid assessments certainly contrast with the attitude taken by many senior officers after earlier modern conflicts. Perhaps the fact that Schwarzkopf went into print very early, and no doubt profitably, with his book It Doesn’t Take a Hero, giving a very positive account of events and his part in them, may have encouraged a different approach. Schwarzkopf’s own actions also contrasted with his quoted exhortation to others to: “Watch out what you say. Why do I say that? Because we have people interviewing everyone they can get their hands on. They are out writing their books.” Such matters may well have prompted his subordinates to give their versions of the war.

The value of the book is also in a number of themes which are developed by the authors. These contradict many of the early myths which emerged about the war and have to a degree been supported by the latest accounts of the war, such as Rick Atkinson’s Crusade and some of the official studies. Amongst the beliefs challenged is the conclusion that the war was a decisive victory for the US, a theme further challenged in Jeffrey’s Record book Hollow Victory: A Contrary View of the Gulf War. For this was a victory which left the vanquished in power, in control of his nation and possessing military capabilities which swiftly and ruthlessly put down two revolts. Further, the defeated foe was able to force the US to deploy forces to defend Kuwait just a few years after the war ended.

One of the most important of the themes developed by the authors concern the conduct of the war by the leaders of the four Services represented in the Gulf. Rather than the war being a triumph of joint and combined operations, the truth may be that the Services were allowed to fight their own wars in their own way by the politicians, the Joint Chief of Staff General Powell and the Commander-in-Chief in the theatre General Schwarzkopf. There now appears there was no joint war plan and the CINC did little to synchronise the ground campaigns conducted by the Army and the Marines, or to cure the difficulties between the air and ground commanders about the use of air power. This aspect is particularly important for the ADF which is striving to achieve a true and effective joint combat capability. Perhaps the US Marine organisation my have some merit given their
success, again, in the Gulf. The story of the USMC effort in the war makes the book worth reading on its own, though readers should be aware of General Trainer’s USMC background.

The book also contends that the generals at the four and three star level were given unprecedented latitude to fight the war they wanted. To put behind the US Defence Force the stigma of Vietnam and prove that the US indeed had a mighty military force unparalleled on the globe. The politicians were also haunted by Vietnam, and Generals Powell and Schwarzkopf were given wide rein to conduct the campaign within broad strategic guidance with clear political aims. This was certainly one of the positive aspects of the war highlighted by the authors. That the military commanders did not achieve a political as well as military victory indicates a failure in their strategic perception, for the politicians were certainly willing, if no urging, a more aggressive air and ground campaign to ensure the destruction of Iraq’s ability to threaten the peace of the Gulf.

For air power enthusiasts, the book suggests that the genesis of the air campaign was Colonel John Warden and his Checkmate team in the Pentagon. As for command and control in the Gulf, The General’s War does not portray the Joint Force Air Component Commander General Charles Horner as the unqualified success that many have portrayed, given the way Navy and Marine air power was utilised during the war. The role of Warden’s man in the “Black Hole” Lieutenant Colonel Dave Deptula, is also revealed as is the political influence Warden was able to exert through his meeting with secretary Cheney down in the basement of the Pentagon. The air aspect of the war certainly provides much food for thought as Australia ponders the role of air power given our strategic circumstances.

This book moves through the various levels of command providing valuable and fascinating insights into the conduct of the war and the personalities which influenced its course. It certainly strips the emperor and reveals that the generals are not the heroes they were portrayed: the real heroes were those who were shot down, captured, bombed, injured and killed during the conflict.


Reviewed by Dr John McQuilton, University of Wollongong; Department of History and Politics.

The extraordinary amount of research that has gone into this manuscript should be acknowledged. The manuscript uses secondary sources, which is only to be expected. More importantly it uses a diversity of primary sources, ranging from war diaries to maps and the recollections of the people that actually participated in the events described. The author uses these sources to build a narrative that will not only appeal to the men and women who were there, but also has the capacity to reach out to a broader audience.

The manuscript tells the story of the men and women who were in Fortress Darwin from the initial build-up to the raids, their aftermath and beyond. This has quite frankly, been a major gap in Australia’s military history. It no longer exists.

The manuscript not only challenges past descriptions of the reactions of the Australians in Darwin to the February raids, it turns many of them on their collective ear. Bill Graham’s remark: “it’s time people were told that we were there and that we did not run” is the manuscript’s touchstone.

With what can only be described as painstaking and meticulous research, the author has unravelled the sequence of events in Darwin during those dark days in February. In the process, he presents a very different view of the popular story of Darwin ... more importantly the author shows that the men in Darwin were prepared to defend the Port, even though they knew that they were hopelessly under-equipped, under-manned and would have probably have lost their lives in any attempt to stem a Japanese invasion.

The greatest strength in Rayner’s account of Darwin lies in the way he allows the men and women who were there to tell their own story. It is the latter who have been, too often, a silent voice in Australian history ...

In summary, then, suffice to say that anyone who writes about Darwin in 1941 and 1942 in the future, and who ignores this book, does so at their own peril.