DEFENCE FORCE JOURNAL

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Contents

3 Editor’s Comment

4 Letters to the Editor

6 An Operational Concept for the Australian Amphibious Force
   Commander P. J. M. Shevlin, AM, RAN

12 A Brigade for the 1980s
   Major D. W. Beveridge

17 The Soldier’s Dilemma
   Wing Commander R. H. Sach, BJURIS, AIPMA, RAAF

28 Basic Defence Planning
   Wing Commander P. Rusbridge, RAAF

32 A Management Game for Professionals and Sub-Professionals
   Colonel J. M. Hutcheson, MC

37 Books in Review

38 The Boer War 1899-1902
   Colonel R. S. Lawson, RAAMC (Retd)

53 The History of The Australian School Cadet Movement to 1893
   Paul Kitney

61 Book Reviews

Permission to reprint articles in the Journal will generally be readily given by the Managing Editor after consultation with the author. Any reproduced articles should bear an acknowledgement of source.

The views expressed in the articles are the authors' own and should not be construed as official opinion or policy.

Contributors are urged to ensure the accuracy of information contained in their articles: the Board of Management accepts no responsibility for errors of fact.
Mr David Hammond, whose untimely death in July robbed the Defence Force Journal of an outstanding and imaginative artist, at work in the Army Audio Visual Unit, Fyshwick, ACT, earlier this year.
The sad loss of David Hammond, for nearly eight years the Staff Artist for the Army Journal and the Defence Force Journal is immeasurable. His talent was immense, and, though not seen at its best in the cramped and limiting confines of the two Journals, was appreciated by readers all over the world for its clarity, precision and for the imaginative way he brought the subjects of the articles to life in the title artwork.

This last attribute was no fluke. He used to read and re-read the articles in order to come up with an appropriate and eye-catching design. Some authors with no doubt a scintillating article but with a somewhat dry title can be thankful that David was there to add his magic touch.

His death comes at a time when the Board of Management is busy debating how best we can improve the appearance of the Journal in line with your comments in the recent questionnaire. His help and advice would have been invaluable to us.

We extend to his widow, his two daughters and his mother our deepest sympathy.

One of the suggestions from the questionnaire, this from the RAAF, has been taken up immediately. You will note that the issue number and date have been added to the left-hand page. This is so that photo-copied articles can be readily identified. Other improvements, we hope, will follow, but the most important improvement is up to you. We want articles and letters on the defence subjects which you feel most strongly about. I have said enough about the censorship issue. I shall not repeat myself.

I will, however, repeat my appeal for back numbers, both of the Defence Force Journal (No. 4 especially) and any Army Journal prior to the 1970s. There have been several requests recently for back numbers to make up sets and I have had to disappoint people. So if you have an old issue gathering dust somewhere, don’t throw it away—it might be of great value to someone. Send it to me at the address on the inside cover.

I am introducing a small segment on book titles awaiting review. It has a two-fold purpose. Firstly, it will draw attention to those books available, and secondly, it will give any potential reviewers a chance to apply for specific books on subjects which interest them. Here may I appeal once more to those reviewers who have not returned their reviews yet. In fairness to everyone, please get a move on!

Cadet Steven Eckert has written from the Pembroke Cadets (4th Battalion) in Fairview Park, South Australia, asking us to include an article on Cadets. He will be pleased to see the inclusion of Mr Paul Kitney’s article on page 53.
WATCH YOUR LANGUAGE — AND PHYSICS!
I have just read the otherwise excellent articles “To Military Writers: A Word from the Editor on Words” and “VSTOL Variations” in your March/April issue and cannot refrain from pointing out a significant error in each of them.

Colonel Matthews uses the phrase “from whence” on page 9 line 8. Since “whence” means “from where” this is a poor example from the author of an article on good English expression.

Commodore Richards’ article ignores the principles of Newtonian physics. Both Figure 1A and the text claim that the aircraft’s weight is less than its total lift prior to point Z, equal to the lift at point Z and greater thereafter.

In fact the lift equals the weight when the aircraft’s vertical acceleration is zero, which coincidentally would be near point Y. The lift must be greater than the weight thereafter in order to arrest the aircraft’s descent and cause it to climb. If the weight equalled the lift at point Z the aircraft would travel horizontally. Once established in a steady climb the weight again equals the lift.

A. K. Richardson
Computing Services Division, Department of Defence, Canberra, ACT

VULNERABILITY OF RESOURCES
Further to my letter in DFJ No 7 (November/December 1977), there have been many suggestions at to the type of weapons we should have to defend Australia, and yet we shall never be able to produce them locally for two main reasons.

• Firstly, we lack technology. I base this on the fact that there is no incentive for our school leavers to study and advance in their knowledge of scientific subjects. Last year over half the top 900 Higher School Certificate holders commenced Medicine. The reason is obvious—the incentive is there, medicare etc.—a guaranteed income. And we are one of the leading countries in medical research.

• Secondly, we lack both government and private enterprise finance to set up research centres to study the development of weapons for our Armed Forces, or to use to the full existing facilities.

If there were encouragement at Government level to negotiate with overseas companies in the setting up of defence research projects in Australia, instead of pouring out supplies of our raw materials in return for finished products as has been done in the past, then this nation could become a leading light in weapons research. This is the basis of my argument.

HMAS Albatross G. F. Tearle Nowra, NSW Petty Officer Aviation

DEFENCE SUPPLY MANAGEMENT
In support of his “Case for Rationalization of our Defence Supply Management” (DFJ No 9), Major Francis may be pleased to note that as a result of increases in its responsibility the US Defense Supply Agency was designated in 1977 as the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA).

DLA responsibilities have been expanded to include worldwide integrated management of foodstuffs and petroleum products and the worldwide disposal of excess and surplus Department of Defense materials. Other logistical services provided by DLA include the administration of the Federal Catalogue System, the maintenance of records for all industrial plant equipment owned by DOD and a general reserve of such equipment, and the operation of a central repository of scientific and technical documentation.

US Army Logistics M. J. Ball Management Center Lieutenant Colonel Fort Lee, Virginia, USA

THE DEFENCE OF AUSTRALIA
In their article “The Defence of Australia: a Bi-mobile Concept for the Army” (DFJ No. 10 of May/June 78), Major Krasnoff and Captain Houston state that recent overseas developments indicate, inter alia, a substantial improvement in the potential for the amount of detail made available to senior commanders and staffs.
Studies have been carried out in the USA and UK on the effect of different rates of information input on decision making. The following quote is from a report on one such study by J. R. Hayes, “Human Data Processing Limits in Decision Making”, Electronic Systems Division Report, ESD-TDR-62-48 (1962): “as the number of relevant information items increased, the time required to make a decision also increased, but the quality of the decision did not improve. Furthermore, when the time available for making the decisions was held constant the decisions actually deteriorated as more and more relevant information was supplied”.

We should be careful that we do not become victims of our own technology by placing increasing reliance on equipments that detract from clear thinking.

W. R. Deane
Directorate of Military Intelligence
Canberra, ACT

THE AUTHORS REPLY
In reply to Major Deane’s letter may we make the following points:

• The problems of ‘flooding’ the commander with information have been known for some time as indicated by the date of Maj Deane’s reference, and study has been directed to overcoming the problem.

• The filtering process can be either manual, i.e. the staff performing its traditional function of protecting the commander from irrelevant ‘bumpf’, or mechanical by programming data systems to present only a certain level of information.

• A major advantage of data systems is their capacity to store and update information ready for instant recall. Thus, to use a simplistic example, it may be sufficient for the Divisional Commander to know that X/RAR has an ‘Amber’ ammunition state while the logistics staff can extract the details of exactly what is required.

As we tried to stress elsewhere in the article Australia can’t afford everything and we must be selective in our choice of technology. However, it must be recalled that the Australian Army is currently still at a fairly low point on the learning curve of using computers as evidenced by the very slow computerisation of comparatively simple things like personnel records. As Army gains more expertise the potential of EDP will be more fully exploited.

Finally, we did not at any point wish to imply that computers would replace the commander’s brain. They are simply aids and, as with any aid, it is the commander’s prerogative to decide what use he will make of them.

W. W. Houston
Captain

LEADERSHIP
The article by Lieutenant M. F. Petty in the May/June 1978 issue of the Journal helps to emphasize the fact that after decades of learned tomes by behaviourists, social psychologists, and sociologists we know no more about Leadership than did the generals, philosophers, and theologians of centuries ago.

M. Long
RAAF Staff College
Fairbairn, ACT

ENLISTED AUTHORS
I refer to the letter written by Fit Lt C. H. Foster in the May/June 1978 issue No. 10 of the Journal. As an enlisted soldier, I take exception to the intimations of his letter. We, as enlisted men, are all capable of thinking and evaluating, regardless of our rank or status within the service. Surely the papers on “higher defence strategy” are merely the results of the thoughts and evaluations of a group of men who happen to be in a position of authority and have access to certain classified material.

While, as enlisted men, we may not have access to these papers and are therefore unable to form opinions and conclusions on the matter of defence strategy, quite a few of us do have a relatively good command of the English language and the ability to express ourselves in an acceptable manner at all levels.

While having the greatest respect for Fit Lt Foster’s rank and position, I feel he has erred greatly in putting pen to paper to register his “surprise and delight” at WO1 D. K. Watts’ article. Rather, he should use his rank and influence to encourage his subordinates to take an active interest in the strategy involved in the defence of Australia.

L. C. Davis
Land Warfare Centre
Canungra, Queensland

(Letters continued on p. 52)
EIGHTEEN months ago, in the first issue of this Journal, I contributed an article on the new amphibious capability that the procurement of the Amphibious Heavy Lift Ship (LSH), HMAS Tobruk, would bring to the Australian Defence Force and concluded with the thought that Army should be thinking deeply on how to make best use both tactically and logistically of an LSH/LCH squadron. Further development of Australian amphibious concepts within the pages of this Journal has been confined to a letter querying the practicability of LSH operations in the face of enemy air power, a description of Beach Unit problems in the NATO area and a proposal to raise an RAN Amphibious Battalion. In other forums the author of this article has found continuing uncertainty as to how Australia's amphibious ships should be used and how their landing forces should be obtained so, in the absence to date of any Army concept being published in this Journal, I submit my own further views for readers' consideration.

But first to take up Major Reid's letter entitled 'AT RISK' in the March/April 1977 issue where he suggested that many of the LSH's proposed roles would not be practicable in a major conflict because of enemy air power and that he thought it unlikely that any major Fleet units would be put at risk in the waters around an enemy invasion beach.

Maritime Defence of Australia

It is hardly necessary to remind readers that the function of the Royal Australian Navy is the conduct of operations at sea for the defence of Australia, in execution of which function its roles include, inter alia:

- the detection and destruction of enemy naval forces;
- establishing and maintaining superiority in areas necessary for naval operations; and
- providing naval support for land operations.

Similarly the roles of the Royal Australian Air Force are to undertake offensive air operations against enemy forces and to establish and maintain local air superiority as and where required.

If, as postulated in the letter 'AT RISK', Australia was under imminent threat of invasion, it would be difficult to imagine the Chiefs-of-Staff Committee assigning the Army to provide the first line of defence on the beaches. For any island nation, one of its most important defence assets is the sea water moat that surrounds it. The wider is that moat, the more difficult it will be for an enemy to cross it with any invasion force. If he should attempt such an operation, the most effective area in which to bring such enemy to battle is when his invasion force is in the form of passengers and cargo in air and/or sea transports. There can be little doubt that had either Napoleon or Hitler been able to brush aside the Royal Navy and land their armies into England, then those armies could have defeated Great Britain. Fortunately British defence policy across the centuries has recognised this fact and Britain's front line has always been made the coast of Europe (if not further east), NOT the beaches of England. The role of the British Army in these island defence phases was as a long stop to deal with such forces as might elude sea and air attack plus assisting in defence of the Channel/North Sea moat by amphibious raids against the enemy-occupied mainland.
United States defence policy since 1823 has similarly sought to use the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans as her defensive moat and use her naval and air forces plus Fleet Marine Forces and her Army to hold her enemies as far from the shores of the continental United States as should prove practicable.

Such maritime defence must surely be the only sensible defence policy for any island nation. It is submitted that the Australian Defence Force should put its primary efforts into ensuring that the RAN and RAAF surface, submarine and air forces—(the latter both sea based and land based)—supported by amphibious and air transported Army forces, are able to deter or defeat any hostile threat to Australia before enemy forces are established on the Australian continent.

And here it needs to be stressed that hostile threat to Australia need not involve any threat of invasion. Australia, like Great Britain in two World Wars, could be brought to her knees by an effective maritime blockade. With Australia's dependence on, for example, imported oil and certain kinds of munitions the outcome of a Battle of the Indian Ocean could be as decisive to Australia as was the Battle of the Atlantic fought between the German U-boat arm and Luftwaffe on the one hand and the allied navies and air forces on the other, with the support of Army and Marines units to ensure the capture/retention of every strategic island covering the convoy routes.

But accepting that for some military reason an enemy was bent on an invasion of continental Australia, (without debating whether that would be a likely course of action), then it must be agreed that HMA ships would certainly be at risk as they went in to attack an enemy invasion fleet approaching the coast with the considerable air cover that it would need. But so indeed would the Australian Army be at risk if, by then alone, they had equally gallantly to endeavour to hold back the juggernaut which had smashed its way through all that the RAN & RAAF could hurl against it. But the risk to ships opposing an invasion should not be over-dramatised. When the Germans were invading Crete, RN battleships and RAN and RN cruisers and destroyers operated in waters dominated by the Luftwaffe but they successfully prevented seaborne invasion even though they suffered casualties. Unfortunately, available fighter defences were inadequate to prevent a successful airborne landing and British and Australian troops, without adequate air support, were not able to defeat the airborne invasion force. Shortly afterwards a force of 7 cruisers and 14 destroyers of RN and RAN, with a few amphibious transports (Landing Ships Infantry) were able to evacuate 17,000 troops from Crete despite overwhelming German air superiority.
Employment of Amphibious Forces in Maritime Defence

With the width of Australia’s sea moat, other than in the area of the Torres Straits, one needs to establish from where any significant air cover for an invasion fleet would be operated, unless the invader also possessed a considerable aircraft carrier force. An enemy seizure of island bases would be one way of bringing his naval and air power closer to Australia, and it is contended that if Australia is under threat of invasion, the Army’s best contribution to national defence would be in supporting RAN and RAAF efforts to hold the enemy as far back from Australia’s shores as is practicable. This can best be achieved by being able to reinforce, recapture or seize strategic islands, or to strike swiftly at strategic targets, with trained landing forces carried in the RAN’s amphibious ships and/or RAAF transport aircraft.

Students of military history will be aware that when the UK was beleagured in 1940/41, eleven Commandos of light strength battalion size were raised to operate from amphibious ships and craft to strike at strategic targets along the coasts of Europe and North Africa and offshore islands, while islands in the Norwegian Sea were rapidly garrisoned and fortified. The early capture of strategic islands was essential to later allied successes in their Mediterranean, Indian Ocean, SE Asian and SW Pacific campaigns. One recollects too the importance allocated to seizing and retaining strategic islands in the Korean War and the Israeli efforts to ensure they can hold the fortified island of TIRAN and SHARM EL SHEIKH that dominate the entrance to the Gulf of Aqaba. As in Australia’s previous wars, national defence demands that the Australian Defence Force has the capability to deny to any enemy the islands scattered through our moat defensive, by means of reinforcement, recapture, seizure or neutralisation.

This writer considers that the acquisition of capabilities for such operations should be one of the primary roles of the RAN/Army Amphibious Force; of greater priority than training for land battles in Australia itself though these must, of course, also be in the essential training programme, to defeat that which maritime operations may have failed to stop.

Amphibious Forces on a Land Commander’s Seaward Flank

Once again history, from World War II to Vietnam, points to the tactical advantages available to the land commander who can use seaborne army forces on his seaward flank. The swift incursion to seize a strategic bridge required for an armoured thrust; the helicopter insertion of an artillery battery; the extrication and redeployment of a unit held up by an enemy strong point or water gap; the placing of a blocking force; the seaward landing to form one arm of a pincer movement; the use of helicopters for the rapid redeployment of patrols of sea-based infantry; the tactical options are many. The writer considers that Field Force units should be planning to practise for all such options in conjunction with the RAN’s amphibious ships.

Amphibious Forces for Evacuation and Disaster Relief

With the lessons of the use of amphibious ships for earthquake relief in the Mediterranean, flood relief in Bangladesh, cyclone relief in Australia, and of the need to evacuate civilians from lawless areas of Cyprus, Lebanon, and Vietnam, this is another use of the LSH which needs to be adequately exercised in conjunction with appropriate Army units. A ship built to be able to get men, vehicles and supplies into a land area without the assistance of man-made facilities, to command operations ashore, and to treat wounded, is custom-built to bring help to people who, through either natural or man-made disaster, have lost the normally expected facilities of civilisation.

Amphibious Forces for Logistic Support

This is the one use that does not need any further advocating since the RAN LCHs are never short of logistic tasks. The only concern is that they do not receive more training in other roles for which they are well suited.

Organisation, Training and Equipping the Landing Force

On a number of occasions the writer has been told informally that, while the views summarised above are generally agreed, the Army is not organized, trained or equipped to provide LSH-carried Landing Forces. This is
a vital matter which needs to be examined as these views are not agreed.

Organization. It is true that if the LSH is to carry a maximum landing force, no current Army unit is specifically tailored to this particular requirement. It is believed that what is required is to determine within the LSH accommodation capacity and LSH/LCH vehicle/equipment lift what is the best mix of arms that an Army Task Force could produce as an LSH/LCH Landing Force; such groupings being entitled, it is suggested, Amphibious Landing Groups (ALGs). Special landing force groupings are common to other nations' defence forces; the amphibious-orientated, air mobile Royal Marines Commando has a different organization and strength to a BAOR infantry battalion; the Soviet Marines battalion differs from a Soviet Army battalion; the Italians have a special mixed Navy/Army battalion group for amphibious operations. One small specialist Army/Navy team that must be formed is an Amphibious Beach Team (ABT) to control a beach used by landing craft and supervise their discharge and the passage of men and material across the beach.

Training. Once the composition of the Australian ALG has been determined, it is considered that a relatively short period of pre-embarkation training would prepare any fully trained Army unit’s troops for LSH operations. And, it is suggested, the training required would, in general, make them better Field Force soldiers. In addition to their established skills in entering and leaving helicopters, they would need to become proficient in entering and leaving landing craft, using their weapons from landing craft, life jacket drill, beach crossing drills, cliff ascents, negotiation of LSH inter-deck ramps, vehicle water-proofing drills, beach recovery drills and, for an ALG’s command team, learning how to command a landing from the LSH Joint Operations Room and to co-ordinate all forms of supporting arms by means of a Supporting Arms Co-ordination Centre. From overseas experience, it is the efficient use of amphibious ship command facilities that is likely to call for the longest team training for a designated landing force, but one is talking of days not months.

Assuming the ABT is formed of RAN and Army personnel already trained in beach work, they only need the training to operate as a closely knit team.

Equipment. Comparing the equipment of Field Force units with that of overseas landing forces, other than the very specialist-equipped USMC, the author considers that the Australian Army is short of very little essential equipment to conduct amphibious landings. Some items

LCH participating in an amphibious landing, landing tanks. The swimming vehicles in the foreground are US Marine Corps Amtracs.
that are suggested for review (specialists of other Corps would doubtless think of others) are:

• holdings of life-jackets;
• a beach recovery vehicle for dealing with 'drowned' or bogged vehicles;
• beach trackway to facilitate vehicles crossing soft sand; and
• vehicle water-proofing kits.

Since the above equipments are also necessary for administrative landings in Logistic over the Shore (LOTS) operations which have appeared in Army training programmes for many years, it would be expected that there should not be many deficiencies in those areas.

The Amphibious Landing Group

It would not be appropriate for a sailor to suggest what sort of seaborne forces an Army Commander might require for the various types of land-orientated operations suggested earlier for Seaward Flank operations, but the author considers it useful to raise for consideration the type of embarked Army force that could be required in support of maritime operations.

The proposal in the February 1978 issue of this Journal to raise an RAN Amphibious Battalion is not supported for a variety of reasons. As any such battalion would have to rely for financial reasons on Army equipment, Army training courses and Army maintenance support, and because such a 'one-off' unit would offer a poor career structure, it is considered much more cost-effective to find the LSH landing force from Army’s Field Force.

It is suggested that if one of Field Force’s three Task Forces was nominated for, say, a two year period at a time to be able to provide, and support logistically, a trained quick reaction Amphibious Landing Group (ALG) of about 450-500 men, this could be achieved with out detriment to that Task Force’s land operations capability. Rather the additional Marines-type skills acquired would benefit that Task Force’s capabilities—and that of the Australian Defence Force.

To be able to support Australian maritime operations by island seizure or recapture and/or swift strikes at enemy strategic targets, the availability of the following standard trained, quick reaction ALG is recommended for consideration as a core force group to build up skills:

- A Battalion Operations HQ (including Medical element)
- 2 Rifle companies
- 1 Support Platoon (Anti-tank and Mortar)
- 1 Troop of Close Support Artillery (3 guns)
- 1 Troop of Cavalry* (Fire Support Vehicles)
- 1 Troop of Field Engineers
- Element of Supply Company
- Amphibious Beach Team

(* For some operations FSVs might need to be replaced by Battle Tanks, a troop of which should also be trained for LSH operations.)

Such a grouping, being replaced by another previously trained group every two years, would provide:

• increased variety to Army training, the ALG being able to participate in a variety of least-cost overseas exercises by being transported in, and supported logistically from, the LSH;
• greater practice in some basic Army skills that do not require frequent practice in purely continental land operations, like water-proofing and cliff climbing and sea-based helicopter operations;
• a spread of amphibious experience throughout Field Force;
• a missing element of Australian maritime defence capability by adding the Marines-type capability that are a necessary part of a maritime defence force that needs to defend sea lines of communication and take the war to the enemy beyond coastal waters; and
• a valuable additional military/diplomatic option to the Commonwealth Government in any time of crisis.

It might be thought appropriate for personnel of the ALG during their period in the nominated ALG as trained amphibious soldiers to wear the green beret currently the headgear of the Reserve Army Commando Companies who have maintained the Australian Army's sea-based raiding expertise.
Conclusions

It is concluded that:

- the Australian Defence Force requires an amphibious capability to support maritime operations, land operations and to conduct disaster relief;
- historical study indicates that the combination of tactical surprise and adequate escort will enable amphibious ships to lodge their forces without undue risk;
- the RAN’s projected LSH/LCH combination provides a viable core force amphibious ship capability;
- an Amphibious Landing Group organization, to be provided from an Army Task Force, needs to be developed, tailored to operate from an LSH with, when necessary (and practicable), LCH support;
- without detriment to any existing capabilities, this new joint force combination will provide increased versatility and viability to Australian maritime and land operations; and
- the development of this necessary capability merits priority in Defence funding and training effort.

THE SILENT SERVICE

“Naval personnel have a long standing tradition of reticence and moderation when committing themselves to the written word.”

from the reply to the questionnaire by HMAS Brisbane.
"A complex of independent brigades may be a more appropriate basis for conventional operations than the traditionally accepted divisional structure'.

Ross Babbage, *Australia's Strategic Re-orientation — Some Important Implications.*

**INTRODUCTION**

The above quotation from Ross Babbage's article is representative of a questioning attitude to one of our more traditional military structures.

Except for a brief flirtation with the pentropic structure the Australian Army Division has not changed in its essentials since World War II. The divisional structure although battle proven, has disadvantages in our peace-time setting: designed to operate as a coherent force, our regular division is fragmented over thousands of miles.

Recently developed doctrine emphasises the need for dispersion, the use of open flanks and the ability to operate in unit or sub-unit groups. Add to this the fact that the combat power developed by manoeuvre units has increased quite considerably, and it is not unreasonable to accept that the time has come to develop smaller more compact battle formations.

This article presents a possible organization, in basic form, and as it might be applied to our contemporary setting.

**BRIGADE OR DIVISION?**

Terminology can be confusing; in Australia we use the term 'division' in a particular sphere of reference. To us it is a formation of nine infantry battalions and ancillary combat and logistic support units that can be grouped into three task forces. It is the lowest level of formation that includes all arms and services and is a Major General's command.

Different examples can be taken from other nations. The new British Division comprises five 'Battle Groups' plus supporting arms and services and includes two task force headquarters under which combat elements may be grouped.

The proposed American Heavy Division will include three brigades each of five manoeuvre battalions and divisional combat support and service units. An American brigade in this structure will, except for its lack of organic combat and service support elements, be almost equivalent to a British division.

Essentially this article examines the reduction in size of our basic fighting formation. In doing this then are two choices—reduce the size of the Major General's command and create more but smaller divisions, or create a smaller formation combining all those elements necessary for autonomous operation.

The choice made in the article is the latter and the method proposed is the insertion of a combat brigade at the level now filled by the division. Division could then fill the function now carried out by corps, and corps head-
quarters would become a regional or force command level.

In this setting a number of independent brigades would each operate within an assigned area of operations. Divisional headquarters would be deployed to command brigades and an allocation of divisional combat support and logistic units to supplement those brigades. Divisions would be formed on a ‘task force’ basis rather than permanent groupings. The next level of command could be designated ‘Defence Region’ headquarters and would command and direct divisions and the lines of communication structure necessary for their support—such defence regions might also be tri-service in nature. A possible example is at figure 1.

![NORTH EASTERN DEFENCE REGION](image)

**THE COMBAT BRIGADE**

Traditionally brigades as we know them have been triangular in format; however an independent formation will require more than three manoeuvre units to give sufficient operational flexibility, the number of units being limited by the ability of the commander and his staff to exercise control.

Harking back to the American and British examples, both appear to favour a pentropic structure but it should be noted that the British have found it necessary to insert two intermediate tactical headquarters between division and battle group. The Americans may be relying more on newly developed computer technology to assist in the control of their brigade.

The limiting factor appears to be that of control; to command five battalions effectively the staff must be able to collect and assimilate data pertaining to fifteen to twenty company size elements. With access to computer assistance this may be feasible but, until then, it appears better to opt for a four battalion structure.

Four battalions or manoeuvre units is a force that can be controlled by a single headquarters. However, using our pentropic experience, if the commander has a deputy with the nucleus of a small staff it is possible to form an alternate or step-up headquarters; deploy a task force on a covering force role or hold part of his force as a pivot of manoeuvre and deploy the remainder in an offensive role.

Thus far we have identified two elements of the organization:

a. four manoeuvre units, and
b. the need for an alternate command element,

let us now examine each component in turn.

**THE MANOEUVRE UNITS**

The term ‘manoeuvre unit’ is used deliberately; force studies will be necessary to establish their type, which dependent on the task and the equipment and money available, could be infantry, mechanised infantry, armour or combinations thereof. The availability of funds will be the most significant factor. However, whatever the form of the manoeuvre units, they will require tactical mobility in their own organic transport.

Given the cost of equipping with modern armour and the relative cheapness of anti-armour technology, the main brigade type would probably be infantry with armoured brigades as regional reserve forces and supporting armoured units in divisional troops. In peace time, brigades could certainly be infantry—the use of armour being restricted to state of the art training.

The Infantry Battalion is currently structured as a ‘mini division’, it could be streamlined down to its essential combat elements with support not continuously required provided by combat support units. Such a restructured battalion could contain four rifle companies, a headquarters, combat support company with anti-armour and mortar platoons and a logistic support company with administrative, medical and technical support platoons.
Ideally the battalion should be mobile in organic light armoured personnel carriers, not necessarily tracked—Glesenheyner in his article ‘Tanks, Wheeled or Tracked’, in the Asian Defence Journal, discusses some of the available options. Surveillance, reconnaissance and anti-air elements should be common to all rifle companies with pioneer support available from direct support engineers. The combat support company headquarters could provide the basis of an integrated Fire Support Control Centre in conjunction with supporting artillery and anti-armour elements and the logistic support company headquarters the battalion logistic command post.

COMMAND AND CONTROL

A combat brigade based on four infantry battalions with organic combat and logistic support units is a large and complex command. In keeping with its status as an integral formation of all arms and services, it would appear appropriate to revive the rank of Brigadier General as Commander.

To assist the commander, a deputy with the rank of Colonel is suggested. The Deputy Commander would understudy and relieve him of aspects of operational or logistic command and with a small staff would provide an alternate or step-up headquarters. Also this alternate headquarters could command a small task force for limited periods.

The normal headquarters staff would be required. Possibly a Lieutenant Colonel COFS, an operations cell with an SO2 (OPS) and staff to run an operations command post, an intelligence cell with an SO2 (INT) and intelligence staff assisted by a brigade intelligence platoon containing interrogation, airphotograph and battle intelligence sections, and a personnel and logistics cell with an SO2 (PERS/LOG) and staff.

The headquarters would require sufficient manpower to man operations, intelligence and personnel/logistic command posts on a 24 hour basis and throw off a small step-up/alternate task force headquarters on a similar basis. The personnel/logistic staff function is seen to be planning and monitoring in nature, logistic command would be invested in a separate logistic headquarters.

Instead of splitting into Main and Rear components, the brigade headquarters would remain together (except for deployment of the step-up/alternate headquarters). The housekeeping and communications function could be provided by a brigade headquarters support squadron containing administrative, defence and signals troops manned from the appropriate corps.

COMBAT SUPPORT

Reconnaissance. Operations in the Australian hinterland will require quite extensive reconnaissance support. This could be provided by a reconnaissance squadron giving medium cover to the front and flanks and supplementing the close cover given by infantry patrols and surveillance equipment.

A squadron of four troops would provide the necessary capacity and have effort available for a detached task force. Equipment could include a mix of light armoured cars and motor cycles, the armoured cars providing mobility, limited firepower, surveillance equipment and communications; the motor cycles, close reconnaissance in support of the armoured cars or to infantry battalions.

Aviation. An aviation troop will be required to provide command and liaison, radio relay and assistance to the reconnaissance squadron.

Anti-Armour. Dependent on the forecast threat, the brigade could include an anti-armour squadron of four troops mounted in light armoured cars equipped with precision guided weapons. The squadron would operate in a tank hunter/killer role in the covering force/screen or supplement battalion anti-armour weapons.

Artillery. The need to operate dispersed and possibly outside the range of divisional artillery will necessitate extensive organic artillery support. A suggested grouping being an artillery regiment consisting of:

- RHQ/Brigade Fire Support Centre (FSC);
- four direct support batteries;
- a general support battery;
- anti-air battery;
- locating troop; and
- headquarters battery including technical support troop.
Engineers. Engineer support could likewise be provided by a regiment comprising:

- RHQ/Brigade Engineer Headquarters;
- direct support field squadron of four troops;
- general support field squadron; and
- engineer support squadron with administrative, resources, plant and technical support troops.

Command and Control. All combat support troops would be organic to the brigade and as such under brigade command. However, when operating under close divisional control, reconnaissance, aviation and anti-armour units might operate within divisional priorities.

The Brigade FSC would retain command of all organic artillery but the highest formation in range would co-ordinate fire when necessary.

In the same vein, brigade engineers would respond to divisional priorities and divisional engineer units supplement the brigade when required.
LOGISTIC SUPPORT

Brigade logistic support will involve complex planning and management and this could be better provided by a logistic headquarters commanding that support rather than our present method of staff co-ordination. In this setting the brigade personnel and logistics staff would carry out the staff planning function and then monitor and advise the commander whilst a brigade support headquarters would command and manage the logistic units. Such a headquarters might include a Lieutenant Colonel, Commanding Officer, brigade support and staff who would command service units and administrative areas and co-ordinate the logistic system.

The service units under the brigade support headquarters should include:

- a transport squadron and field supply company to provide replenishment;
- a field workshop company to provide second line repair and recovery;
- a medical company for casualty evacuation and treatment; and
- a military police platoon for traffic control and disciplinary support.

Under the brigade system it would of course be necessary to extend the present logistic concept down to that level, with divisional or force troops establishing replenishment parks from which brigade transport troops would replenish brigade distribution points.

SUMMARY

The proposed brigade is shown in outline at figure 2. It is a departure from our traditional modus operandi but is not radical nor impractical. It is a smaller and more compact formation than the infantry division and is in fact not unlike the structure that geographical dispersion has already forced on us.

The next part of the article will present a possible application to the present day.

THE PRESENT DAY

Under the brigade concept the present 1st Division would be reorganised so as to reflect its altered role. With less emphasis on the direct command of combat and logistic support, a restructuring of arm and service headquarters might be appropriate. The ability of brigades to act as autonomous formations could enable the peacetime command function to be exercised by HQ FF Comd, leaving HQI Div free to concentrate on the production and management of formation exercises and tactical and logistic war games. On mobilisation, this headquarters might form the nucleus of a defence region headquarters or a field division headquarters and could carry out peacetime contingency planning on those lines.

Each regular task force could be redesignated as an infantry brigade and reorganise as such. Manning the brigades to full strength would be beyond Regular Army (ARA) resources without a considerable reallocation of manpower between the functional commands. A possible solution is to take the 'one army' concept to its conclusion and incorporate Army Reserve (A Res) units and personnel into each brigade.

Brigade headquarters could contain a proportion of A Res positions and shadow positions alongside ARA staff appointments, ie. A Res Deputy Commanders, A Res staff officers and other ranks shadow posted and used to make up ARA manning shortages during exercises.

Each brigade could contain two ARA and two A Res infantry battalions, and combat support and service support units a proportion of A Res sub-units, platoon/troops or personnel as appropriate. In this way the ARA component of each brigade would remain large enough for viable troop exercises in peace and would provide a better structure for mobilisation for war.

CONCLUSION

This article has presented an alternative to the present divisional structure. To some, it may be radical, to others not radical enough. In conclusion it should be pointed out that it draws on Australian lessons learnt and represents an attempt to fit an organization to both our needs on mobilisation and our present geographical dispersion.
The politico-legal elite cannot, however, be accused of remote and callous pontification; indeed, writings of many eminent jurists concerned with military law display a passion for reason and justice. Nevertheless, relative isolation from the military environment has, all too frequently, proved an insuperable obstacle to the development of operationally acceptable laws.

Servicemen themselves must accept responsibility for some portion of this censure. Legal systems are innately dynamic, obtaining essential ingredients of rationality and acceptability from social interaction. Within the civil sphere, competing religious, political and economic interests highlight promptly any actual or perceived anomalies. Petitions, public demonstrations and the ballot box all provide avenues through which social evolution is identified. Service society has displayed but little evidence of a corresponding interactive process.

I wonder whether prevailing complacency would be shattered if Servicemen understood the implications of a problem which jurists, with profound mastery of understatement, refer to as the ‘soldier’s dilemma’.

In a nutshell, Servicemen are obligated to obey orders. Failure to do so can result in severe punishment. Conversely, the Serviceman who obeys an ‘illegal’ order, viz. one which requires him to commit an offence, is considered culpable. To be candid, I am unsure whether the true dilemma is; how can Servicemen give immediate and unquestioning obedience whilst attempting to determine whether orders are ‘legal’; or, how can they ascertain,
whether their orders are 'legal' or not? For practical purposes, perhaps the questions are identical. In any event, the answer is straightforward; in many cases, they cannot.

My primary aim is to alert Servicemen to the confusing and self-contradictory state of law governing the 'soldier's dilemma'. In achieving this end I will examine the historical basis for laws applying to war, highlight significant international developments in legal decisions given by tribunals and contained in treaties to which Australia is a signatory, then consider applicable domestic law. I will also propose two measures which, if accepted, would minimize the dilemma. However, I must add the cautionary note that concrete progress is at best a remote possibility, albeit one which will be enhanced if the Service community expresses dissatisfaction with the existing situation.

A Historical Perspective

To begin, let me make clear my belief that laws governing armed conflicts are indispensable. Laws of war are as old as civilization. Babylonians of the seventh century B.C. had well-established doctrines, as did the ancient Hebrews. Hebrew principles are recorded in Deuteronomy 20:

'. . . and when the Lord thy God hath delivered it (a city) unto thine hands, thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword: but the women and the little ones and the cattle and all that is in the city, even all the spoil thereof, shalt thou take unto thyself . . .' 3

In the fourth century B.C., Sun Tzu noted it was forbidden to injure a wounded or elderly enemy. He added:

'Treat the captives well and care for them. All soldiers taken must be cared for with magnanimity and sincerity that they may be used by us'.

These early rules were little more than strategic foresight, promoted as a protective measure in case of defeat or an administrative basis from which productivity could be restored within conquered territories. In more complex societies, the logical inconsistency of utilizing unabridged butchery to expand civilization became increasingly apparent. Ancient Greece and Rome employed truces, armistices and safe passes. Poisoned weapons were considered illegal.

This apparently healthy progress was temporarily arrested when Christian nations invented, then armed themselves with, morality. During the Middle Ages, 'just wars', waged against non-Christians, resulted in atrocities on a major scale. However, subsequent reactions provided an impetus which expanded into comprehensive, though nebulous, standards of conduct. A chivalric code was developed. Jurists and theologians began synthesizing contemporary practice with Greek and Roman dogma.

During the nineteenth century, general recognition of the requirement for identifiable regulations led to proliferation of treaties, accords and agreements. Conferences aimed at formalizing universal laws of warfare were held but little of substance was achieved. Nevertheless, nations generally recognized that standards of acceptable conduct were embodied in courts martial decisions, formal treaties and the opinions of eminent jurists. Paralleling these developments was the increasing participation of jurists and the diminishing influence of field commanders.

Judicial Decisions

So far as I can determine, the first recorded case in which obedience to superior orders was given as a defence occurred in 1474 A.D. Peter Hagenbach, who had been appointed Landvogt (Governor) of the Upper Rhine by Duke Charles of Burgundy, exhibited bloodthirsty enthusiasm in suppressing his subjects. At a subsequent trial Hagenbach's counsel argued:

'He had no right to question the orders he was obliged to carry out, and it was his duty to obey. It is not proven that soldiers owe absolute obedience to their superiors? Does anyone believe that the Duke's Landvogt could have remonstrated with his master or have refused to carry out the Duke's orders? Had not the Duke, by his presence, subsequently confirmed and ratified all that had been done in his name?'

The tribunal remained unmoved and Hagenbach was found guilty.

Resultant doctrine, consolidated by numerous decisions, was expanded by the Wirz Trial to embrace superiors (with implications for intermediaries) who issue (or convey) illegal
orders. In this trial, the Judge Advocate advised:

'A superior officer cannot order a subordinate to do an illegal act, and if a subordinate obeys such an order and disastrous consequences result, both the superior and the subordinate must answer for it'.

These formidable claims were modified by the South African case of Reg. v. Smith, in which the presiding judge held:

'. . . it is monstrous to suppose that a soldier would be protected where the order is grossly illegal (but that he) is responsible if he obeys an order not strictly legal is an extreme proposition which the Court cannot accept. Especially in time of war, immediate obedience . . . is required . . . I think it is a safe rule to lay down that if a soldier honestly believes he is doing his duty in obeying . . . and the orders are not so manifestly illegal that he ought to have known they were unlawful, (he) will be protected by the orders'.

The Llandovery Castle Case produced a further modification when its court held:

'A refusal to disobey the commander of a submarine would have been something so unusual it is humanly possible to understand that the accused could not bring themselves to disobey. That certainly does not make them innocent. They had acquired the habit of obedience to military authority and could not rid themselves of it. This justifies the recognition of mitigating circumstances in determining the punishment'.

Following upon, though not directly allied to, the Llandovery Castle decision, there was considerable debate over the question of whether superior orders could provide a defence per se or merely served as a reason for mitigation of punishment. One leading text on international law amended its interpretation of this problem three times in three editions.

Wide publicity has been given to decisions by the Nuremberg Tribunal. In providing guidance on the problem of duress in superior orders, the Tribunal held:

'Individuals have international obligations which transcend the national obligations of obedience imposed by the State. He who violates the laws of war cannot obtain immunity while acting in pursuance of the authority of the State if the State, in authorizing action, moves outside its competence in international law. That a soldier was ordered to kill or torture in violation of the international law of war has never been recognized as a defence to such acts of brutality though . . . the order may be urged in mitigation of the punishment. The true test, which is to be found in varying degrees in the criminal law of most nations is not the existence of the order, but whether moral choice is in fact possible . . .'

The question of choice, or duress, was again addressed in the Einsatzgruppen Trial. Its tribunal held:

'If one claims duress in the execution of an illegal order it must be shown that the harm caused by obeying the illegal order is not disproportionately greater than the harm which would result from not obeying the illegal order . . . There is no law which requires that an innocent man must forfeit his life or suffer serious harm in order to avoid committing a crime which he condemns. The threat, however, must be imminent, real and inevitable . . . The test to be applied is whether the individual acted under coercion or whether he himself approved of the principle involved in the order . . .'

This apparently succinct statement of principle failed to encompass numerous situations, at least two of which have since eventuated. US v. Keenan involved unpremeditated murder in response to orders. The accused demonstrated that his actions were in accordance with the pervasive indoctrination of US Marine Corps training. However, a Board of Review held that the defence was unacceptable. This decision was further reinforced by US v. Griffen in which a tribunal held that killing a prisoner, whilst acting under orders, could not be justified on the grounds that the prisoner's retention might have seriously endangered an entire platoon.

Clearly, under existing law, the defence of superior orders cannot operate where gross violations of basic human standards have been committed. Responsibility for such violations embraces subordinates who carry out and superiors who issue illegal orders. Beyond that, many significant aspects are unresolved. What
guidelines can be applied to determine whether an infringement is fundamental or of some lesser degree? In the latter case, can the defence of superior orders invariably operate? If so, are superior orders exculpatory or merely mitigatory? What constitutes duress? Is duress a defence under any circumstances or is it limited to minor war crimes? The Einsatzgruppen Trial implied the existence of a test applying to all offences. However, this viewpoint has been contradicted by an eminent academic whose opinion was cited with approval in the Trial of Generaloberst von Falkenhorst; the pertinent statement being:

'It is clear, however, that threats of death, or even of grievous bodily harm, will excuse some crimes that have been committed under the influence of such threats ... It certainly will not excuse murder'.

Innovations

Of fundamental concern to Servicemen facing a 'soldier's dilemma' is the evolutionary nature of case law. In effect, doctrines introduced by a recorded decision of any one trial might not be considered 'good law' until successive tribunals have applied them with either approval or modification. This process can take many years. Meanwhile, an accused whose actions are within the ambit of an emergent concept is placed in jeopardy. Only the court can determine ultimately whether he has committed a crime or not.

The 'rule of proportionate response' is a typical case in point. So far as I can determine, this 'rule' holds that the degree of military damage inflicted must be in approximate proportion to the size and significance of the enemy target. Some authorities accept this as 'good law', others recognize that it might become so. North Vietnam used the 'rule', to justify branding all captured American airmen as war criminals. My concern here is that Servicemen tasked with either strategic bombing operations or the delivery of indiscriminate weapons, particularly missiles, might discover in retrospect that their actions could be classified as criminal.

The Statutes

Regrettably, the 'soldier's dilemma' cannot be resolved by reference to existing protocols or conventions. The most important of these are the Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907, the Geneva Protocol of 1925 and the four Geneva Conventions of 1949. In essence, the Hague Conventions established agreements governing prize courts, land and maritime warfare, neutral powers and similar regulatory procedures. They provided also for an international judicial machinery. The Geneva Protocol expanded existing weapons prohibitions to include poisonous gases and bacteriological warfare. In 1949, four Geneva Conventions rationalized and, to some extent, consolidated previous international legislation.

These agreements, in total, contain hundreds of provisions, rules and prohibitions. Some—a prohibition against firing on lifeboats, for example—appear self-evident. Many are not. Moreover, in any international forum, the extent of legislative application is incredibly complex. Of 64 signatories to Geneva Convention I (1949), 23 expressed a total of 89 modifications or reservations. Expecting Servicemen to have more than the most peripheral knowledge of these provisions is unrealistic.

A further complication is imposed by judicial interpretations. Comprehensive though they might be, existing conventions are subject to judicial, or statutory, interpretation in accordance with established precedents. This process of statutory interpretation is by nature evolutionary, embracing problems similar to those I have already discussed with reference to developments in case law.

Finally, there remains the daunting possibility of retroactive national or international legislation; that is, statutes given post-dated effect. Existing Australian law generally supports the notion that retroactive legislation is contrary to fundamental notions of justice and will not be entertained. Nevertheless, most, if not all national and international legislatures have power to pass laws with retroactive effect. When sorely pressed they have done so.

The Eichmann Trial is an example in which the accused was charged, under an Israeli law, with offences committed before Israel became a State. The court held:

'... the nature of the law in question as one which created extra-territorial offences with retroactive effect is not in doubt ... even were counsel for the appellant right in saying that the character as aforesaid of the law is
repugnant to the law of nations (a claim which was earlier dismissed) even then this contention could not avail him.\textsuperscript{15}

**Future Developments**

Potential developments in international legislation auger ill for conventional Servicemen, especially combatants. In his Report on Human Rights in Armed Conflicts of 18 September 1970\textsuperscript{16} the United Nations Secretary General advocated extensions to the rights of guerrillas\textsuperscript{17} and to 'civilians and combatants in conflicts which arise from the struggle of peoples under colonial and foreign rule for liberation and self determination'.\textsuperscript{18} The United Nations has also considered banning the use of mines and napalm.\textsuperscript{19} Other weapons commonly employed by Western powers have come under close scrutiny. Significantly, devices such as booby trapped bodies and poisoned foodstuffs used by less affluent or more manpower intensive forces have generally escaped adverse criticism.

Non-Western blocs in the UN General Assembly could amass the numbers to pass resolutions banning a wide range of technologically based anti-personnel weapons. Presumably, Australia would either oppose any such motion or abstain from voting. Nevertheless, if such 'laws' gained international recognition, Australia and its allies would have to choose between seriously degrading their anti-personnel weapons options or adopting an independent stance. This latter path, within the international context, leads directly to illegal actions authorized by illegal orders.

The Law in Australia

There are three circumstances in which Australian Servicemen, having acted under orders, might face charges of having transgressed the laws of war; firstly, an enemy power could press charges against captured personnel; secondly, in the event of defeat, Australians could appear before tribunals established by either a single enemy power or its allies acting conjointly; and thirdly, Australia could decide to prosecute its own Servicemen. In the first two instances, any accused attempting to mount a defence based wholly or partly on superior orders would be effectively hamstrung by both the emotional prejudice of his judges and the intricate uncertainties of international law. His prospects of success would be minimal. How, then, would he fare if charged by Australian authorities?

In practice, an Australian Serviceman charged by an Australian authority would be judged by an Australian tribunal—probably a court martial. The charge would be framed to allege breach of a legislative enactment. Law to be applied would be determined partly by interpretation of the relevant statute and partly by reference to a combination of international legislation, extra-Australian case law, internationally accepted customs and the opinions of eminent jurists.

The legal status of this second category of sources is difficult to determine. On the one hand they would be regarded as 'persuasive'; that is to say, not binding upon a tribunal but nevertheless relevant and influential. On the other hand, jurists recognize a concept named the 'Doctrine of Incorporation'. In effect, this doctrine claims that international law to which a nation has assented or with which its tacit agreement may be implied, is considered to be part of national law. Therefore, precisely which authorities might be applied to a case involving the 'soldier's dilemma' and how 'persuasive' they would be, is anybody's guess.

Looking to the future, the dilemma was considered, in my opinion inadequately, when
the Defence Force Disciplinary Code (DFDC) was drafted. Relevant extracts from DFDC, Second Draft, read:

'19(1)(9). A person who . . . when ordered by his superior officer, or otherwise under orders, to prepare to carry out operations against the enemy, does not use his utmost exertions to carry those orders into effect . . . is guilty of an offence.'

'15. The fact that a person charged with an offence acted in obedience to the command or order of a superior shall not constitute a defence to that charge but shall, if the person is convicted be taken into account in mitigation of sentence.'

Responding to a request by the Chiefs of Staff Committee, the Judge Advocate General of the RAAF (JAG) recommended, following publication of the Second Draft DFDC, alternative wording for S.15. I cannot determine whether the JAG's proposal will be accepted nor do I support it. The JAG's proposed substitute states:

'A person shall not be liable to be convicted of an offence by reason of an act or omission he engages in:

a. in execution of the law; or

b. in obedience to an order of a superior officer unless that order was clearly unlawful or if it was not clearly unlawful unless he knew it was unlawful or ought in the circumstances to have known it was unlawful'.

The JAG's rationale was based on a complex variety of factors. Three are of special relevance to the 'soldier's dilemma'. Firstly, the revision clearly incorporates the concept that Servicemen have a primary duty of obedience; that they should, unless other specified factors are evident, have to make a decision only when an order is obviously unlawful. This modification of the 'manifestly unlawful rule' was described by the JAG as:

'... an acceptable compromise between the supremacy of law and the discipline of the services'.

Secondly, sub-section (b) of this revision incorporates the notion that a Serviceman who knew, or ought to have known, better should not be able to seek protection under the manifestly unlawful rule. This gratuitous addition, apparently designed to 'reflect a more modern attitude to responsibility . . .' is surprising in view of a previous statement by the JAG that:

'The Conventions (the 1949 Geneva Conventions) only require legislation to provide what each party to them considers effective penal sanctions for grave breaches, and there is nothing inconsistent with this that a party should consider its criminal law provisions as effective sanctions where they cover everyone except soldiers acting in obedience to orders not manifestly illegal'.

The implication is that a tribunal, considering charges in accordance with the JAG's proposed S.15(b), should apply a 'reasonable soldier' test to determine whether an accused ought to have known that his actions were unlawful. I would challenge the validity of applying a reasonable anything test to the operational environment and will later discuss this point in some detail.

Thirdly, if I interpret him correctly, the JAG inferred that his modification would subject a peacetime Serviceman more to the ordinary processes of law. Whether intensification of the 'soldier's dilemma' in peacetime is or is not desirable could be debated at length. However, assuming the JAG's view to be correct, this issue could have been resolved by introducing two separate and unambiguous standards; one to be applied in wartime, the other during peacetime. Second Draft DFDC, as presently structured, contains several similar provisions.

Without doubt, the JAG's proposed revision is a positive improvement on the Second Draft DFDC S.15. By implying a 'reasonable soldier' test it minimizes the possibility of actions or omissions being assessed by the conventional 'reasonable man' standard employed in civilian courts. (The mythical 'reasonable man' being a common-or-garden passenger on the Sydney Harbour Ferry—a creature whose standards of correct behaviour are likely to vary markedly from those of a Serviceman.) Additionally, it introduces circumstances in which a plea of superior orders can protect an accused against all except manifestly illegal actions. Acceptance of the JAG's recommendation would therefore reduce the 'soldier's dilemma' marginally. Nevertheless, I consider that significantly more could and should be done.
Two 'Protective' Measures

Jurists might claim I have overstated the significance of the 'soldier's dilemma'. Their arguments, I suspect, would rest upon two points. Firstly, the Crown has an option on whether to prosecute or not. Charges of war crimes against Australian Servicemen would be initiated in only the most extreme circumstances. Secondly, established criminal law procedure demands that, to secure a conviction, the prosecution must show an accused had, or should have had, knowledge of the wrongfulness of his actions. Therefore, the Serviceman is protected adequately from any gross injustice. I believe both objections are fallacious; the protective measures are merely hypothetical.

Admittedly, the reluctance of governments and Services to prosecute their own combatants has been notorious. However, here I emphasize the past tense. The era in which there was an option to withhold prosecution has either drawn to a close or will soon do so. Australian society has become less constrained and more ready to criticize. Opposition to national policies and procedures is increasingly strident and, apparently, better organized. Traditional ethics governing confidentiality in the public sector have diminished. Higher educational levels are producing a more rebellious and perceptive population; a populace from which future volunteer Servicemen and conscripts will be drawn. Future Servicemen are more likely to demand adequate legal protection and defy security restraints in exposing dubious tactical practices. Yesterday’s 'bush lawyer' might hold an LL.B.

The news media also is less restrained in its criticism and has become, as two successive Federal elections demonstrated, less editorially predictable. Its technical capacity to televise hostile operations has expanded dramatically. Media censorship is politically dangerous. In future conflicts news media penetration is likely to publicise any illegal or quasi legal operations. The inevitable mistakes will be highlighted, battles reviewed, tactics analysed. Leftist inspired demands for judicial inquiries are almost inevitable.

Internationally, the operational trend is heavily biased towards conflicts between conventional forces and rebel organizations. Between 1958 and 1965 outbreaks of guerrilla insurgency and national uprisings increased by 150 percent and 250 percent respectively. Australia cannot reasonably expect to remain insulated from environments in which distinctions between friend and foe, enemy and ally, passivist and activist will be difficult; women and children are likely to be involved, tempers will fray, innocents will be killed or maimed. The scope for illegality borne of operational necessity will increase.

The combination of these social, ethical and political factors suggests to me that Servicemen can no longer anticipate protection through governmental intervention. The hard fact of life is that governments are basically concerned firstly with national survival, secondly with political survival. In a period of political crisis the ballot box will take precedence. Those sceptical of my conclusions should study the background to charges laid against Captain Medina and Lieutenant Calley (US Army).

The second 'protection' afforded is that to secure conviction in any criminal trial a prosecutor must demonstrate that the accused appreciated the wrongfulness of his actions; that he had a 'guilty mind' or mens rea. In practice, concrete evidence illustrating a man's state of mind is not always available. Therefore, domestic cases resolve the issue by applying a 'reasonable man' test. They ask: 'What would a reasonable man placed in these circumstances have done or thought?' The JAG has impliedly proposed substituting a more pertinent 'reasonable soldier' test. My quarrel is not with the additional measure of protection but rather with an applied mens rea concept per se.

The conduct of operations in hostile environments demands predictable responses to orders given under circumstances in which fear might prevail over anything less than automatic reactions. Therefore, military training systems have consciously developed techniques designed to instil instinctive response patterns and unquestioning obedience to orders. For example, the Army's training process typically begins when new enlistees are deliberately disoriented by complete severance from their civilian environment. Induction starts with foot and rifle drill, then develops to include combat and tactical procedures. Special 'intelligence briefings', designed to reinforce the indoctrination process, are frequently held prior to embarkation for combat operations. Successful graduates
are commonly termed 'doctrinally orthodox'—a euphemism for brainwashed. No agency has yet identified an appropriate alternative.

In wartime, Service training is often reinforced by a carefully designed program of nationalistic propaganda. The principles of public manipulation are well known and have been practised extensively. One analyst, describing the process wrote:

'Having sought to aim war guilt and all the moral condemnation this entails on the enemy, the next step is virtually inescapable; to make the enemy appear inhuman, degraded, foul, incapable of any humane or decent instinct'.

Illustrating the resultant atmosphere of intense hatred is this extract from a speech by Sir Winston Churchill:

'We shall bomb Germany by day as well as by night, in ever increasing measure, casting upon them month by month a heavier discharge of bombs, and making the German people taste and gulp each month a sharper dose of the miseries they have showered upon mankind'.

Highly trained combatants reinforced by oratory of that calibre can hardly be expected to act with due regard for law; neither do they.

During World War I, at Gallipoli, Australian soldiers in a fit of spy mania, fatally shot their commanding officer and bayoneted his second in command. Excerpts from a description of World War II action in the Western Desert read:

'... he attacked and destroyed an enemy machine gun nest, killing seven men, then wiped out with grenades another party hiding in a rock cistern, went on to knock out a second machine gun and an anti-tank gun, gathered in a bag of prisoners and finally reported to his platoon commander ..., saying ... "Sir, what a wonderful war"."

Intense emotions such as these can lead equally to the commission of war crimes. The natural consequences of an operational climate, they are, nevertheless, not the actions of reasonable soldiers. Moreover, although Servicemen in command and staff appointments are exposed to dissimilar influences I see little justification for concluding that the pressures are likely to be significantly less pervasive. Under such circumstances, to infer a 'guilty mind' from considerations of experience, education or what an accused Serviceman ought to have known is fraught with danger.

**Limiting the Dilemma**

Combatants and their generals cannot be permitted to run rampant, indulging in excesses as they please then seeking refuge behind some extreme form of legal permissiveness. Conversely, the Services must not be unduly inhibited when confronting an enemy unhindered by legal or ethical scruples. The cliché that there are no prizes for gaining second place in a war is disturbingly profound.

Obviously, the 'soldier dilemma' cannot be eliminated; some constraint on orders which may be issued and which a subordinate should obey must be established. However, I contend that the dilemma can be reduced significantly. To achieve this reduction I propose two steps.

At present, Australian law governing the 'soldier's dilemma' cannot be authoritatively stated. Australia's Geneva Conventions Act (1957), in combination with existing Army, Navy and Air Force Acts and the proposed DFDC, forms an elementary reference for determining war crimes per se. However, only 'test cases' could finally provide definitive guidance—a situation approaching that of retroactive legislation. To alleviate this problem, Government should identify precisely which laws of war and supplementary regulations it will apply to Australian Servicemen. The sum total must then be codified.

By 'codified' I am not endorsing the present trend of blending into convenient sections of draft DFDCs selected extracts from the Geneva Conventions Act (1957); nor do I support the practice, adopted by numerous military law manuals, of utilizing extensive explanatory footnotes and margin annotations, thereby creating an element of doubt over whether such supplementation did or did not have authoritative sanction. Issues unresolved by the international forum must be addressed within Australia and clear determinations made. Unambiguous procedural and interpretative rulings should be introduced and behavioural guidelines incorporated whenever possible. In particular, these requirements must form
either part of the DFDC itself or amplifying regulations requiring parliamentary assent.

Superiors and subordinates confronting the ‘soldiers’ dilemma’ might then be able to determine the legality of their position. The Services, as organizations, would have a reference to consult when establishing rules of engagement, selecting weapons options or making strategic and tactical decisions. Moreover, and of fundamental importance, the responsibility for determining how and to what degree Servicemen should be constrained in pursuing national objectives would fall where it morally belongs — upon Government. The traditional ‘wink and nudge’ principle is longer acceptable.

One plausible objection to a detailed and pragmatic codification is that the natural processes of legal evolution could be retarded. Rigidity might prove as great an evil as excessive flexibility. Admittedly, precise codification does imply a requirement for periodic legislative amendment; firstly, to reflect new treaties and accords; secondly, to incorporate recommended revisions to existing doctrines or procedures. However, the laws of war are not likely to require changes with frequency sufficient to render legislative revision an intolerable burden.

A second objection, one to which I readily assent, is that codification can never obtain the precision necessary to embrace every situation. Indeed, any attempt to do so could prove disastrous. I recognise this as a practical constraint and some compromise must be struck between acceptable detail and the demands of practical application under circumstances not originally foreseen. Nevertheless, scope exists for greater precision and guidance than is to be found in the present draft DFDC.

This plea for codification is negated, to some degree, by my earlier argument that Servicemen in the wartime environment are conditioned more to instinctive responses than jurisprudential considerations. I am the first to admit that codification is not a panacea. Recognising this problem, I propose a second and radical innovation: radical because it conflicts with a centuries old tradition of English law and innovative because it is most certainly original.

To utilize as one element of proof, particularly in cases based on the ‘soldier’s dilemma’, the state of combatant Servicemen’s minds— minds moulded by an admixture of fear, aggressive indoctrination, exposure to brutality and concerted propaganda—is clearly unreasonable.

Established legal systems provide one avenue of escape from this predicament—the plea of insanity. An accused Serviceman could plead that at the time he committed an alleged offence he was either unaware of his actions or, at least, could not distinguish between right and wrong. In a clinical sense the claim might frequently be valid. However, I believe a clear distinction should be drawn between the man who, for patriotic or other reasons, subjugates himself to a dangerously brutalizing environment and the man suffering from mental disorder. In the former case, any notion of insanity is demeaning and unacceptable. Therefore, I contend that for war crimes trials, particularly those in which a defence of superior orders has been asserted, an innocent state of mind should be presumed and the presumption negated only where refutation is supported by documentary or direct testimonial evidence.

Admittedly, documentary or testimonial evidence illustrating a man’s state of mind, particularly in the battlefield environment, will seldom be available. However, a review of the Nuremberg Trials reveals that such evidence is normally obtainable in cases affecting upper echelon personnel—historically, the innovators of gross illegibilities and inhumane policies. The effect of my proposal, therefore, would be to extend a higher degree of protection to those who bear the brunt of operating in an immediate and hostile environment, whilst leaving senior leadership relatively more exposed to retribution. This, of course, is the same principle as was advocated by the JAG. However, my more radical proposal creates a significantly sharper division and markedly enhances the protection of combatants who, in a final analysis, are most vulnerable to a ‘soldier’s dilemma’.

Justification

Any civilian reader is entitled to ask: why should Servicemen receive the preferential consideration I have advocated? Codification would be a mammoth task, dwarfing origination of the DFDC which, itself, has been under preparation for at least a decade. Introduction of a modified mens rea concept would abrogate
a legal doctrine of long standing. Worse, introduction of the DFDC or its replacement would again be delayed.

I believe the proposed revisions are fully justified. During hostile operations the Service-man's raison d'être is to prosecute actions which, either in peacetime or when performed contrary to the laws of war, are classifiable as murder, manslaughter, wounding with intent, assault, arson, etc. The nation owes an exceptionally high degree of legal protection to such individuals.

Moreover, hostile tactics are a legitimate instrument employed to extend national policy. Throughout history armed conflicts have, of pragmatic necessity, blended authorised strategies and tactics with some measure of mistakes, misjudgements and occasional excesses. Common sense dictates the exercise of moderating influences where possible. Nevertheless, as responsibility for a decision to wage war rests with Government, the totality of its corollaries must be recognised and accepted also—in this case by providing legislation to minimize the 'soldier's dilemma'.

Conclusions

The earliest laws of war were little more than strategic foresight prompted either as a protective measure in case of defeat or an administrative basis from which productivity could be restored within conquered territories. As societies became increasingly complex a general recognition of the requirement for appropriate standards of military conduct emerged. Greek and Roman regulatory practices were synthesized with theological and juristic concepts, a chivalric code evolved, treaties and accords were initiated. Trends paralleling these developments were the increasing participation of jurists and the diminishing influence of military commanders.

The 'soldier's dilemma' evolved in a like manner. 1474 AD marks the first recorded case in which a plea of superior orders was rejected as a defence. However, the accused in that case had committed little less than wholesale butchery. Since then Servicemen, although acting in accordance with orders, have been found guilty on charges of killing a prisoner whose retention could have endangered an entire platoon and killing an unarmed enemy in circumstances which accorded with approved military training. Under existing law there is no longer any doubt that the defence of superior orders cannot operate where gross violations of basic human standards have been committed. Beyond that, many significant issues remain unresolved.

Case law precedents are, by nature, evolutionary. Doctrines introduced by any single tribunal might not be considered 'good law' until applied with approval in subsequent trials. Meanwhile, an accused whose actions are within the ambit of an emergent concept cannot determine his legal position until after judgment has been delivered.

Neither is the 'soldier's dilemma' clarified by reference to the incredibly complex existing protocols and conventions, all of which are subject to evolutionary interpretative processes similar to those employed for case law. Retroactive legislation is a daunting possibility. Future developments appear bent upon camouflaging distinctions between uniformed regular combatants and irregular forces. Anti-personnel weaponry commonly used by Western nations has come under critical scrutiny. Within international forums the 'soldier's dilemma' is likely to intensify.

Australian Servicemen arraigned upon war crimes charges by any foreign tribunal would have difficulty in sustaining a defence based upon superior orders. Within the Australian legal system many problems impacting directly upon the 'soldier's dilemma' are unresolved and the Serviceman's lot might not be significantly better.

The classic dilemma is reflected both in existing Australian Army, Navy and Air Force Acts and in the draft DFDC. In the latter case, a modifying revision has been recommended by the JAG. However, his modification, if introduced, would provide marginal relief at best. Traditional protective measures—the Crown's option not to prosecute its own nationals and the requirement to demonstrate mens rea—are essentially invalid when applied to an operational environment. Therefore, more radical and penetrating solutions are required.

Firstly, a comprehensive codification embracing legislatively affirmed offences, doctrines, procedures, interpretative rulings and behavioural guidelines is required as a foundation
Some compromise must, of course, be struck between acceptable detail and the flexibility demanded by practical application. Nevertheless, scope exists for significantly greater precision than is contained in the present draft DFDC.

Secondly, at least in cases based on the 'soldier's dilemma', an innocent slate of mind should be presumed unless refuted by documentary or direct testimonial evidence. Inductive conclusions based upon 'reasonable man' or 'reasonable soldier' tests are of themselves unreasonable.

Implementation of either or both of my recommendations would extend to Servicemen a measure of legal protection significantly higher than is enjoyed by their civilian counterparts. However, I contend that the revisions are fully justifiable. Hostile operations are an instrument of national policy requiring participation by men who have been consciously and methodically brutalized. The operational environment is an inseparable admixture of authorised tactics, mistakes, misadventures and occasional excesses. A government taking the decision to deploy its combatants must accept responsibility for the totality of normal military consequences and provide adequate legal protection for its uniformed participants.

NOTES

5. 17 SC 561 (Cape of Good Hope).
6. (1921) Cmd 1450 at 45; 2 Ann Dig 436.
8. 'Law Reports of Trials of War Criminals', as cited by Green, p. 86.
11. (1968) 3 CMR 586.
12. In re Ohlendorf.

There is an extensive Bibliography. Any reader interested in obtaining a copy should write to the Editor.

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**Award: Issue No. 11 (July/August 1978)**

The Board of Management has awarded the prize of $30 for the best original article in the July/August 1978 issue (No. 11) of the *Defence Force Journal* to Major A. E. W. Stormer for his article "Airships—Prejudice versus Potential".
There is a great temptation for some observers of the Defence scene to say: "Country X does so-and-so, therefore we should follow suit." This is an extraordinarily simplistic approach to Australia's defence problems. We are concerned primarily with our own country, and the solutions which may be applicable to other nations may not necessarily satisfy our requirements.

The above quotation forms part of Mr Killen's statement on Defence made on 22 September 1977. It expresses a sentiment, unexceptionable in itself, which, one can infer, pervades much of our current defence planning. So it should. It is high time we started thinking things out for ourselves, rather than copying other people. Our concern for what is right for Australia is a phenomenon that should be reflected in all our defence thinking and planning, right from the foremost operational level back to the most basic and fundamental stages of all, that of concepts and principles.

Nevertheless, I suspect that the desire to avoid copying for copying's sake does not extend right to the very heart of the defence planning process. The old bogey—the notion that what other countries do must be right for Australia—appears later on in the same statement. For example, the statement makes it clear that the study of contingencies is carried out because other countries have found it helpful.

Contingencies are hypothetical situations the study of which provides conclusions which form the basis for development of strategic and operational concepts. One must not study one particular contingency to the exclusion of others, for contingencies are not probabilities but only possibilities. Therefore, one must study a range of them. In this way, a sufficiently broad background will develop for sensible planning to take place. The statement suggests that the study of contingencies, thus defined, forms the initial step—the basis—in our defence planning.

So far, so good. As a proposed basis for defence planning the study of contingencies is presumably better than none at all. However, what are the possible alternative bases? Is this the only way? Why are we doing it this way? Is there a not a better way? In particular, are we really doing it this way only because other countries have found the study of contingencies to be helpful?

I do not know whether these questions are being asked often enough or whether they are being asked sufficiently strongly. They are obviously being posed in some areas, because the statement goes on to rebut a proposed alternative basis for defence planning which suggests that a better way would be to concentrate on one particular threat to the exclusion of others. Part of the rebuttal forms a reversion to the practice that the statement professes to find too simplistic—copying other countries. We study a selection of contingencies, the statement goes on to say, because other countries have found it helpful—the old bogey again. Why, one might ask, should it be helpful to Australia just because it is so to other countries? Perhaps our strategic planners may be a little vulnerable on this issue. Whether
they are or not, we might well ask what is the case for the study of contingencies as a valid basis for defence planning?

In answer to this question we can say that the study of contingencies can only form a valid basis for defence planning if all defence planning is dependent on the existence of a possible threat or possible numbers of threats. In other words, it presumes that the existence of a possible threat or number of threats is a necessary and sufficient basis for defence planning.

However, this is not strictly true. Although the study of contingencies appears to be able to provide us with much detailed information on the probable likelihood and magnitude of a particular threat, at a fundamental level it can provide the answer to only one question: ‘Are there any possible threats against us or not?’ If the answer is ‘No’, and we can believe it, then we do not need to defend ourselves, and we proceed no further. If the answer is ‘Yes’, then clearly we do need to defend ourselves. To that extent, and that alone, is defence planning dependent on the existence of possible threats. Thus, what we should have said is that the study of contingencies is a necessary and sufficient basis for determining the need for a defence force.

Logically, this fundamental question is valid, especially if there seems to be a real possibility of no conceivable threat. In practice, however, it is a trivial question, as the answer is invariably that there are conceivable threats and that we do need a defence force.

Thus far, except in a trivial way, defence planning has not been shown to be dependent on the study of contingencies. However, having presumed or deduced the need for a defence force, we can then move on to discuss the relationship between contingencies and other major aspects of defence planning. If defence planning is not to be dependent on contingency studies, what is it to depend on? Perhaps an examination of the make-up of strategy, and, in particular, the relationship between strategy and the study of contingencies will throw considerable light on the answer to this question.

Some sort of link between strategy and contingency studies can be established from the recognition that the study of both of them, however they are defined, involves the study of aspects in defence which are permanent and universal and those which are transient and particular. A useful simple model can be envisaged by grouping all the aspects which are permanent and universal together. Then one can observe that, collectively, they describe an all-pervading situation that never changes, or, perhaps, changes only very slowly. This is what strategy is or should be based on. It involves factors that are geographic, demographic and economic. It also embraces such concepts as the principles of war.

If we now group all the transient and particular factors together, then we can similarly observe that they describe a situation superimposed on the first which is continually changing. Contained within this changing situation are all conceivable threats. The study of this situation is thus the study of contingencies.

This proposed model is difficult to verify, except by appeal to historical precedent. However, if the model is accepted, then certain consequences flow therefrom.

For example, it can never be logically correct for that which is general to be dependent on that which is particular. Since we have defined the study of contingencies as that which is concerned with the transient and the particular, then we have also defined the particular case at the same time. Similarly, we have defined strategy as the concern for all that is permanent and universal—hence the general case. Thus it is logically false to suggest that strategy depends on the study of contingencies. Only the reverse can be true.

Having now established an important conclusion from this model—that strategy cannot be derived from the study of contingencies—we should now examine the limitations of the model. To begin with, it sees issues as clear cut—as either black or white. Strategy is all that is general, and contingencies are all that is particular.

However, life is nowhere near as clear cut as that. Issues are not either black or white but rather intermediate shades of grey. To study contingencies is to acknowledge the truth of this. One cannot analyse a possible threat and our response to it without some idea or consideration of the strategy one would employ. The two factors tend to become intermingled.
This state of affairs only highlights the dependence of the study of contingencies on the pre-existence of an agreed strategy. Strategy is the framework which one would bring to any contingency study in order to give it form, coherence and meaning. To conceive of a reverse situation in which one brings the results of the study of contingencies to bear on considerations of basic strategy is to foresee an intellectual disaster in which the least undesirable likely consequence is a total cul-de-sac in the planning process. The most undesirable likely consequence is defeat in war.

To base our defence planning on the study of contingencies, as the statement says we do, is fallacious. Why, then, do we do it? 'Because other nations have found it useful', says the statement—apparently oblivious to this contradiction of the idea quoted at the beginning of this essay.

This raises the question—'If founding defence planning on the study of contingencies is fallacious, why have other countries found the study of contingencies useful?'

In answer to this question, the first point to realize is that most countries in question are much older than Australia. Thus, they have had much longer in which to evaluate their basic strategy. Not only do they have fairly solid ideas about what their strategy should be, but they have had time to test it in battle—sometimes several times over. They already know the manner in which they should fight their wars.

Furthermore, in many instances, they have a clear perceived threat to consider. This threat is usually of such magnitude and dominance that it can hardly be said to be a contingency. In such circumstances, other nations have not only firm ideas on basic strategy, but, given good intelligence, a similarly firm idea of the threat they face. From a defence planning point of view, these nations are doubly fortunate. Their margin of uncertainty is small, and they know in some detail what they must provide in the way of force structure, organization and operations to counter the threat.

Therefore, their contingency studies are probably for a secondary purpose, directed more towards secondary or minor threats rather than to the major threat. In this case, the studies would have the aim of confirming that their existing defence planning, developed to counter the major threat, was also capable of dealing with one or any reasonable combination of minor threats.

Thus, it can be argued that, although other countries do conduct contingency studies, as the statement says they do, they do not use them for the purpose of basic defence planning as the statement implies they do. Therefore, our planning is incorrectly based on two different grounds—logic and precedent.

We are illogical when we base our defence planning on the study of contingencies, and we are incorrect when we assume that other countries' defence planning practices and procedures constitute a precedent for so acting. We must get the strategy right first, regardless of whether or not there is a perceived threat.

One could ask 'What if you are right, and strategy and contingency studies are the wrong way round in the planning process? So what? Does it really make any difference?'

To answer this, we must consider the consequences that flow from getting the order wrong both now and for the future. We must then determine whether there is any evidence that the consequences we envisage are coming to pass.

If the study of contingencies precedes the development of basic strategy, then the inversion has a fundamental effect on all major decisions in the planning process. Each major decision has to be justified primarily in terms of conceivable or perceived threats and not in terms of the correct overall strategy. In times of low threat, therefore, little positive development takes place. The little that does get done is limited to areas of secondary importance. For example, new transport aircraft are purchased because the current ones have worn out—in other words, a 'replacement syndrome' starts to grow.

An atmosphere of economy emerges in which the prime object is to identify the barest sustainable minimum standard from which recovery would be possible should one day it become necessary. The second most important object in this atmosphere is, in view of economic pressures from other areas of government, to reach down to that minimum state and then stay there.
A more insidious effect is the delay that takes place in the development of the necessary strategy. This provokes delay in the more important equipment buys. If there is no agreement on, for example, the correct emphasis on air superiority within an overall strategy, then the maintenance and development of air defence withers and becomes stunted. Arguments derive more from the replacement syndrome than from strategy. At the same time, military arts in these areas which are based on experience tend to atrophy and even regress within the defence force.

On the other hand, in times of high threat, the same system produces different but no less serious effects. Once the threat has been perceived then all subsequent planning, including strategy, will be heavily oriented towards that threat. However, some threats come and go—for example, Confrontation. The subsidence of a threat would then leave us with a defence force conditioned only by the last battle it was preparing to fight, not the future one it might need to fight. Without an overall strategy, the study of contingencies makes a defence force a responding organization rather than a deterministic one.

We can see this trend in the Jindalee project. Irrespective of whether Jindalee will actually work or not, there seems to be a growing tendency to rely on it for our future defence. A recent ABC television programme showed how dependent on the study of contingencies the project is. Academics and senior defence officials emphasized the importance of the project, and how integrated into the defence of Australia it will become. Major sections of the defence force will be fitted in round Jindalee. Most significant of all was the information that Jindalee will cover our northern approaches when in service.

Here we see the study of contingencies at work. Jindalee will not face South East as, presumably, the assessed likelihood of an attack by the Kiwis is lower than the chances of attack from elsewhere. With our northern approaches surveyed by this marvellous new technological device, and with the rest of the defence force integrated to respond to it, we will then sit back and do nothing—until the threat emerges in a different place. We would then find ourselves having to fight a war for which we were not manned, trained or equipped and which we weren’t expecting. We would have become like the French in 1940 and the British in Singapore in 1942. Jindalee would have become our Maginot Line.

Surveillance is only part of the overall strategic problem. It is bound up with the geography of our country and with other basic strategic factors too. These can only be most fundamentally assessed on their own, before contingency threats can confuse the issue.

In the sixteenth century, the English prevented an attempted invasion of their country by the Spanish through a strategy which was founded on control of the geographic approaches to their island and which included armed assault on the invasion fleet at its home base. Four hundred years later, they thwarted another invasion attempt by the Germans, using exactly the same strategy. The threat was different, the weapons were different, the force structure was different, but the strategy was the same. For four hundred years, the strategy had remained unchanging as a basis for defence planning. So long as Britain remained an island, the strategy remained valid.

It is imperative to divorce considerations of basic strategy from considerations of any particular threat. Only thus may we avoid the pitfall of considering only those opponents that we know about whilst neglecting those we don’t know about. The correct strategy is the most general strategy and covers all eventualities.

To base our defence planning on the study of contingencies before development of the correct strategy is fallacious. Its consequences are numerous errors and defects in detailed defence planning. To the reader is left the task of recognizing if any of the errors and effects described in this article exist now within the defence force. The implications of using the correct approach—the development of strategy as the basis of defence planning—will be explored in a subsequent article.
INTRODUCTION

"GAME theory is a method for the study of situations in which two competitors are similarly motivated to maximise gain or minimise loss, and the success of one can be achieved only at the expense of the other. In addition to considering his own strategy, the decision maker must also consider what the strategy of his opponent will be."

The Game

Exercise ‘Long Vigil’ was a onesided-game with a controlled enemy held in the field in Northern Territory from 19 July-4 August 1977. There was a concentration period of eight days before the 19 July and a short dispersal period after 4 August 1977. The setting was the defence of Australia against an enemy which had the capacity to land over beaches and advance inland to secure areas rich in minerals and allow the establishment of production plants on Australian territory.

The Aim

The aim was to exercise the Special Air Service Regiment (SASR) as a surveillance and reconnaissance force in support of a corps deployed in the defence of the Northern Territory. The exercise included the following aspects of the SASR operations:

- Surveillance of an extended coastline and hinterland of possible air landing or air drop sites. The area was approximately 450-800 kilometres of coastline with a depth of hinterland of 100 kilometres.
- Detection of enemy landings and subsequent reporting of an enemy build-up and enemy operations. This aspect included appropriate redeployment of SASR patrols to cover the landing site or sites.
- Harassment of enemy lines of supply, headquarters locations and other operations. During this stage the SASR continued to report on the enemy build-up. Pending the arrival of the main ground forces SASR was required to impose delay—where possible. (Harassment took the form of indication of FGA targets.)

THE CONCEPT

The Enemy was called Orange Force and its activities represented the lodgement of an Enemy Corps over the beach and the subsequent advance to secure rich mineral deposits at Rum Jungle and Jabiru as well as the major airfield at Tindal (Katherine).

The Friendly Forces were an Australian Corps and appropriate corps troops. However, only the following elements were manned during the game:

- Corps Reconnaissance Elements which was the SASR and known as Blue Force.
- A Skeleton Corps Headquarters which also carried out the role of Control for both Blue and Orange Forces. An Air Support Operation Control (ASOC) unit and an Air Transport Operation Control (ATOC) unit was established near the Corps Headquarters.

The Scenario

The five phases of the game were as follows:

- Phase 1. Blue Force deployed in a surveillance and reconnaissance role in support of the Australian Corps, before D Day, at a stage when an enemy landing was imminent.
- Phase 2. Army Reserve Commandos landed, on D Day and D plus one, as initial enemy reconnaissance elements of Orange Force. Five enemy parties of about ten commandos were landed from patrol boats onto beaches between Port Keats and Arnhem Land. An additional three parties of commandos para-
chuted to make a reconnaissance of the airfields shown on Figure 1.

**Phase 3.** An air extraction of the commando reconnaissance parties on D plus 4 and D plus 5. Thence a parachute jump by about a commando company to secure the airfield at Munmarlary. (See Figure 1) on the night D plus 7—D plus 8.

**Phase 4.** The landing over two beaches of Orange Force (less commandos). An infantry battalion with supporting arms was deployed in two elements on different beaches. Each element was required to simulate the operation of an enemy infantry division. The landing and build-up took place over the period D plus 8 to D plus 11.

**Phase 5.** The advance of the enemy corps from its beachheads towards Tindal (See Figure 1.) The Stuart Highway north of Katherine, and the town of Darwin were considered not to exist. This break-out and advance took the five days from D plus 12 to D plus 16.

**The Scene**

The friendly corps headquarters and the headquarters of the SASR and its squadrons were established at Tindal. Initial concentration of most of the Blue and Orange Forces was at
the Tindal base. An administrative base to support the land, sea and air operations of the Orange Force was established in Darwin. A Camp Commandant’s organisation provided the administrative support within the Tindal base. ‘Long Vigil’ was a joint navy, army and airforce exercise. The RAN provided three landing craft to move the enemy ‘corps’ onto the beaches and two patrol boats to transport the commandos. The RAAF participation included Transport Support (TS) for both enemy and friendly forces as well as Close Air Support (CAIRS) and strike support for the friendly forces. Sub-units of army Porter fixed wing and Kiowa helicopters were deployed to support both Blue and Orange Forces.

Pre-Play

The exercise was preceded by Field Force Command issuing a ‘General Instruction’ which gave a warning order to the players, included the safety instructions and directions to the commanders of the Blue Force (SASR), Orange Force (infantry battalion group) and Commandos to submit their detailed orders to Exercise Control about two months before D Day. Other pre-exercise papers included a ‘General Outline of the Exercise’ (for the Control Staff), a ‘General Idea’ of the enemy intentions, Special Ideas to Orange and Blue Forces covering their operations, an Instruction to Observers, Instructions to Exercise Control, an Administration Instruction to Orange Force and finally a Camp Commandant’s Instruction for the Tindal Base. RAAF Operational Command promulgated an operation order for airforce elements involved in the exercise.

The Play

Throughout the exercise the Blue and Orange Main Force and Reconnaissance Commanders were required to submit daily situation reports to the Exercise Control which represented both the enemy and friendly corps headquarters. The friendly corps headquarters promulgated daily intelligence summaries to Blue Force. Consequent upon the approval of their orders the three commanders of Blue and Orange Forces received very few directions after deployment in the field. Blue Force reacted to the intelligence summaries as well as to their interpretation of their own observations of the enemy activities. It was found that the instructions contained in the pre-exercises papers enabled the players to deploy and to complete the play with virtually no further instructions from exercise control.

Restraints

Comprehensive safety instructions, which were designed to eliminate accidents, precluded a number of activities such as swimming and firing live ammunition. Logistic support was limited, consistent with realistic operations. There was some restraint on tactical mobility due to the need for the forces to cut and then repair fences before continuing the advance or withdrawal. There were no umpires. The rules for contact were:

- When the sighting of an SASR patrol was reported by Orange Force, Exercise Control usually ordered the withdrawal of the patrol for twenty four hours.
- There was no hand-to-hand combat of the soldiers of Orange and Blue Forces.

APPLICATIONS

“Decision-making skill is the key to successful planning at all levels. This involves more than the selection of a plan of action, for at least three phases — diagnosis, discovery of alternatives and analysis—have to be completed before a choice can be made.” — Kazmier.

The managers of the SASR were personified by the commanding officer and his squadron commanders. In the first instance, these managers were able to practice their decision-making skills in analysing the alternative locations of their patrols with a view to discovering the initial enemy landings. Subsequently, decision-making skills were able to be exercised in an aura of realism as enemy patrols and other elements were sighted. By good luck, or good management, the Enemy Corps was able to plan one of its landings in an unusual location, so that the SASR managers were able to exercise discovery and subsequent analysis in exercising their decision-making skills to adjust their initial plan.

Case Studies

“A business case is a report of the more relevant conditions and circumstances with which an enterprise is confronted at a moment in time or at various periods in time.” — O’Donnell. Tactical Exercises Without Troops
A MANAGEMENT GAME FOR PROFESSIONALS AND SUB-PROFESSIONALS

(TEWTs) are akin to hypothetical case studies. TEWTs are more economical in manpower and time and cost than exercises with troops, such as 'Long Vigil'. However, TEWTs are 'paper exercises' in which the enemy operations are described in a similar way to a business case study. Even with the most vivid imagination it is difficult for players to visualise where, and how the enemy will be sighted. Likewise real time is not experienced in a TEWT. Hence, the case study format of the TEWT does not lead to the tangible experiences of exercises with troops.

Control

"Once any system, be it a mechanical process or a business organisation, is set into motion toward specific objectives, events occur which tend to pull that system 'off target'. A successful control process is one which effects corrections to the system involved before deviations become serious." "In the control process, the translation of enterprise goals into specific measurable outcomes, which then become the basis for evaluating performance, constitutes the step of establishing standards".

—Kazmier. Hence the SASR as a military business organisation was able to use Exercise 'Long Vigil' to correct its administrative and operational systems. The regiment was able to translate its goals into measurable outcomes in the form of timely enemy sightings and then evaluate their performance.

The Enemy

Even in a one-sided game and even when they are controlled the troops performing the role of the enemy can gain much valuable information from the experience. In Exercise 'Long Vigil' the infantry battalion made every effort to understand and employ enemy tactics. In addition, the battalion gained from the experience of ship to shore movement of vehicles and equipment as well as their capabilities in some aspects of cross-country movement. Undoubtedly, the battalion and its supporting arms were able to translate their goals as the enemy into measurable outcomes and hence evaluate their performance as propounded by Kazmier.\textsuperscript{3}

Professionals

"Every professional is concerned with the use of knowledge in the achievement of objectives —the professional draws upon the knowledge of science and of his colleagues, and upon knowledge gained through personal experience. The degree to which he relies upon the first two of these rather than the third is one of the ways in which the professional may be distinguished from the laymen."—McGregor.\textsuperscript{6} From 'games' like 'Long Vigil' the professionals (officers) are able to use knowledge gained from military textbooks and from formal and informal discussions with their colleagues. The professionals of Blue Force, Orange Force and Exercise Control gained probably as much from their research before the exercise as during the exercise. "Progress in any profession is associated with the ability to predict and control. One of the major tasks of management is to organize human effort in the service of the economic objectives of the enterprise. Every managerial decision has behavioural consequences. Successful management depends—not alone, but significantly—upon the ability to predict and control human behaviour"—McGregor.\textsuperscript{7} Many of the SASR patrols were required to stay in a surveillance mode in one location for many days. On some days the weather in the Northern Territory was harsh. The vehicle-mounted elements of both Blue and Orange Forces were required to move comparatively long distances over roads of mediocre quality, in hot and dusty conditions. Hence, it is apparent that the managers throughout the exercise were able to practise the prediction and control of human behaviour.

Sub-professionals

"My basic philosophy is that any job worth doing is worth doing well. I prefer to slip a schedule than do something halfway. I don't believe in turning loose something half finished. Quality is more important than quantity.—Self Description of a Corporate Craftsman"—Mac-coby.\textsuperscript{7} "The first-level supervisor is in a unique position in the organization in that he is the only manager who supervises the work of non-managers. Since the ultimate attainment of organizational goals depends on what happens at the operative level, this makes the first-level supervisor's position particularly important. The success of plans and strategies determined at the top management level depends on his ability to translate them into action at the working level"—Kazmier.\textsuperscript{9} While tactical exer-
exercises without troops are an economical method for training military managers: these exercises do not test the success of the plans or strategies proposed as solutions to exercise problems. In contrast, exercises with troops do test the military managers’ skills as planners, and, in addition, test the manager’s ability to implement his plan. However, probably the greatest attribute of exercising units is to test the ability of the sub-professional manager (supervisor—warrant officers and NCOs) to translate plans into action. The eyes and ears of the SASR were the soldiers (operatives) whose motivation and ability to surveil effectively tended to rely on the managerial ability of the sub-professionals.

POST EXERCISE ANALYSIS

The Environment

It is considered to be inappropriate in this paper to itemise the multitude of lessons learnt by the players on both sides of the game. However, it is appropriate to indicate that the organization before, during, and after the exercise was well balanced by the willingness and ability of players to make the exercise a success. Thus the environment was established for the management philosophies of McGregor, Kazmier, and Maccoby to be used in the training of military professionals and semi-professionals. The scenario was enacted by the players in a possible scene for a real war. Radio communications over long distances in varying conditions provided the channels for the managers to monitor and sometimes vary their plans. Perhaps, it could be said that the environment was tamed.

Cost Effectiveness

Exercise ‘Long Vigil’ was one of the few occasions when the whole of the SASR had been able to be exercised as a regiment. The movement of both Blue and Orange Forces across the long distances from their interstate bases to the Northern Territory also served as management training of the professionals and sub-professionals. ‘Long Vigil’ facilitated the direct and indirect testing of vehicles, equipment and people as the means for executing (military) management decisions. A Scientific Evaluation Team was deployed to observe the whole host of human and physical resources deployed in the game. While the observations of the team might be considered *sub judice*, the opportunity for the team to be operate must have enabled the team to gain management experience as well as given much valuable analysis and data to Exercise Control.

Sea-Air

It is pertinent to indicate that, as much as possible, the army aircraft operated as sub-units with consequential management training. There was management experienced in the cooperation between the army, navy, and airforce players. Possibly the most telling lesson was the impact of the large distances to be flown, in particular by the army helicopter and light fixed-wing aircraft. Over-zealous use of aircraft in the early stages of ‘Long Vigil’ very quickly brought home the constraints to management of limited flying-hours for both aircraft and pilots. An indoor game would probably not have had the realistic impact, in particular as real tasks could not be carried out by the sub-professionals to meet the plans and strategies of the professionals.

CONCLUSIONS

This article was not intended to portray the whole in-depth story of Exercise ‘Long Vigil’. However, it is hoped that it will kindle or rekindle the valuable management training for professionals and sub-professionals in exercises with troops. ‘Long Vigil’ tends to show how cost effectively a relatively limited number of troops can be deployed to enable military professionals and sub-professionals face the realities of managing their sub-units against a ‘real’ enemy.

There is every reason to believe that management decision making is, and, in the past has been, difficult in military operations. Therefore, every opportunity should be taken to simulate decision-making on the battlefields on which wars will be fought. Game theory provides the peace-time venue for management training. However, only by going into the field can the full impact of the plans and strategies of professional managers be tested—via sub-professionals to their operatives. Side benefits such as scientific tests on equipment and people give further justification for field rather than classroom teaching and games.
NOTES

2. Ibid., p. 98.
5. Ibid., p. 414.
7. Ibid., pp. 3-4.

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

The following books have been received and are recommended. Reviews of many of them will appear in later issues of the Journal:

- GERMAN MILITARY UNIFORMS AND INSIGNIA 1933-1945, WE.
- LIFE AT WAR, BLITZKRIEG, THE RISING SUN and PRELUDE TO WAR, Time Life Series.
To understand the situation which led to the Boer War, it is necessary to trace briefly the history of European settlement in South Africa.

Vasco da Gama sailed around the Cape in 1497, visiting Natal on Christmas Day, but the first European settlers were the Dutch who landed at Table Bay in 1652. They were sent as agents of the Dutch East India Company to establish a staging port for ships trading with Java, where the Company's chief interests lay. They were joined in 1689 by Huguenot refugees from France, not welcomed at first, but soon to become integrated with the Dutch settlers. Many French names are prominent among the Boers of later generations, de Wet and de la Ray being famous among the Boer leaders in the war of 1899. At first restricted to the vicinity of Cape Town on Table Bay, the Boers soon spread and multiplied as farmers until there were 15,000 in the colony during the next century. They were fiercely independent and intensely Calvinistic—described as carrying a Bible in one hand and a sjambok in the other, the sjambok being a stout whip made from rhinoceros hide, to deal with the natives. They could quote Old Testament authority to justify their enslavement of the native black races (or to slaughter them if occasion demanded).

So things stood until the French, after their conquests in Europe, took over the Dutch territory in 1793. In turn, the country was taken over in 1815 by the British who paid £6,000,000 in compensation to the Dutch to seal the bargain. They appointed British officials to rule from Cape Town; and later also from Durban, after annexing Natal in 1843. This last claim they justified because here the first European settlers (1836) were British, although later outnumbered by the Boers.

In 1827 the British in Cape Town named English as the official language although only one in seven of the inhabitants was in fact British. This caused much resentment among the Boers while even more obnoxious to them was the abolition of slavery which was proclaimed throughout the British Empire in 1834. The British paid compensation of £1½ million to the Boer slave-owners, although the assessment of the loss by the Boers from freeing of the slaves was actually £3,000,000 as they claimed.

The Boers reacted by moving northwards to fresh territory taking family, stock and baggage in great wagons hauled by teams of oxen. This was the first of the 'Great Treks'—initially to Natal. When the British settled there, they moved on again to what later became Orange Free State (across the Orange River) and the Transvaal (beyond the Vaal River as far as the Limpopo, which became their northern boundary). On the way they encountered hostile tribes—Zulus, Matabeles and others. These they slaughtered if necessary, or enslaved, and there were massacres and treachery on both sides. One notorious tribal leader named Dingaan, after pretending friendship and entertaining a large party of Boers, slaughtered the lot of them when they had given up their muskets as his guests. The Boer leader Pretorius exacted a terrible revenge on 16 December 1838, which was named "Dingaan's Day" and celebrated with fervour annually thereafter by the Boers. In this encounter and others against the Zulus they were supported (or led) by the British from Natal, and on these occasions at least, the Boers and the British made common cause.
Nevertheless the British claimed all inhabitants of Natal as subjects of the Queen, while the King of Holland repudiated the Boer claim for support from the Dutch in Europe.

Undeterred, the Boers continued in a succession of Treks to new territory, setting up independent republics in Orange Free State with its capital at Bloemfontein, and in Transvaal where the capital was named Pretoria after their great leader.

In 1848 the British proclaimed sovereignty over the Orange Free State. This roused the Boers to a fierce resistance. They descended on the British garrison at Bloemfontein which they captured, remaining in occupation of their capital. Later Sir Harry Smith, governor of Natal, returned to conquer them, but in the face of continued Boer opposition, the British compromised in the Conventions of 1852 and 1854, acknowledging the independence of the two republics, though still maintaining a vague British ‘suzerainty’ in matters of foreign policy and defence—partly to keep other European powers (notably the Germans) from intervention.

In effect, independence of the Boer republics was restored and even from their own government the Boers suffered little interference. They were described as “something between Old Testament Israelites and Scottish Covenanters”; determined, obstinate and brave. They became expert horsemen and expert marksmen, for their living and even their survival depended on shooting game (and if necessary native tribesmen) with deadly accuracy. They still had their slaves who did all the rough work on the farms. Both slaves and masters lived crudely while the Boers sometimes became lazy and indolent, and coarse in their habits and in their clothes. Many of them were ignorant and illiterate. If they could read, the Bible was their only reading. They had a contempt for the Kaffirs and for all the native tribes, and a dislike for the British most of whom they
despised, especially the missionaries who were disposed to make a fuss about their treatment of the natives—even wishing to set them free.

Meanwhile, British rule was accepted in Cape Colony and in Natal, both of which had large Boer populations, even outnumbering their British rulers. By contrast, the Boer Governments in Orange Free State and Transvaal were lax and inefficient so that it was difficult to collect enough taxes to keep them solvent. But arrangements for defence were not expensive. All men aged between 16 and 60 were liable to be called up for military service in a loose organization of Commandos, each electing its own leader as well as a few "field cornets" to whom they granted an uncertain authority.

In 1867 there was a large influx of new settlers after the discovery of diamonds at Kimberley, where Cecil Rhodes made a fortune and established himself in a position of great influence, becoming Prime Minister of Cape Colony.

In 1875, for the first time a federation of the four South African territories was advocated—by Lord Carnarvon, Colonial Secretary in London. At that time Transvaal ("The South African Republic") was in danger from hostile tribes from the north; and being nearly bankrupt, the time seemed ripe for its amalgamation with the British territories. The British were heavily engaged in suppressing native risings in Cape Colony and also in Transvaal itself, where only the gallant defence of Rorke's Drift by 130 men repulsed an attempted Zulu invasion of Natal. The Boers were happy to accept such services in their defence against hostile native races, and when Carnarvon proclaimed annexation of the Boer Republic in 1877 they seemed at first to be satisfied. Not so their leader Paul Kruger, who twice went to London to plead, without satisfaction, for continuing independence. Accordingly, Kruger, supported by Pretorius and their military commander Joubert, raised the republican flag in Pretoria on 16 December 1880, 'Dingaan's Day'. They heavily defeated British detachments sent against them in successive actions. The final repulse of the British occurred at Majuba Hill on 27 February 1881, when the whole force of 554 British soldiers were killed or captured. Sir George Colley in command was among those killed. The British capitulated after what they described as the 'Boer Insurrection'. Others have referred to these events as 'The First Boer War'. Indeed an American has recently published a book of over 300 pages describing the various engagements in this 'First Boer War'.

The independence of the Transvaal Republic was acknowledged after Majuba Hill, but there were other important results—notably a growing opposition to the British among the Dutch at the Cape and elsewhere in South Africa. On the other hand, the British remembered Majuba Hill with bitterness as a blot on the escutcheon which some day must be expunged. "Remember Majuba" became a common rallying cry.

The discovery of gold in Transvaal in 1886 introduced a new element into the political situation, attracting a large influx of British to the goldfields of Johannesburg, as well as many American and French citizens. These were resented by the Boers who named them 'Uitlanders' (foreigners), and refused them any rights of citizenship, although most of the revenue of Transvaal was derived from the gold-mining industry. The Uitlanders declared that in levies and taxes they provided five-sixths of the total revenue but were denied a vote.

Cecil Rhodes who had already made an immense fortune from the diamond mines of Kimberley, was equally active in supporting British claims to their rights in Johannesburg. He was the son of an English clergyman and came to South Africa in 1870 when aged 17 years. He had visions of British dominion "from the Cape to Cairo", and he was an important sponsor of a railway running from Cape Town to the west of Transvaal to the territory to the north named Rhodesia after him. With his sanction, Dr Jameson, a friend and colleague, made a raid on the Transvaal where it was expected that a general rising would develop in his support. But the rising came to nought, so that Jameson's party was obliged to surrender, which they did on 1 January 1896. Jameson was extradited to London for trial and imprisonment; thus his raid proved a great fiasco and humiliation.

Kruger's appeal to Germany at this critical time did not improve relations with Great Britain. He commenced the accumulation of a great stock of guns and ammunition mainly
from Germany. Much of it was actually sent to Cape Town, whence it was transported through Cape Colony on British railways—almost a crowning impertinence, as it was plainly intended for use against the British. Kruger, however, was able to use a railway built from the Portuguese port of Lourenco Marques at Delagoa Bay in Portuguese East Africa as a shorter, more direct route for his importations; indeed he strove to incorporate Lourenco Marques in his own territory.

After the Jameson raid, Rhodes was obliged to resign from his position as Prime Minister of Cape Colony, but Joseph Chamberlain, Colonial Secretary and the most influential figure in the British Cabinet (under Lord Salisbury, British Prime Minister) gave strong support for the British in South Africa. He appointed Alfred Milner, an extremely able and forthright civil servant, as governor of the Cape. Milner was greatly detested by the Boers, but he devoted much attention to the grievances of the Uitlanders in Transvaal.

Kruger in Pretoria became extremely autocratic, suppressing the Press and even the judges in any matter concerning the Uitlanders, at the same time arming the burghers among the Boers and fortifying Pretoria and Johanne-

burg, approaching Germany, Holland and France for ammunition and support against the British who were supplying most of his revenue. With him was a youthful attorney named Jan Smuts.

The Uitlanders were so concerned about the treatment meted out to them that they sent a petition to the Queen on her birthday 24 May 1899. Despite appeals by Milner, Kruger refused to grant the franchise to the Uitlanders until after seven years' residence (later reduced to five). It was this issue of the delay in granting the franchise which precipitated the war, though indeed the basic cause was the long standing rivalry between the Boers, determined to maintain independence in their two republics, and the British—determined to incorporate them in the British Empire.

The Boers had been preparing for years (as had the British in more leisurely fashion). The final ultimatum came from Kruger himself. He declared that a state of war against Britain would exist unless all British troops stationed on the border of Natal were withdrawn by 9 October 1899. This was rejected by Chamber-
lain as simply insulting, and war was declared on 11 October 1899. A wave of patriotism swept over Britain—greatly encouraged by offers of help from the Empire—Canada, New Zealand and Australia; even from Ceylon and India, though it was clearly understood on both sides that it was to be a whiteman’s war. No natives were actually engaged to fight on either side though many British colonists in South Africa joined up.

Yet in Britain the country was not wholly united. The anti-war groups, jeered at and taunted as “pro-Boers”, included Lloyd George who made some fiery speeches and was nearly lynched when attempting to address a meeting in Birmingham. There were pro-Boers in Australia too, the Sydney Bulletin being consistently opposed to the war (and losing substantially in its circulation thereby). In the House of Commons Joseph Chamberlain turned on his anti-war opponents and accusers and “white-faced and scornful” spoke for nearly three hours carrying the vote for war by 362 votes to 135. “Very, very good,” said the Queen, when this was reported to her, “I am delighted.”

OUTBREAK OF HOSTILITIES

In the few days remaining before the ultimatum from the Boers expired (on 11 October 1899), there was a general exodus of ‘uitlanders’ from Johannesburg and Pretoria. Somehow the name uitlanders suggests that they were crude characters—miners, adventurers, and speculators. So it is a little surprising that a contemporary picture shows orthodox English types—women in long skirts, children with dolls and the men wearing straw-boaters and white ducks. All trains leaving for the south were crowded and even cattle trucks hooked on behind were packed with people determined to get away. It was said that some were ill-treated and insulted by the Boer inhabitants who were staying behind. This could well be true, although there are so many exaggerated accounts of all the events of the war from both sides, that one feels bound to be sceptical. All the British escaped to Cape Town or Natal, though how they were accommodated one can only guess. Some may have returned to England. Many of them joined the ImperialMounted Infantry.

Kruger, President of the Transvaal Republic, ordered a general call-up of the burghers—totalling 45,000—far out-numbering the British regulars, who comprised 16,000 in Natal and 11,000 in Cape Colony. The Boers moreover had 110 guns—far more than the British and mostly modern types from France and Germany.

The two armies were completely different in every way. The Boers wore no regular uniform, but what could only be called their farm clothes with battered hats to match. Kruger himself, a squat figure with a broad flat face fringed with a stringy beard, wore a silk top hat and a frock coat—as did some of his generals. Kruger conducted much of the State’s business on the verandah of his own humble home, and the administration of the army was very simple. There was no pay for the Boer soldiers (burghers) and rations were largely a matter for the individual, who could carry a week’s food supply in the form of dried meat (‘Biltong’), travelling with it on horseback. Each man had his own pony which was his only essential requirement beside his rifle and his bandolier. It was not unusual, however, for the women-folk to leave the farm also and follow behind the army in ox-wagons. There was no such thing as parade ground drill; it was every man for himself (or “every man his own general”) with only the elected commandant and a few ‘field cornets’ for each commando—called up from each district. Every Boer soldier was mounted and an expert marksman. All this gave them a great advantage over the British who were mostly unmounted and wore pith sun-helmets which made excellent targets to be shot at—the brass buttons and decorations of the officers even more so.

The British officers were a class apart from their men—belonging as it were to an exclusive club, although the purchase of commissions had been abolished in 1871. Kitchener complained that they considered war too much like a game of polo with intervals for afternoon tea. There was a good sprinkling of aristocrats among the officers. The first Staff List for the war included General Lord Dundonald, Major the Marquis of Winchester, at least one Baronet and a number of “Honorables” such as Lieut. Hon. E. D. Loch and many more.
These officers regularly led their men in battle whether mounted or on foot, so that the casualty rate among the officers of all ranks, including that of General, was extremely high. General Penn Symons was killed in action at Talana Hill at a very early stage and likewise General Wauchope, leading the Scottish Brigade at Magersfontein. An American observer commented that, “the British soldiers have not the individuality or the resources of our men, but for indomitable courage, uncomplaining fortitude and implicit obedience, they are beyond criticism”. However, the British came to recognize that the Boer soldiers also were brave, skilful and chivalrous. Although there were complaints about the treacherous use of the white flag (as a decoy, followed by further shooting), it seems that their treatment of the wounded was kind and considerate in nearly all cases.

As opportunity offered, British soldiers used their lances, their swords or their bayonets to charge an enemy post. In rifle shooting they commonly fired “volleys” on the order given—i.e., all men firing simultaneously in the general direction of the enemy, but without individual aiming at a single person or target. In this and other ways tactics were not good and staff work was often deficient from faulty intelligence or lack of reconnaissance—from poor maps and scanty knowledge of their enemies’ numbers or disposition. Machine guns of the Vickers type were not often used though they could have made a big difference—freely available as they were. (Lloyd George in another era described them as “the most lethal weapon of World War I”). However, there was at least one innovation used by the British—the observation balloon.

The Boers were experts at taking cover behind boulders and in long grass, using the country and even digging trenches for protection; whereas the British still had the tradition of advancing in a solid phalanx—shoulder to shoulder—even regarding it as unsoldierly to resort to camouflage or to crawl from boulder to boulder to avoid being hit. One British historian records that, “Our troops were unaccustomed to the art of taking cover. While the Colonial crawled like a stalked along dongas and through gullies to get to his quarry, the hardy Briton always exposed himself, as though pluck demanded that he should make a mark of himself”. Their bayonet charges were highly effective when they got close enough to the enemy, but the casualties in reaching this point were often extremely high. The Boers eschewed the use of bayonets, swords or lances and they resented their use by the British as brutal. They fought only as horsemen, dismounting to use their rifles and then galloping off. Close range fighting was not their metier. But their artillery was high class—some of it manned by German mercenaries and handled with skill.

The Boers did not fight on Sundays. In the defence of Kimberley they once complained officially that British soldiers had been observed preparing fortifications on a Sunday, but the British retorted that they had observed similar military activities by the Boers who had been digging trenches. But neither of them descended to firing a shot on the Sabbath.

Although the Boers gained an immediate advantage in their mobility and individual initiative, in the long term the lack of a fixed organization in their army led to instability and a loss of cohesion. Any burgher felt entitled to return home to his farm whenever he chose, and at one time there was a veritable ‘leave plague’ which we would call desertion.

For the first time in war the British soldiers wore khaki (then spelt kharki), though the Scottish regiments wore kilts (suffering disabling sunburn on the back of the knees on occasion). In the beginning, only British regulars were engaged. Offers from the Empire were not received with enthusiasm by the War Office,
although the moral support was welcomed by Cabinet. It was indicated that unmounted infantry in limited numbers would be acceptable. Later the reception of these offers was much more eager. The N.S.W. Lancers had been in England when the war began, on a training exercise at Aldershot. They volunteered as a body and were the first colonial troops in the field. But offers of support from Canada, from all the other Australian Colonies (Queensland being the first) and from New Zealand were accepted willingly when the war was not going well in the first month. The Colonials were all the more welcome when they proved to be expert horsemen and marksmen, able to deal with the Boers effectively, using their own tactics. There seems to have been no widespread urge to recruit in Australia for only expert horsemen and marksmen were eligible. John Monash, for example, then in the militia, did not find it necessary to enlist, but Rupert Clarke raised a contingent from his own property in Sunbury, Victoria, and in due course was rewarded with a baronetcy.

Tremendous send-offs were given to Colonial Volunteers as they embarked for overseas — whether on troopships in Sydney Harbour or on farewell marches in the streets of Melbourne, Ottawa or other cities. The Canadian troops (all picked horsemen) wore pith helmets of the British pattern, but Australians and New Zealanders wore the slouch hat which we know so well. A small point of difference from the present style was that the Australians turned up their felt hats on the right to permit freedom in swinging a sword on the right side — instead of turned up on the left as in World War I and more recently. Sometimes because of their headgear, Australian and New Zealand soldiers were mistaken for Boers, with embarrassment — eg. a British officer captured by Boers whom he mistook for New Zealanders; or Australians fired on by mistake — thought to be Boers.

**LADYSMITH AND MAFEEKING**

The British were relatively unprepared when the war began. The Boers invaded Natal from the north and west, converging on Ladysmith. In the centre they approached the rail junctions of Stormberg and Naampoor in the northern parts of Cape Colony; in the west they invested Mafeking and Kimberley on the railway. The immense distances (700 miles from Cape Town to Mafeking) meant that no continuous front was possible and strategy was dictated by the railways on which supplies depended. These were the western railway from Cape Town to Kimberley, Mafeking and on to Rhodesia; the central railways from Port Elizabeth and East London forming junctions with the western railway in the north of Cape Colony, en route to Bloemfontein in the Orange Free State; and thirdly the railway from Durban and Maritzberg through Ladysmith to Johannesburg and Pretoria. The railway from Pretoria to Lourenco Marques (in Portuguese East Africa) was under the control of the Boers — being their major life-line for overseas supplies when the war began. The Portuguese were happy to accommodate them at the eastern end of the line which was in their own territory of Delagoa Bay — though it was subject to a mild degree of blockade by British ships at a later stage.

In their first offensive the Boers were repulsed at Talana Hill (where General Penn Symons was killed) and at Elandslaagte where the British had a further victory, although casualties were heavy on both sides in both these actions north of Ladysmith. In a further action at Lombard's Kop, also on the approaches to Ladysmith, the British lost heavily, suffering over 1200 casualties (including 800 prisoners), compared with 200 casualties among the Boers. The British prisoners were paraded in the streets of Pretoria, which permitted much offensive gloating by the French and the Germans; while in London, this day (30 October 1899) was remembered as "mournful Monday". Naval guns manned by sailors from the H.M.S. Terrible were brought ashore at Durban to redeem the Boer superiority in artillery and these naval brigades figured prominently in future actions, being mounted in Ladysmith which was now practically invested.

Along the western railway, Mafeking and then Kimberley further south were likewise invested. Each of these three sieges caused much privation and hardship to the inhabitants — military and civil. Before long, they were reduced to eating horse-flesh and even cats and dogs. Colonel Baden Powell, in command at Mafeking, proved a magnetic leader in the siege. South of Kimberley, Lord Methuen had a victory at Belmont in November 1899, when Australians (N.S.W. Lancers), in action for the
first time, performed creditably. There was a further engagement west of Belmont on 1 January 1900 at a kopje (small hill) called Sunnyside. On this occasion Canadians and the Queensland Rifles distinguished themselves (along with British Regulars from the Duke of Cornwall’s Light Infantry), capturing this kopje with 40 Boer prisoners.

General Sir Redvers Buller, V.C. had arrived at Cape Town on 31 October 1899 to find that in less than three weeks Mafeking and Kimberley had been besieged on the western railway; Ladysmith likewise in the east on the railway running north from Maritzberg; while in the centre the rail junctions at Stormberg and Nauwpoort had been occupied by the Boers after evacuation of the British garrisons.

Redvers Buller took supreme command and it was expected that he would open an offensive towards Bloemfontein along the central railway from his base at Cape Town, where his Army Corps was being disembarked. But first he was obliged to give attention to the besieged towns of Kimberley, Mafeking and especially Ladysmith, where the inhabitants were becoming apprehensive, calling for relief. Cecil Rhodes, cut off in Kimberley, was also getting clamorous. He had been the moving spirit in every enterprise for the expansion and development of South Africa and his influence was immense. Sir Alfred Milner and Sir Redvers Buller could not contemplate the great loss of prestige should any of these three towns be obliged to surrender. Buller therefore divided the Army Corps into three unequal parts—the smallest in the centre where the main offensive was originally planned. This force was allotted to General French and his chief staff officer Douglas Haig, both having escaped from Ladysmith on the last train to get out. (They were each to be Commander-in-Chief, in succession, of all British troops in France in 1914-1918). This force prepared to assault Stormberg and Nauwpoort—the railway junctions in the north of Cape Colony.

The force for the relief of Kimberley remained under command of Lord Methuen, while Redvers Buller himself took command of the forces in Natal. Sir George White commanded the garrison besieged in Ladysmith. Not many attempts were made to break out and there were few excursions from Ladysmith.

On 15 November an armoured train came up the railway from the south, on reconnaissance. This contraption comprised a locomotive in the centre (protected by boiler plating against artillery) with three or more railway wagons fore and aft carrying troops and guns. Troops from the Gordon Highlanders and the Dublin Fusiliers were on board. With them there was also a war correspondent for The Morning Post—a young man named Winston Churchill who had recently lost a by-election in which he had hoped to get into Parliament. He had had previous experience of colonial warfare in India and in Egypt, but on this occasion he was a non-combatant, though referred to as Lieutenant Churchill. Unfortunately on the return journey of this armoured train it was derailed by boulders placed on the line by Boers who then attacked the troops, as they clambered down, with artillery and machine guns. Winston Churchill helped superintend heaving the trucks back on to the line, but it
was over an hour before the train could be sent off again carrying the wounded. Churchill remained with the fighting men who were left behind and eventually all were captured. Under guard they were taken to Pretoria and imprisoned in a ‘Model School’ which had been turned into a gaol.

The siege of Ladysmith remained relatively stable for the next month following this incident —although Sir George White had 12,000 troops under command. The Boers actually allowed passage from the south of one train a day to provide sustenance and medical care for the sick and wounded in a hospital erected on the fringe of the town.

In November, more troops from Canada, Australia and New Zealand were arriving and together with other units of Buller’s Army Corps, they were dispatched up country as fast as they arrived, most of them to Lord Methuen’s Kimberley relief column, being ‘Mounted Infantry’.

BLACK WEEK

By December, preparations seemed complete for action on all fronts. In the central sector, a force under General Gatacre (a fanatic for physical exercise and fitness) set about to recapture Stormberg, now occupied by the Boers. After marching all night under a guide who took the wrong turn (requiring seven hours marching instead of four) they landed right in the enemy’s position in broad daylight. The Boers were ready for them and exacted tremendous slaughter both in the attempted assault and the enforced withdrawal. The action was a complete disaster with heavy casualties especially among the officers. This news reached London on Monday, 11 December 1899.

On the western railway General Lord Methuen attempted to relieve Kimberley with an attack at Magersfontein—a Boer stronghold in its vicinity. The British suffered an even worse defeat. A Scottish brigade was decimated and many of the troops were routed and fled in panic. General Wauchope (in command of the Scots) and Major the Marquis of Winchester were both killed, as were many other officers and troops. The news of this battle reached London on Thursday—three days after the news of the “reverse” at Stormberg.

Yet a third severe set-back occurred on Friday, 15 December in an attempt to capture the village of Colenso about five miles south of Ladysmith. This was the first serious attempt to relieve Ladysmith. The river Tugela ran between the Boers in Colenso and the British approaching its south bank. The Boers remained under cover during the preliminary bombardment carried out by British naval guns. When the field guns and the infantry were within easy range, the Boers shot them down unmercifully. British historians maintained that these tactics were an example of their “slimness”—in failing to reveal themselves—even using smokeless powder to avoid giving their position away. This despicable “slimness” circumvented the “broad and more open tactics of the Briton”. The Boers had dug trenches for protection and placed barbed wire across the river Tugela. They had even constructed a dam lower down to increase the depth of water, obscuring the barbed wire, so that some of the troops actually drowned crossing the river. The Irish Brigade (who had begun the day of battle with half an hour’s parade ground drill) suffered terrible casualties, complaining bitterly that they could not get a sight of the enemy to charge with their bayonets, as the Boers stayed under cover as long as possible “adopting the same tactics which had confounded us at Magersfontein”, as one historian scornfully observed. Like the charge of the Light Brigade at Balaclava, it was magnificent but not war, and it was only redeemed by the indomitable courage of the troops and the officers including General Buller, who with great coolness rode from one party to another through shot and shell to encourage them. He recommended five V.C.s, including four to officers attempting to
save the guns. The total British casualties were 1167, including 337 prisoners. Eleven guns were lost. Yet a third disaster in the space of five days was reported, and in London it was the never-to-be-forgotten "black week". Three British Generals in succession, Sir William Gatacre, Lord Methuen and Sir Redvers Buller in three widely separated actions had made frontal attacks against strongly fortified Boer positions, and suffered repulse and severe losses. As an American commentator observed: "Say, Colonel, was there no way round?"

In England, disappointment, dismay and grief were universal, digested by the public with dumb, almost paralysed resignation. Then the whole country seemed with one consent to leap to arms. Fifteen huge transports took 15,000 reinforcements of all arms to the Cape by the first weeks of January 1900. Lord Roberts, the most revered figure in the British Army, was sent out to take command. Roberts' only son had been killed at Colenso, which added poignancy to his dramatic appointment. General Kitchener was named as Chief-of-Staff to Roberts.

It was curiously in character that the dark depression of the "black week" in December 1899, should be relieved more by Winston Churchill than anyone else on the scene. As related, Winston Churchill was captured on 15 November, along with the soldiers left behind after the raid on the armoured train. Churchill was lodged in the 'Model School' in Pretoria which had been converted for use as a gaol. His protests that as a non-combatant he should be released were rejected, and he determined to escape. After observing the habits of the guard, he seized an opportunity of avoiding him, left his quarters and climbed over a six-foot fence surrounding the premises. He found himself in a private garden next door where there was a tea party going on. He slipped out and wandered into the town where he eventually located and followed the railroad which goes to Delagoa Bay and Lourenco Marques, its port. This railway line was his guide and lifeline, and after following it to a wayside station he was able to jump on to a moving train as it slowed down, hiding in a heap of coal sacks. This took him some miles along the way before he had to clamber down to avoid detection, and he repeated this train jumping, varied with tramping beside the line for the next five days, arriving at Lourenco Marques on 21 December. From there he sent a telegram announcing his escape, declaring that though he had lost many pounds in weight he was free and light of heart. Then he proceeded to the wharf and boarded the liner Indiana which was bound for Durban, landing him there on 23 December. By this time his escape was known and the people in Durban were expecting him. He received a rapturous welcome from a thousand people waiting to greet him, a speech was demanded and then he was chaired to the hotel where he was to stay, after delivering a second speech. He had already sent a courtly letter to the governor of the prison whence he had escaped, again protesting against imprisonment as a non-combatant; but thanking the governor for kindness shown to him as a prisoner, and expressing the hope that the end of the war, "shall preserve the national pride of the Boers and the security of the British" and put a stop to all enmity—regretting his inability to make a personal farewell—a typical Churchill epistle.

**ROBERTS AND KITCHENER**

News of this escapade relieved the gloom of "black week" in London, as did also the appointments of Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener who arrived in Cape Town on 10 January 1900. Redvers Buller remained in command in Natal and, on 23 January, Sir Charles Warren under his command made an attack on Spion Kop, regarded as the key to the relief of Ladysmith. It was a failure destined to become notorious. Spion Kop was captured and then abandoned just as the Boers were about to retire themselves. This was a consequence of a confusion of orders, and failure of communication in the chain of command.
from Redvers Buller to Sir Charles Warren
and their subordinate commanders. As a result,
the British suffered appalling casualties with­
out gaining their objective. Winston Churchill
himself was on the scene, endeavouring to
restore the situation by haranguing Sir Charles
Warren without result—except that Sir Charles
Warren threatened to have him arrested until
told who he was, a son of Lord Randolph
Churchill. Two appalling photographs of the
scene at Spion Kop were published and im­
mediately censored as “Boer propaganda”.
One shows a field covered with bodies and
the second a long trench in which they were
stacked—giving some idea of the terrible
carnage. The British casualties were given as
1200 — the Boers 300. Lord Roberts was
severely critical of the British command at
all levels, and in writing about Spion Kop,
Churchill declared, “Sir Redvers Buller said
little and what he said was obscure. He was
a man of considerable scale. He plodded from
blunder to blunder and from one disaster to
another without losing either the regard of his
country or the trust of his troops, to whose
feeding as well as his own he paid serious atten­
tion”. Churchill was then only 25 but his
exploits had already made him world famous.
Perhaps his dispatches were almost too exub­
erant, and one telegram he received read,
“Some of your best friends wish you would
stop making an ass of yourself”.

General Roberts dispatch to South Africa
was the most important aftermath of “black
week”. He was the most famous general in
the British Army and it was his own suggestion
that he should take over from Redvers Buller,
whose dispatches showed increasing pessimism.
He was appointed directly by Cabinet, over­
riding Lord Wolseley (“Sir Garnet”) and the
War Office—on the understanding that Lord
Kitchener should be his Chief-of-Staff. General
Roberts was then aged 67 years and he was
in semi-retirement as Commander-in-Chief,
Ireland. He had tremendous prestige and was
adored, almost revered by the public. His only
son was killed at Colenso, almost at the very
time of his appointment. He sailed for South
Africa forthwith. Kitchener joining him on
board at Gibraltar, having travelled from
Khartoum.

Roberts and Kitchener were a magnificent
combination — Roberts, a master of high
strategy, was able to obtain whatever he wished
without demur from Cabinet and the War
Office; Kitchener received instant compliance
with his plans and his proposals from any
subordinate commander; he had an immense
capacity for detail, and his very great energy
and determination were irresistible.

Roberts and Kitchener journeyed on the
same ship, and during the voyage had ample
opportunity to confer and decide the strategy
which the situation required. General French
and Haig were at Cape Town to meet them
on arrival on 10 January 1900. It was decided
to post most of the troops up the western
railway, 600 miles from Cape Town as far as
the Modder River which flows west between
the Orange and the Vaal. This included the
great mass of reinforcements all mounted as
far as possible. This was for the relief of
Kimberley, but more importantly to attack
directly the main force of Boers under General
Cronje, between the Modder River and the
Free State capital at Bloemfontein, which was
their real objective. With great boldness
General French left the railway on reaching
the Modder River, making a sweep of a 100
miles to the right—referred to as the “great
flank march”. By swift movement of cavalry
and mounted infantry, and with forced marches
by night (to avoid the great heat of the day),
showing great boldness and endurance they
were able to take up positions on the south
bank of the Modder opposite Cronje’s force,
capturing fords across the river and threaten­
ing to cut off Cronje from his home base at
Bloemfontein. Kimberley was relieved on 15
February 1900, almost as an incidental, when
a patrol of Australian horsemen rode in shortly
after 4 p.m.

**CAPTURE OF CRONJE AT PAARDERBERG**

Magersfontein was abandoned by the Boers,
who withdrew without defending it and likewise
at a later stage, Stormberg. Shortly afterwards
a titanic struggle developed with the Boers
stationed on the north bank of the Modder,
centred on an eminence called Paarderberg.
This lasted ten days; using all arms with great
skill and with inflexible purpose, Kitchener
gradually entrapped and surrounded Cronje’s
force. Colonel Hannay leading a Brigade of
Highlanders in the first assault was shot down
riddled with bullets. This was only one of many incidents of high courage. On the tenth day Cronje and all his force surrendered, the final assault being made by the Canadians—actually a French company. After his surrender, Cronje was taken under escort to Lord Roberts who shook his hand saying, “You have made a gallant defence, Sir”.

Cronje was taken to Cape Town with his wife, and despatched to St. Helena; other prisoners were sent to Ceylon and to Bermuda. When the news reached England there was great jubilation and a cartoon shows members of the Stock Exchange in London capering and dancing and throwing their silk top hats aloft. The fact that this great victory was won on Majuba Day, 27 February, made it all the more memorable and Kruger exclaimed sorrowfully, “The English have taken our Majuba Day away from us”.

Ever since Spion Kop, Roberts had left Natal and Ladysmith to the untender care of Redvers Buller, who eventually found a way through to relieve White, who had been locked up with a very large force for 120 days. Many of the Boers had been drawn off towards the west and others were brushed aside in a succession of skirmishes and battles until Ladysmith was relieved on 28 February. Sir George White returned home and was received by Queen Victoria.

Roberts, Kitchener and John French, after the capture of Cronje and his force, proceeded towards Bloemfontein, and though small forces of Boers were encountered, there was no major engagement before they entered the city on 13 March. In place of the Republican flag the Union Jack was hauled up at the Presidency of General Steyn.

It could be said that the victory at Paaderberg was the decisive action of the war. At this time there were nearly 200,000 British and Colonial soldiers fighting the Boers—far more than at Waterloo or in the Crimea. Yet it is doubtful if one person in a thousand has ever heard of Paaderberg—either in this country or in Great Britain. Apart from the skirmishes (some of them expensive) there was nothing left but the occupation of Bloemfontein and then Pretoria (5 June). By then the Boer government had evacuated each of these towns and maintained only a precarious existence in remote settlements or habitations in Eastern Transvaal, moving from one place to another to escape capture.

**RELIEF OF MAFEKING**

On 17 May 1900, Mafeking was relieved after a siege of over 200 days under command of Colonel Baden Powell, whose spirited defence had made him a popular hero—next after Roberts and Kitchener. Although not of very much military importance, this victory at Mafeking was the signal for the greatest outburst of patriotic enthusiasm that the British Empire has ever known. The news reached London about 9.30 p.m. on a Friday night and spread like wildfire. Every street in London became packed with crowds from nowhere and everywhere—dancing, singing, kissing each other (and any stray police). Every city in England had the same experience, and it was repeated the next day and evening (Saturday). The same scenes were repeated throughout the Empire. In Melbourne crowded balconies collapsed. The cable trams were rolled over in Bourke Street. Anybody who was old enough
to remember can still tell of the thrilling and universal rejoicing—wherever they happened to be—whether in the big cities or in any country town—the bonfires, the songs, the relief, the joy and the exuberance. A very few solemn folk in London thought the lack of restraint and unbridled display of feeling was un-English and even “degenerate”. But from the Prince of Wales down, everyone else joined in to make it an unforgettable night.

As far as any organised resistance mattered, the war was over, but the Boers kept on fighting for another two years before their final surrender on 31 May, 1902.

Roberts returned home at the end of 1900, was received by the Queen and created an earl. Perhaps it was her last audience, for she died on 21 January 1901. Kitchener was left in command and to him fell the task of vanquishing some thousands of Boers in commandos, scattered over the country fighting guerrilla war with deadly effect. It required tremendous perseverance and determination, even ruthlessness, all of which Kitchener possessed in a degree unrivalled by any other general. In the scattered actions which followed, Colonial troops including Australians and New Zealanders distinguished themselves in the sort of war to which they were peculiarly adapted; while General Ian Hamilton, later to be their commander at Anzac, was conspicuously successful.

Kitchener devised a scheme of criss-crossing the country with barbed wire fences—five strands of barbed wire, sometimes with a trench alongside or a low fence of boulders to provide additional protection. This was the first use by the British of barbed wire and trenches (though they were used by the Boers even earlier), and were to become a major feature of the fighting in World War I.

Added to these long fences, block houses (looking like corrugated iron tanks with a gable roof) were placed every mile or so along the fence, housing seven men to guard it. These fences reduced the mobility of the commandos but did little to stop the more enterprising—particularly De Wet and Smuts, who led excursions throughout the length and breadth of the land, invading Cape Colony and Natal with threatening attacks. They received support, supplies and protection from their countrymen still living on their farms. Therefore Kitchener directed that all farms adjacent to the railways, where enemy activity interrupted the line, should be burnt and their inhabitants imprisoned. Such attacks on farms became widespread on the pretext of cutting off supplies to the fighting burghers. Women and children had to be rounded up after their farms were destroyed and lodged in ‘refugee camps’—named ‘concentration’ camps by the enemy. This provided a fruitful source of propaganda and the French published cartoons of starving mothers and children depicting “British inhumanity” and atrocities—with grossly exaggerated accounts of conditions. Those in charge of these camps did their best, though doubtless there was much hardship involved. Some of the Boers captured in the British territory of Cape Colony were executed as “rebels”, especially if engaged on espionage. The Boers too were responsible for atrocities, shooting civilians and prisoners. In the British Parliament the atrocity stories were aired by the Opposition, and countered by Government supporters.

Kitchener’s senior generals were French and Haig in the Cape (with Methuen until he was wounded trying to capture De la Rey); while in Transvaal Ian Hamilton and Allenby were conspicuous—each to become a notable leader in World War I. It must have been galling for these British leaders to be obliged to resort to fences, blockhouses and farm burning, when their own instincts favoured dashing cavalry charges against fixed positions. But their own resolution and their devotion to Kitchener were such that they carried out his strategy dutifully.

There were many occasions for hard riding anyway in pursuit of the guerillas, for the Boers were by no means the only ones adept at ambushes, lightning raids, fast pursuit and capture. Thus Kitchener proceeded with the unenviable task of eliminating perhaps 10,000 Boers scattered widely over most of the country, ably led by De la Rey, the elusive De Wet, Smuts and Botha. Steyn and these others escaped capture until the end. Steyn being now the leading political figure in charge of Government which was almost peripatetic.

Colonial contingents did well and were often praised by higher commands. They were never assembled together in a single corps but remained attached to British regiments—as the N.S.W. Lancers, the Queensland Rifles and
the others from each Australian Colony, often widely dispersed. Perhaps their most notable feats in the war were at the battle of Diamond Hill—the final coup-de-grace after the capture of Pretoria, and the successful action at a place called Brakfontein in Western Transvaal, where Australian contingents numbering about 400 men withstood a siege by a much larger Boer force under De la Rey who finally withdrew. Both Kitchener and Roberts praised them highly for a dogged defence.

However they were not always approved by Regular British officers. On 12 June 1901, "taking advantage of careless picketing" a party of Boers routed 350 men of the Victorian contingent. The Boers looted their camp and rode off "shedding the prisoners". A certain General Beatson berated them for this "mishap". He had previously tried to turn "their easy-going scorn of drill and smartness into the rigid discipline of a crack cavalry regiment". They detested and mistrusted him. When he heard of the defeat they had suffered he made for the scene with his whole column. Then he mustered the Australians and branded them as "a lot of wasters and white-livered curs", adding for good measure that the "Australians are all the same". The Contingent mutinied and refused to march under him, whereupon he had three of the leaders arrested, court-martialled and sentenced to death. When Kitchener heard of this, he commuted the sentence to three years' imprisonment, and when the Australian Government (as it now was) made representations to the British Government, a complete pardon was granted. Despite this, the colonial volunteers were popular heroes in England; but the friction between British Regulars and the Australians persisted even to echo in 1941 in a sharp exchange between Prime Minister R. G. Menzies and General Maitland Wilson.

The free-roving Boer commandos had many successes attacking British positions and patrols and then riding off. But they were not always successful and many were killed and captured, and despite the exploits of Smuts and De Wet they were gradually worn down.

The first serious attempt at a peace conference was a meeting between Kitchener and Botha at Middleburg on the Delagoa Bay railway on 28 February 1901. However it was clear that the Boers were determined to pre-serve their independence and the British determined on the annexation of Transvaal and the Orange Free State. Any qualifications by Kitchener designed to soften the blow were opposed by Milner and Chamberlain. Promises of reparations, amnesties and of preservation or maintenance of their own language were of no effect, and on 16 March negotiations were broken off, despite protests in South Africa by Kitchener and at home by Lloyd George, who blamed Chamberlain and Milner for the breakdown. In any case the war was on again—with many bitter battles over the next year.

Kitchener added another tactic to the division of the country with barbed wire fences and block-houses. He commenced a series of 'drives' with large bodies of troops sweeping across wide tracts of country to capture any Boers who might be operating within the area, and to destroy all farms and villages encountered. Eventually successful, this war of attrition or 'scorched earth' nevertheless left a lasting bitterness which persists after 75 years between the Afrikanders and their oppressors, the British.

It was not until May 1902 that a further peace conference, opening with a prayer, was held at Vereeniging. Botha considered surrender inevitable but Steyn would not budge from his determination to preserve Boer independence, while some younger commanders would not recognise facts, declaring with Kemp, "I will fight on till I die". It was De la Rey whose vote for peace (and surrender) turned the scale. Smuts and Milner drafted the 'peace treaty', which was signed
half an hour before the deadline on 31 May 1902.

All war correspondents had been excluded from the peace conference, but Edgar Wallace, correspondent for the Daily Mail, outwitted the censors. He arranged passage each day on a passing train, while a confederate at the peace conference signalled him with different coloured flags. When a white flag was sighted, he cabled London to say he had "purchased 1000 Rand shares"—the pre-arranged code meaning "Peace is Proclaimed". The multitudes assembled and rejoiced in London. It is recorded that the Stock Exchange adjourned in Melbourne while they sang the 100th Psalm.

Kitchener addressed the Boer leaders at Vereeniging, emphasizing that it was no disgrace to be defeated by an overwhelming force. At that time there were over 200,000 British and Colonial soldiers under his command. They had lost 22,000 men, two-thirds from typhoid and other diseases. The Australians involved numbered over 15,000 of whom 500 did not return. Their names are chiselled on monuments all over Australia.

The four South African Colonies federated in 1910. In World War I Botha (against strong opposition) carried the majority of the country in declaring for Britain. South Africa under Smuts fought against the Germans capturing their African colonies. The South Africans fought in Abyssinia and Libya in World War II. Even then, a South African officer who was in a Field Ambulance at Mersa Matruh, told me he could never hope to return home after the war—his family would not receive him again after he had been fighting with the British.

Since 1948 Afrikander nationalism has ruled South Africa, and from the Boer mentality the policy of apartheid has emerged. For better or for worse the British won the war, but the Afrikanders had won the peace. Their struggle to maintain white supremacy still goes on.


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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR (Continued from p. 5)

ENLISTED AUTHORS

I refer to the article in the May/June 1978 issue No. 10 in which Flight Lieutenant C. H. Foster expressed delight and surprise to see an article in the Journal written by a non-commissioned member. He was of course referring to the article written by Warrant Officer 1 D. K. Watts entitled "The Army—What is Happening?"

Furthermore I agree with him when he says, "Such an article is a refreshing change". I also acknowledge that it would appear that not many non-commissioned personnel take the trouble to air their views per the medium of the Journal.

However, I take umbrage to the implications of paragraph four, where he states, "This journal should try to encourage the main body of our men—the enlisted men—to air their views. While they may well not be versed in the art of English expression or higher defence strategy, their thoughts, no matter how crudely expressed, should carry some weight with their commanders—it is a poor commander indeed who believes he can achieve his aim without the good will of his men". To imply that only commissioned officers are well versed in the art of English expression, and that enlisted men can only crudely express themselves is both erroneous and extremely undesirable.

Flight Lieutenant Foster mentioned "slipping morale" and "pride in service", I wonder how much further morale slipped when "the enlisted men" read his article. The average enlisted man would really have had "pride in service" when he read that officers view enlisted men as incompetent and illiterate.

I do not believe, however, it was his intention to ridicule the enlisted men, but I would like to draw his attention to one of the main aims in writing, postulated by the University of Queensland, this is the need to reduce and even eliminate the necessity for the reader to interpret the meaning of the writer.

RAAF Laverton, Victoria  E. Nothand
Warrant Officer
The History of
The Australian
School Cadet Movement
to 1893

Paul Kitney

FOREWORD

My interest in the School Cadets goes back to the time when I was a member of the Cadet Corps in New Zealand. That interest was rekindled when I took up my appointment with the University of New South Wales, for one of my duties is to represent the academic interests on the Royal Military College selection boards. I was pleased to see that a number of candidates coming before the board were serving or had served in the Cadets. The decision taken in 1975 to abolish the organization disappointed me. I sensed that many years of tradition had been tossed away and determined to look into the beginnings of the Cadet Movement in Australia. With the generous help of a number of school headmasters and archivists I pieced together the account which follows. My study terminates with the disbandment of many cadet units during the depression of the 1890s. Much more remains to be written but I dare to suggest it will not be as fascinating as the first twenty-five years of Cadet history.

WITH the establishment of the first unit at St. Mark’s Collegiate School, Sydney, in 1866, the cadet movement became a popular activity in Australia’s eastern colonies. Financed by parents, guided by the various Departments of Public Instruction and aided with varying degrees of enthusiasm by the colonial Defence authorities, the movement prospered until the depression years of the 1890s, when a number of schools were forced to abandon their units. Many reasons help to explain why the movement became popular when it did and all have the ring of authenticity. That given most publicity was the fear of war which persisted intermittently through most of the second half of the nineteenth century. Initially, a fear of Napoleon III grew in England in the late 1850s and resulted in cadet corps being formed at the Great Public Schools of Eton, Harrow, Shrewsbury, Rugby and Winchester “to train their boys for national defence in time of national emergency.” This had an influence in Australia in due course, especially in N.S.W. By the mid-1860s Australia feared that a Russian invasion would be mounted from Vladivostok. This gave the Volunteer forces more sense of purpose, and the formation of a cadet corps was seen by many influential citizens as a complementary move. The popularity of rifle shooting competitions most certainly helped to encourage the establishment of cadet units. The presence of British troops in the colonies, and their readiness to help develop colonial defence were other factors, as was the natural tendency for boys to play at soldiers. Oddly enough, however, it is doubtful whether the raising of a volunteer contingent to fight in the Maori Wars in New Zealand in the 1860s had much impact, as efforts to raise a second contingent failed.

Two other reasons are recognised, not closely associated with each other, but together providing the greatest impetus for the development of the cadet movement. The first of these was the introduction of military drill and gymnastics into the curriculums of most schools, both elementary and secondary, from the late 1850s onwards. With such a grounding in drill, the step to forming a cadet corps was often a small one. The other factor, especially among the independent schools, was the appointment of a number of headmasters who were cast in the Thomas Arnold mould and who firmly believed in the moral aim he had followed at Rugby—"to produce boys fit to take the leadership in a Christian State and Empire". Boys could be “taught, practically, the value of discipline ... and provided with a healthy and useful occupation during the hours of relaxation ... (and) thus kept from forming bad associations and pernicious habits at a critical point in their lives”. The cadet corps offered an excellent means of developing character, discipline,
school spirit and leadership. In an era rich with headmasters of outstanding ability, the names of George Macarthur, Alexander Morrison, Albert Weigall, Joseph Fletcher, Frederick Bridges and Reginald Roe stand out, not only as educationists but also as champions of the cadet movement.

Somewhat naturally, the cadet movement gained most support in the more populous colonies of New South Wales and Victoria. Queensland, although not far behind in forming its unit, developed much more slowly, as did Tasmania. In South Australia and Western Australia the first cadet units were formed after the turn of the century. The subject gymnastics and military drill was introduced into the curriculum for Western Australian schools in 1893, and in 1894 Parliament was informed that “Mr. Gardiner, the Superintendent of Drill has been most energetic in giving instruction in this subject to both teachers and pupils, (although) they have been handicapped by the want of a drill manual”. The first school cadet unit was not established until 1908, but a cadet element of the volunteer forces, catering for youngsters who had left school, began in 1896/7. The first South Australian school unit was formed in 1900 at The Collegiate School of St. Peter, evoking the comment that “Considering that the cadet movement has been carried on for so long and so successfully in the other colonies, it is a matter of some surprise that South Australia has only just awakened to the same idea”.

Both the Launceston Church Grammar School and the Hutchins School, Hobart, raised cadet units in 1885, although a Cadet Vernon of Launceston Grammar competed in a rifle shoot the previous year. A cadet element of the volunteer forces, catering for youngsters who had left school, began in 1896/7. The first South Australian school unit was formed in 1900 at The Collegiate School of St. Peter, evoking the comment that “Considering that the cadet movement has been carried on for so long and so successfully in the other colonies, it is a matter of some surprise that South Australia has only just awakened to the same idea”.

In Queensland, a rifle company was formed at the Brisbane Grammar School in 1870 but was disbanded four years later. With the appointment of Reginald Roe to the staff, however, a more determined effort saw the formation of a volunteer cadet corps of fifty in 1878. Roe was the first Commanding Officer of the unit, a position he held for many years. It was not until 1890 that the next school unit was formed, at Ipswich Grammar School, under the command of Captain Robins. In 1892 the Toowoomba Grammar School unit was formed. In his report for that year, the headmaster said, “We have been enrolled as a Cadet Corps under the command of Captain Lee, a staunch colleague, always ready with his services . . .” It is surprising that Toowoomba took so long to form a unit, as drill was introduced into the curriculum in 1877 and volunteer cadets had existed in the town since 1879 under the command of Major Blaxland, a master at the school. The Department of Public Instruction had been asked to provide rifles for the formation of a Cadet Unit at the School in 1883 but this approach had apparently not been followed up. There is some evidence that school cadets existed at Roma and possibly, Maryborough, by the 1890s.

Military drill had been introduced to the curriculum of some schools in Sydney in the 1850s, and as early as 1860 seventy-two pupils of The King’s School were enrolled in the Parramatta Voluntary Rifles. But the Reverend George Fairfowl Macarthur was influenced by other factors in constituting his cadet corps at St. Mark’s. A member of his staff, William Dalmas had been on a visit to England where he had observed the greater public schools operating cadet training schemes. He returned fired with enthusiasm for the benefits which the boys derived from such training. Macarthur, who had been an Army chaplain, needed little persuasion to write to the Officer Commanding, Volunteer Force, New South Wales, in February 1866, requesting “consideration of a proposal to institute a Corps of Cadets . . .:

1. . . . to create in the minds and habits of our youth a desire and aptitude for the service of the Country . . .

2. . . . fewer accidents would arise from the incautious use of Fire Arms if our youth were properly trained and disciplined to be careful and methodical in handling them . . .
3. . . . promotion to the use of the Rifle in the Corps would impart an interest to the daily Drill . . .

4. . . . a spirit whereby the Lads . . . would become valuable members of the Volunteer Force . . ."

Support was quickly forthcoming. Approval to raise the unit was granted on 29 March, and in June, Dalmas was appointed Officer Commanding the cadet corps, with the rank of Captain. The glory of St. Marks was short-lived, however. In 1868 Macarthur was appointed headmaster of The King’s School and Dalmas and about forty pupils from St. Mark’s transferred with him. The continuity of the cadet unit was preserved and in August 1868 its title was officially changed to The King’s School Cadet Corps. The Camden Congregational Theological College and associated Grammar School formed a volunteer cadet corps in 1868 under the command of William Mann Thompson. However, little is known of the unit and, when the College moved from its original home at Camden Villa, Newtown, in 1876, it is possible that the unit was disbanded.

In 1869 Reverend Joseph Fletcher was given approval to establish a unit at Newington College and the following year Albert Weigall formed the Sydney Grammar School unit. With an initial strength of seventy-nine cadets this was the largest corps up to that time and the numbers rapidly grew to over two hundred.

At about this time state schools were beginning to take an interest in cadets and the total cadet strength of New South Wales increased from less than two hundred in 1870 to 850 in 1871. Military drill was introduced into the public schools’ curriculum in 1870 and the first military inspection of the senior boys of Fort Street School occurred in June. Present were the Secretary of the Council of Education, William Wilkins, and the headmaster, Frederick Bridges, who later announced that the school intended to seek authority to form a cadet corps. Later that year Mr John McGuanne and Mr Richard Cannon were appointed honorary captains and officers commanding of the Paddington House and Lyceum Schools respectively and the Cleveland Street unit came into being soon afterwards.

In 1872 Dr John Fraser, who had opened a private school in West Maitland called ‘Sauchie House’ was given approval to establish the Sauchie House Cadet Detachment of the Royal NSW Volunteer Rifles, with a strength of fifty-six—the entire school. “. . . Dr Fraser was not given to offering choice in matters concerning his curriculum.” In 1883 Dr Fraser retired and the school was bought by the NSW Education Department. It was transferred to East Maitland in 1893. The Cadet unit survived both the change of ownership and location, and is still in existence. Also in 1872 the NSW Council of Education decided that teachers who were not trained in military drill would be required to take instruction so that they could give drill to their pupils. As a result cadet units began to appear in state schools in Sydney and surrounding districts. In 1874 units were formed at Orange and Mudgee Schools. By 1875 Liverpool, Richmond and Parramatta Schools all had their own corps. In 1883 there were twenty-two state school units. The following year the Cadet Corps at Newcastle Superior Public School was formed. In 1883, also, the Catholic Boys’ Schools in Sydney were “bade recollect that military drill was on the programme.” This no doubt led to the formation of what appears to be the first Catholic school unit in NSW at St. Ignatius College in 1885.

Despite Sydney’s claim to the first unit, the idea of a school cadet corps seems to have originated in Victoria. At Scotch College in the 1850s the boys were drilled regularly by Sergeant-Major Cleary of the 12th Regiment, the British garrison unit. In May 1858 Mr. S. Ross, headmaster of the Mount Korong school wrote to the Chief Secretary that he taught his boys various details of military drill including marching evolutions, and added, “You have, Sir, some thousands of fine male youths attending your public schools in Victoria who, with say four hours a week training, would make a fine Militia Nucleus.” The idea was not seized upon, but, in 1861, the headmaster of Scotch College, Dr Alexander Morrison, said in his annual report: “Military Drill, although last in our enumeration, is certainly not least in our estimation, and most efficiently has it been carried on by the able and well-selected Drill Sergeants sent us by Colonel Pitt, through whose kindness, also, sixty of the biggest boys have been furnished with rifles . . .” Drill and Gymnastics flourished in the 1860s and in 1865
the first teachers attended a course of instruction in the subject, conducted by one, G. Techow, at the National Gymnasium, to qualify as instructors. The subject was enthusiastically embraced into the curriculum, "since boys, if care be not taken, sometimes, acquire an ugly style of carriage, which is often repulsive and hard to remedy."

In 1867 a more determined effort to establish a cadet corps was made. Captain Frederick Thomas Sargood, an officer in the Victoria Volunteer Artillery was charged with the responsibility of forming a body of cadets from the secondary schools of Melbourne to participate in the formal welcome to His Royal Highness, the Duke of Edinburgh. The response was only lukewarm, but, when the Duke arrived there was "a juvenile Guard of Honour composed of a 'cadet corps' of boys belonging to Wesley College and two private schools from St. Kilda. Their uniform was dark grey, faced with scarlet and they were armed with carbines. They presented arms very creditably."

The headmaster of Ballarat College, in his report for 1867, noted that "Mr. McCartney, late Colour-Sergeant in the British Army trained all the boys in military drill and other manly exercises." The Victorian Board of Education encouraged the teaching of the subject and this, together with the popularity of rifle shooting as a school sport, provided a firm foundation on which cadet units could be built. At Melbourne Grammar, for example, "the whole School was drilled from 3 to 4 o'clock on Thursday afternoons!" St. Patrick's College was another school involved with both drill and rifle shooting at this time. However, it was not until 1883 that more positive action was initiated. The Service government was responsible for passing a Discipline Act in that year and Service appointed Frederick Sargood (now a Lieutenant-Colonel) as his Minister of Defence. Sargood had recently returned from a trip to Europe where he had been much impressed by the inclusion of military training as a regular activity in Swiss schools. In 1884 he sent a circular to sixteen schools in Victoria seeking support for the formation of a Cadet Corps, the object of which would be "To bind together in one patriotic brotherhood the youth of this country so that, should occasion arise, they may be able in after years to defend their country with the most telling effect." As a result, a meeting of headmasters under the chairmanship of Mr. A. S. Way, principal of Wesley College, drew up a number of resolutions which led to the formation of the Victorian Cadet Corps.

Colonel Sargood approved the resolutions and the first units were gazetted on 23 January 1885. Among the first six listed, dated 20 January were four state schools from Bendigo. By the middle of 1885 nearly two thousand cadets were enrolled throughout Victoria. The Department of Defence assumed responsibility for the Corps but the Department of Education remained involved. This situation resolved itself in 1891 when Sargood (now Sir Frederick) held both portfolios. In NSW no happy compromise was reached; the Department of Public Instruction (later Education), remained responsible until the Department of Defence decided to involve itself in 1893. As will be seen, the results of this action were disastrous.

So much for the establishment of the first cadet units; other aspects remain to be examined. Some mention has already been made of the type of uniform worn by the cadets, especially in Victoria. Cadets were required to provide their own uniforms and the Scotch College magazine noted that it "is of such material and make that it can be worn on any occasion and, moreover, is much cheaper than any ordinary suit of the same quality and style". The less privileged schools were encouraged to adopt it as their school uniform. However, exceptions to the official uniform were made. In 1885 Melbourne Grammar School cadets objected to the blue serge uniform, asserting that "the similarity between a cadet and a telegraph boy was a great drawback". The following year, "an excessively neat rifle green Norfolk jacket, trimmed with black braid, with trousers of the same colour . . . and a cap of imperial pattern with a white cover for the summer time" was substituted.

In NSW exceptions to dress regulations were possibly more common than the approved uniform. St. Mark's and The King's School units initially wore navy blue tunics and grey trousers but when this uniform was adopted for the NSW cadets in 1874, King's changed to grey tunics and navy trousers. Sydney Grammar wore scarlet coats with blue cuffs and white
braid, blue trousers with red stripes and peaked caps. However, this was abolished in 1890 to save expenses and the cadets had only their field dress thereafter. Newington College cadets wore "a suitable uniform based on that of the British Rifle Brigade with the distinctive green stripe of that formation. The uniform was of dark blue serge, the tunic faced with bright green down the front and on the cuffs and had shoulder straps of bright green twisted braid. The trousers had a green stripe down the side. The cap also was of dark blue serge with green piping. In front was the corps insignia—a silver plated bugle coiled round the letters "NC". The school had its own tailor and hatter and Fletcher took a keen and unclerical delight in seeing to it that his Corps was the smartest among the school cadets of the colony. Sauchie House was apparently equipped by the Volunteer unit to which it was affiliated, except that uniforms were not issued to cadets under fourteen years.

While no reference has been found to the type of uniform worn by the Hutchins School cadets, it appears from a photograph to be similar to, if not identical with the official Victorian uniform. The Brisbane Grammar School uniform by 1880 consisted of blue tunic, grey trousers and French kepi for headdress although, "judging by the earliest photos of a cadet group in 1873 they did not all have a uniform". By 1890 khaki had been introduced to replace the blue and grey. The Ipswich Grammar unit was singularly unfortunate as the ship carrying their uniforms sank in the Red Sea and a fresh order had to be placed in England. As an interim measure they drilled in school uniform.

If there was a great variation in uniforms there was equal variety in the weapons used, especially in the earliest years. The first 'rifles' used at St. Mark's "were 'dummy' pattern made of broomsticks and pieces of fencing. Then carbines, discarded by the mounted police, were substituted" the stocks being cut down for the smaller boys. The Corps was later armed with Enfields and then with General Hay rifles. Newington, too, began with poles for weapons because the Reverend Fletcher dreaded accidents. However, "eventually carbines were used... clumsy weapons of the pre-cartridge era... It was said (they) had seen service in the Crimea. An armoury and a 'magazine' for powder were set up in the old burial vault of the Blaxlands under the chapel". The smaller boys were issued only with belt and bayonet. Later, in 1886 the Corps was issued with Martini-Henri carbines. The weapons used by Sydney Grammar are not identified, but the Maitland cadets at various times used Snider rifles, Enfields and Martini-Enfields.

Brisbane Grammar School cadets were armed initially with "Snider carbines for the small fry or Snider rifles for those who could stand the shock of discharge— it kicked like a mule!" General Foott, who recounted these details, added, "In those days I was a very tidy little soldier and this led to my being fined five shillings for polishing my carbine all over with emery cloth." Early in the 1890s the Sniders were replaced by Martini-Henri rifles. Ipswich Grammar, also, was issued with Snider rifles, obviously older than the Newington College carbines, for they were reputed to have been used at Waterloo. In Victoria, the variety of weapons in use does not appear to have been great. The rifles provided to Scotch College by Colonel Pitt are not identified but the 1867 Guard of Honour had been armed with double-barrelled carbines weighing fourteen pounds! However, from 1884 onwards the cadet units were issued with the oval-bore Lancaster rifles and, when these were withdrawn from service, they were replaced with Francottes, and later still, by Martini-Henris. These lighter weapons were easier for the cadets to handle than the more cumbersome carbines and possibly reflected an official interest in the cadets not shown in other colonies.

When it came to cadet activities there was much more compatibility between all schools and all colonies. Foot-drill, rifle drill, parades both ceremonial and non-ceremonial, rifle shooting and encampments and bivouacs formed the bulk of the curriculum in each school. Training was "by the book", and the following Instruction Manuals have survived in the archives of at least one school:

"Field Exercises and Evolutions of Infantry", 1867

"Regulations for the Musketry Instruction of the Army", 1867
"A Military System of Gymnastic Exercises, for the use of Instructors", 1862.

Drill, having often been introduced to the school before the formation of a cadet unit, usually remained part of the school curriculum and was performed by all students. In other schools it became an "out of teaching-hours" activity. In whatever way, foot-drill amounted to one hour per week. Additionally, in Victoria after 1884, school corps were organized into battalion-sized units and drilled as such six times a year. Associated mainly with this aspect of cadet training, and equally as revered as the headmasters they served, were the drill instructors—men like Hodges and Hegney of Sydney Grammar, Lees of Newington, Gray of Melbourne Grammar, Whitehead of Scotch College and numerous others, mainly ex British Army regulars who became part of the tradition of the schools.

Rifle training seemed generally to be held on a Saturday morning and was frequently followed by a rifle competition in the afternoon. At this time it was by far the most popular sport in all the colonies. School units competed in local competitions, special invitation events, inter-school matches and, finally, inter-colonial matches. Most school histories abound with details of the performances of their rifle teams. Newington is a case in point. It shot an inter-school match against Camden College in 1869 and won; in 1870 it defeated The King's School and in 1871 defeated both King's and Sydney Grammar in separate competitions. Sandwiched in between were competitions against 18th Royal Irish, a regiment on its way back to England from service in New Zealand, and HMS Galatea, the ship which had brought the Duke of Edinburgh to Australia. Newington won both. In 1875 it won the NSW Schools Challenge trophy, a Silver Bugle; in later years this competition was held annually for a Challenge Shield which Newington won on a number of occasions. Sydney Grammar won this Shield more than once also but the efforts of its corps are not recorded in detail. However, it is worthy of note that the competition for the Silver Bugle was terminated because Sydney Grammar, with three victories, won the trophy outright. An interesting sidelight to shooting competitions occurred in 1887. Sydney Grammar was not issued with ammunition that year and the retail price of more than two pounds per hundred rounds was considered exhorbitant. Undaunted, Sergeant Morris collected empty cases from the range, bought a filling outfit and set to work making cartridges:

"I nearly blew up the lodge when I started; . . . we practised for the Shield that year on my cartridges; you'll see the hole in the old wall now where I blew a brick out trying how they would go; they went all right."

Shooting was always very popular in Victorian schools. Before the advent of the cadet corps in 1884 there had been an inter-schools' competition for a cup donated by James McEwan and Co. Wesley College won it in 1873 and again the following year, followed by St. Patrick's College and Melbourne Grammar, before the trophy became the permanent possession of Wesley when it won again in 1877. The Victoria Rifle Association conducted an annual competition for senior school cadets commencing in 1884. Geelong Grammar dominated the event in the ten years to 1893, winning seven times; the other winners were Scotch College twice and Geelong College. Associated with this competition initially was the George Trophy, a life-size suit of armour on a plush background. However, Geelong Grammar won this outright in 1887.

Probably the proudest record of all is that of Brisbane Grammar School. For a number of years the School competed in local competitions because there were no other school units in Queensland. Then, in 1887 the inter-schools competition was introduced. Six schools competed, the Grammar Schools of Geelong, Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane, Scotch College and New Zealand's Dunedin High School. Brisbane Grammar won and repeated the effort in 1888, 1889 and 1890. In 1888 Colonel Sargood presented the Cadets' Federal Rifle Competition Challenge Trophy for competition in conjunction with the inter-schools' shoot and it was won outright by Brisbane Grammar in 1890. It is interesting to note, in passing, that at least three other Sargood shields existed at various times. North Parramatta won one such trophy in 1876, and in 1895 Sir Frederick presented two more, one each for senior and junior cadets' shooting.

In Victoria at least two other trophies were offered for competition in the 1880s. One, pre-
sented by Mrs. Sargood, was competed for by metropolitan schools in marching, company and battalion drill movements, and manual and firing exercises. The first winners were the Brighton Road State School cadets under the command of Lieutenant J. C. Hoad, who later became Chief of the Australian General Staff. Scotch College which had performed with distinction in the competition in each year won the shield outright in 1890. The other trophy, known as the Queen’s Colours, was a set of colours handworked by the Governor’s wife, Lady Loch and her daughter. Competition for this trophy was open to all schools in Victoria. The conditions of award are not clearly defined but it appears to have been related to field training. Scotch won the competition in 1888-90 and Geelong Grammar in 1891. Thereafter there is no mention of the trophy. Perhaps it was abandoned when the Lochs returned to England.

Ceremonial parades, of which the Guard of Honour for the Duke of Edinburgh has been mentioned, played an important part in the training of cadets. In 1867 the St. Mark’s unit took part in the Queen’s Birthday celebrations in Sydney. The boys “attracted no little attention and admiration; the corps has not been formed more than about nine months” but displayed “a degree of proficiency in military movements which at once testified to their enthusiasm in the work . . .” In 1869 The King’s School and Camden College paraded and “as the boys strode along in all the ‘pomp and circumstance of war’ they at times were honoured by the plaudits of the crowd.” Rain washed out the parade in 1870, and Sydney Grammar School was the sole representative in 1871, being joined the following year by Newington College. In 1875 the school camped about two miles from Parramatta during the Queen’s Birthday holiday weekend and engaged with King’s in mock battles as well as a ceremonial parade and other activities. A battalion camp was held at Camden in 1890 with King’s, Newington and Coerwell Academy (Lithgow) providing a company each and Sydney Grammar three companies.

In Queensland, General Foott recalled that “We used to do some fairly strenuous field days including shamfights and bivouacs. Sydney Grammar held its first camp at Wisemans Ferry in 1872 and, although it ended in tragic circumstances with the death of a boy by drowning, no other serious accident occurred in the next twenty or more years that camps were held at Bathurst, Mittagong and even at the Sydney Showground. In 1875 the school camped about two miles from Parramatta during the Queen’s Birthday holiday weekend and engaged with King’s in mock battles as well as a ceremonial parade and other activities. A battalion camp was held at Camden in 1890 with King’s, Newington and Coerwell Academy (Lithgow) providing a company each and Sydney Grammar three companies.

In Queensland, General Foott recalled that “We used to do some fairly strenuous field days including shamfights and a bivouac. We used to go to camp at Lytton where we met and fought cadets from Roma, Ipswich and, I think, Maryborough. I remember a shamfight at Lytton . . . when we harried the ‘Romans’ across the swamp.” Ipswich also recalled the camps at Lytton, especially the skirmishes with Brisbane Grammar. Occasionally the cadets even defended Ipswich township against Brisbane cadets. In 1891, during the shearers’ strike, a country cadet went to far as to write to the Colonial Secretary in Brisbane, “If the Government wants us, we are ready to go to any part of Queensland. I think you will find we are not...

Duke of Clarence and our present King”. (The occasion was 1881 and the King was George V.) Scotch College was selected to form a guard of honour when the Governor, Sir Henry Loch, opened the Centennial Exhibition in 1888. Units from many schools lined the route to Man-of-War Steps in Sydney when the Soudan contingent embarked. Newington College had the honour of providing the only cadet company to take part in the march past the Vice-Regal party when the contingent returned. In Melbourne a school holiday was proclaimed on 19 November 1886 to mark the occasion of the first public parade of all the cadet forces in Victoria at Albert Park. More than two thousand cadets representing the units of forty-one state schools, eleven independent or private schools and one Roman Catholic School were inspected by the Governor.

By far the most popular activity engaged in by the cadets were the encampments and bivouacs. Sydney Grammar held its first camp at Wisemans Ferry in 1872 and, although it ended in tragic circumstances with the death of a boy by drowning, no other serious accident occurred in the next twenty or more years that camps were held at Bathurst, Mittagong and even at the Sydney Showground. In 1875 the school camped about two miles from Parramatta during the Queen’s Birthday holiday weekend and engaged with King’s in mock battles as well as a ceremonial parade and other activities. A battalion camp was held at Camden in 1890 with King’s, Newington and Coerwell Academy (Lithgow) providing a company each and Sydney Grammar three companies.

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faint-hearted fellows. We wear a uniform and carry a rifle which we will not be frightened to use if called upon to do so.” What a bivouac that would have been!

Camps in Victoria were held annually from 1887 onwards. The first took place in the grounds of Colonel Sargood’s residence, Rippson Lea at Elsternwick and in later years at Langwarrin and Aspendale. The real enjoyment of a camp can best be visualised through a cadet’s own eyes:

“The most enjoyable of them all were the camps at Geelong... Many will recall with great delight how they used to roll up their swags in the yard at East Melbourne, see them packed off to the train, and then march down Collins Street to Spencer Street to the inspiring strains of our own bugle band. Then the camp itself; the lure of Geelong, two miles away; that wretched guard on Queen’s Bridge... the callous way in which officers refused a leave pass even for most urgent cases; those brave spirits who swam the Barwon in the dark, because “ford there was none”, only to find another guard at the top of the hill; the sad return home; the derisive laugh of their less venturesome tent-mates; the next day’s fatigue party; then the last day, with its mimic battle and the welter of blank cartridges and mock slaughter.”

What blissful days!

But harsh economic realities were to bring such activities to an end in the 1890s for some years. School boards were reluctant to ask parents for further support and many units were disbanded, to be reformed just before Federation. J. H. Allsopp in his History of Ipswich Grammar summed up the situation very well when he wrote, “Unfortunately the miseries of the 1890s reached into the school and... caused the unit to be disbanded in 1895.” In NSW the situation was aggravated by the actions of the Defence Department which, having had little interest in the cadets to that time, in 1893 inspected all weapons in the school armouries. They “discovered honeycombing” in the old Lancasters and carbines (which had been old before their issue to the schools over twenty years before) and presented headmasters and the Department of Public Instruction with a “heavy bill for damages”. This was the last straw for all but the strongest units and, combined with the emergence of organized sport as an alternative leisure occupation, caused the disbandment of all but a few independent school units. Had the scheme been a success? Cadet life may have been treated as a game but the lessons it had to offer were well-learnt and the comradeship it fostered endured. The same School Histories which joyously relive the activities of their cadet units, record with pride the names and deeds of their ex-cadets who fought and, in many cases, died for their country in the Boer War and World War I. No greater tribute to the Australian School Cadet Corps movement is necessary.

NEW BOOK ON DUNTRROON

Brigadier G. D. Solomon, OBE, has written a book to be published in August on his experiences as Staff Cadet at the Royal Military College in pre-war days. He later returned as Director of Military Art.

The title of the book is A Poor Sort of Memory and it is published by Roebuck Press, Canberra. There is a Foreword by Lieutenant General Sir Mervyn Brogan, KBE, CB. The book will be reviewed in the next issue.
At a time when technological advances are outstripping strategic and tactical policy development, this book serves as a useful reminder of the lessons learned in the past of the effect of technical change on a country's overall defence policy. Specifically, this book deals with the effect of technical change on British Naval policy between 1860-1939. Further, it discusses the effect of resistance to change based on, in some cases, technical advances that clashed with the Admiralty's own concepts of 'what is good for the Royal Navy and in the defence of Britain'.

But the book doesn't stop there. It goes deeper into the relationships between the Admiralty and British Industry, especially the shipyards. How did shipyards tender for contracts one hundred years ago? What was the effect of sub-contracting and how were builders penalised for late delivery? This book answers those questions and also shows how the defence policy of a predominantly maritime nation can virtually gain a stranglehold on defence spending, limited only to what the Admiralty considers a 'sufficient fleet in being'.

Of course, any discussion of British Naval policy invariably involves Naval personalities. This book is no exception. Perhaps the most notable are Admiral J. A. Fisher and Sir Arthur Hood, the latter's record, Professor Ranft suggests, indicates an 'irascible if not stupid man'.

This book is not the work of one man but a compilation of essays by various authors, each of whom contributes a chapter dealing with a specific subject related to the concept of the effects of technical change.

The strategic teachings of Mahan and their effect on the Admiralty in developing a Naval policy are reflected at various stages. It propounds the theory that the Admiralty's appreciation of Mahan's views resulted in a development policy which was detrimental to the Royal Navy, especially in terms of equipment.

The evolution of new weapons and equipment is examined at a time when the torpedo was considered to be 'the ultimate weapon'. Because of the havoc wreaked by German U-boats in World War I Britain pressured strongly for the removal of the submarine from the list of acceptable weapons of war. This directly affected the expansion of its own fleet and the development of submarine forces of other countries.

Items which were considered futuristic such as breech loading large calibre Naval guns, armourplate, ASDIC and steam turbine ships propulsion are also covered in the book.

Although an interesting book overall, probably the most intriguing chapter to both the professional and casual reader is that dealing with the relationship between the Admiralty and private shipbuilding industry. The relationship with shipyards such as Yarrows, Thornycroft and Vickers which were famous then as they are today are discussed with some interesting facts.

Perhaps the most valuable lesson to be learned from this book is that every technological advance brings with it corresponding problems in strategic and tactical policy development, the problem of developing adequate counter-weapons systems, the incorporation of these counter-weapon systems into 'conventional' warship design and above all, the requirement for a working relationship between the military and the civilian sector.

Brian Ranft is Professor of History in the Royal Naval College, Greenwich, and Visiting Professor in War Studies, King's College, University of London. The other contributors are Alan Cowpe, Hugh Lyon, Philip Towle, David Henry, Geoffrey Till and Lieutenant Commander Anthony Wells.
The book is not a disjointed collection of technical Naval history, rather Professor Ranft has managed to edit a potentially heavy and laborious subject into an interesting study that would appeal to both the professional and layman.


Belatedly reviewed by Dr L. H. Barber, Department of History, University of Waikato, New Zealand

HAD Rip van Winkle on emerging from his slumber suddenly discovered a review due for publication twenty years earlier he would, no doubt, as an honourable man, quickly, though belatedly, have completed his task. While recently intruding into the past in one of New Zealand’s larger libraries I discovered a brief but fascinating book that although over fifty years old has still a relevance that invited an analysis of its contents.

The Young Officers’ Guide, by a pseudonymous ‘Senior Major’ was one of the most popular satirical guides to army life enjoyed by officers in the reigns of Edward VII and George V. The work begins with a series of maxims of eternal validity. Young officers are advised to ‘Always ask for leave at all times and in all places. In the end you will acquire a kind of right to it’. Subalterns are then enjoined to remember ‘that there is a time to work and a time to play. The time to work is when you are being watched’. Anxious to keep his proteges concentrated on the essentials of their craft, the ‘Senior Major’ then advises: ‘Do not learn the Training Regulations too thoroughly From the time they are issued they begin to be obsolete. Go on doing the same thing ever you did the same old way, modified by local conditions (ie. your Brigadier’s mental obsessions)’.

Having prepared his earnest young readers with the distilled wisdom from his years of experience, the author then turns to the subject of Company Training. Here he emphasises the importance of communications, and suggests:

‘Should the Colonel ... make his unwelcome appearance, you must resort to a subterfuge.

His arrival is announced on the bugle by the mess-call. Then the company doubles in and forms around you in a circle, lying down, alert, athirst for knowledge, whilst you lecture on the Colonel’s favourite subject ... Should the Colonel suggest your practising the manoeuvre, say that your program is full up, but that you will plan it for the next morning at 6 a.m.’

This brilliant advice is followed by a study of the problems presented by the General’s inspection. Subalterns are firmly encouraged never to be at a loss for an answer when questioned by the General. The author notes that ‘In nine cases out of ten the accuracy of your statements will not be questioned’. After advising his readers never to volunteer information the ‘Senior Major’ suggests that:

‘Whatever the General’s fad is, study it well. It may be boots, it may be potato-peeling, or it may be an unsavoury delight in examining bare feet ... If he is a Clean Feet specialist, let him come across one pair of filthy feet. (This is quite easily arranged, and generally does not require very positive action on your part.)’

After delivering this sensible advice the author proceeds to discuss, in turn, the Quartermaster’s Store, the Pay Office, and the Hospital. He then embarks on an analysis of some of the deeper mysteries of the officers’ craft. His description of a ‘certificate’ is without peer:

‘A certificate is a statement in writing made by a person, usually an officer, to the effect that he has done his duty. Generally speaking, persons in the Army are presumed to have left undone what they ought to have done, unless they certify in writing to the contrary. This may, perhaps, seem a most reasonable view to take of human frailty: but in the Army it has its drawback, that people’s time is so much taken up in certifying that they have done their duty that they are obliged to omit part of that duty in order to give them enough time to certify that they have done it.”

The author’s treatment of that vexing problem, the ‘confidential report’, is no less interesting and useful. The ‘Senior Major’ insists that:

“The object of these is ... to bring a little amusement into the dull lives of the officials.
at the War Office. As far as Regimental Officers are concerned their ‘characters’ vary every time they change their C.O.”

The Young Officers’ Guide to Knowledge deserves to be revised yet again and republished. There would undoubtedly be a ready market for this learned treatise throughout the army, and its reappearance would be greeted with the same pleasure by senior officers as the first editions received. The ‘Senior Major’ makes quite clear exactly how much reaction the initial appearance of this book called forth from high places.

In the ‘Unsolicited Testimonials’ printed prominently in his work he notes an appreciation from the then G.O.C. (No doubt Field Marshal the Earl of Ripoff, KCI, SA, AA, m.i.b.):

“Your little book rivals the official publications from a long and varied experience, I may say that it contains every essential for a young officer to know without the useless padding that confuses without instructing.”

Even more telling was the written commendation signed by the Adjutant of the ‘Senior Major’s’ regiment.

“The C.O. wishes to see you in the Orderly Room immediately.”


Reviewed by Midshipman J. Goldrick Royal Australian Navy

The first impression of the enthusiast on seeing Warships of Australia is pleasure that Rigby have been imaginative enough to fill the gap that Angus & Robertson left when they decided to publish John Bastock’s Australia’s Ships of War as a limited edition at the hideously expensive price of $150.00. Unless superlatively keen, or lucky enough to obtain a copy by clandestine means, the price was beyond most and thus the joy at seeing this work at the more reasonable price of $39.95.

The joy, however, is somewhat mixed. The book is flawed in several ways, both in the author’s conception and execution and the publisher’s method of presentation. Warships suffers from an attempt to present a sweeping history of the R.A.N. and, at the same time, detail the minutiae of each vessel’s design, construction and operation. It is an attempt which succeeds only in parts.

The history, though over one hundred pages long, still leaves one with a curious sense that one is not possessed of the ‘whole quid’. It is a summary and, like all summaries, leaves out details which may be unimportant to the grander considerations of history but are of consummate importance with such a small subject as the R.A.N.

The ships’ section, too, is patchy. The publisher was foolish enough to include several rather crude silhouettes in the earlier sections which detract from the whole and the author has several curious ‘holidays’. The first Anzac’s career is well detailed but the date she paid off is strangely concealed among the S & T class. Mr Gillett talks of the V & Ws following a ‘usual routine’ but leaves precisely what this routine is unsaid.

As far as the facts are concerned, the assembly has been something approaching meticulous but the writing seems to have been done in a somewhat hasty and off-hand manner and lacks logic and continuity. Any future editions of this book will, one hopes, be revised to cover this failing.

Much the same can be said of the illustrations. The extensive use of colour, the size of many prints and the originality of more bring a considerable freshness to the book but they are ruined by shoddy work. The plans in colour have a vaguely uneasy air about them, as if the draughtsman has forgotten something or misplaced a curve. Some of the plans are in fact downright disastrous—such as that of the Encounter. One other trouble is that several of the captions are either incorrect—for example, the photograph of the Australia on page 129 is dated as 1914 when she is obviously carrying wartime modifications (such as director firing and anti-aircraft guns) and the bow seen to the left can only belong to the Renown which came out in 1920—or else stationed impossibly far away from the relevant photos, forcing the reader to leap around the book like an impasioned Maori.

All this said, the book is nonetheless worth the expenditure, especially if one buys through
the Naval Historical Society and secures a $10 reduction. Many of the black-and-white drawings are superb, as are the bulk of the photos. The inclusion of those of Sir Harry Rawson and Sir Dudley de Chair was a touch little short of genius and the choice of paintings is excellent, especially as the selection has been confined to the less surrealistic available. The section on the Fleet Air Arm is good and Mr Gillett has also gone to the trouble of detailing the service of R.N. submarines in Australian waters—a gap long empty.

In summary, the book could do with a couple of months more work before it receives more than a grudging pass from this reviewer. One does gain the suspicion that the fault in fact lies with the publisher. It is an unfortunate fact that many Australian companies do rush their authors in a bid to catch some favourable season in the book trade. If this is the case with this work then one might hope that Rigby could see the light and permit a second, revised, edition to be issued.


Reviewed by Richard Pelvin, DGLOG-A

This book is a collection of articles describing 23 battles from the Russo-Japanese War to Vietnam which the editors consider to have most influenced the course of Twentieth Century warfare and Twentieth Century history. Each article is written by a different author and the editors have aimed at achieving a variety of authorship by age and by country. The disadvantage of this approach is of course that there can be no consistency of theme or approach running through the book. The book further suffers from the large number of battles selected which has led to the accounts being too short to give anything but a superficial glance at each action.

It is difficult to justify the inclusion of a number of the battles and the exclusion of others. In the case of Tsushima, the outcome of the Russo-Japanese War had been already decided at Mukden and Port Arthur. It is unthinkable that the Russian Baltic Fleet, a collection of ships of extreme age and doubtful design, could in any appreciable way have altered the course of history.

The inclusion of Schweinfurt is even more difficult to justify. The argument that the losses inflicted on the Eighth Air Force by the Luftwaffe led to faster development of the P-51 Mustang long range escort fighter, thereby assuring Allied command of the air seems rather shaky. Development of the P-51 was already well under way by 1943 and the industrial output of the Allies and the excellence of its products would have ensured the Luftwaffe's defeat whether Schweinfurt had been fought or not.

If Jutland is to be included as a decisive naval battle of World War One, then surely the Allied victory in the submarine war which nearly brought Britain to her knees in 1917 should also be included. It is difficult to justify the exclusion of the Russian and Chinese Civil Wars from the book. It is also unfortunate that the Arab-Israeli conflicts have been excluded on the grounds that the person approached to write the chapter, General Dayan, did not have the time. General Dayan is surely not the only person who could write on this subject and would hardly be the most objective.

Generally each account is, within the limitations imposed by the shortness of the articles, well written. The accounts of Jutland, the Atlantic, Chongchon River and Tet particularly stand out. Nevertheless the value of the book to the serious reader of military history is doubtful.

There are a number of silly errors which should have been removed by stricter editing—Scharnhorst and Gneisenau escaped through the English Channel in 1942 not 1941 and the Queen Elizabeth class battleships had a full speed of 25 knots, not 21. It is also interesting to find the entry for Montgomery in the index refers to two separate people.

The map section, bound into the end of the book, provides maps and/or charts for each battle described. These are generally very well executed but the map illustrating the Chongchon River battle needs some indication of terrain to properly complement the text. The photographic illustrations are poorly reproduced, with only one per chapter. They are not particularly informative and might well have been omitted in favour of more text.