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CDF Parade at the Australian Defence Force Academy
What Price Officer Education?

By Major General P.J. Day, AO, (Ret'd)

Introduction

According to the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence, and Trade (FADT Committee) the present regime for educating officers in the Australian Defence Force (ADF) must be completely changed. The Committee wants all pre-commissioning colleges integrated, the Defence Academy closed, all the staff colleges merged, and the bulk of tertiary education for officers delivered by civilian universities. None of these proposals are new. All have been examined and discussed at least once during the past 40 years. One must wonder what gave rise to this revisiting of old debates.

Initially, the Government and the Minister for Defence appeared to be puzzled and embarrassed when the Committee tabled its report in October 1995. The title – “Officer Education: The Military After Next” – was imposing but the public comments made by the Committee Chairman gave the impression that his main purpose was to find reasons to close the Defence Academy. In view of the Committee’s almost total lack of contact with the Academy and its officer cadets, the Minister for Defence directed the Chairman to represent him at the 1995 Graduation Parade. But by then the horse had bolted. It now remains for the Department of Defence and HQADF, encouraged one hopes by articles and papers written by those whose business is the education of officers, to firmly rebut the ill-informed recommendations of the FADT Committee.

An option, possibly attractive to the new Minister, is to let the whole sorry event fade away. There are two main reasons why this is not in the interests of the ADF now, nor of the “Military After Next”. Firstly, the inevitable budgetary pressures will cause those in the Department of Finance to look for every avenue to reduce expenditure. A report by a Parliamentary Committee purporting to prescribe a cheaper way of commissioning and educating officers will be used to defer expenditure in these areas. Secondly, unless the Report is clearly and comprehensively rejected it will become a focus for academics looking for ways of supplementing their faculty budgets by appropriating more of the education now being delivered most excellently by the University of New South Wales through the Defence Academy. The result will be tension and uncertainty which will adversely affect the Academy and the quality of its graduates.

Education Policy in the ADF

Four primary themes can be identified in the 23 Recommendations of the FADT Committee. The first I will call “Education Policy”. Indeed Recommendation Number 1 calls for the development of a comprehensive policy for the higher education of officers and for its introduction by the end of 1996. The Committee persisted with this line in the face of evidence that the Chiefs of Staff believed that a single policy for the three Services was not practicable. There was no discussion in the Report of how a single policy which maximised the benefits for each Service could be formulated as other than a broad, and not very useful, statement of good intentions. Nor was there any sideways look at how other professions such as engineering, law or medicine manage their internal specialised streams by setting very distinct policies for threshold qualifications and continuing education.

Recommendation Number 3 requires that officers be notified regularly of all future postings. This strange and apparently unnecessary exhortation comes from a misunderstanding of a criticism by Dr Cathy Downes, the witness who most influenced the outcome of the Report. She believed that officers should have more say in what courses they attended during their service but were discouraged from taking the initiative by the rigidity of the present system.

A belief held by some members of the Committee that ADF officers are reactionary and unfamiliar with the nature of a democracy is behind Recommendation Number 4. This calls for education in citizenship, the rule of law, and the civil/military relationship “… at each stage of pre-commissioning and post-commissioning officer training”. These subjects used to be covered at the Academy and the staff colleges and I would be surprised if this is no longer done.
Even if more depth in treatment is desired, the recommendation would have carried more authority if some acknowledgement of the current training was mentioned.

Recommendations Number 7 and 12 can be listed as policy issues but they are equally likely to flow from a desire to serve special interests. A greater use of distance education, which I infer means correspondence courses, may be a great benefit to members of the Reserve but it would also facilitate a greater involvement of civilian establishments in officer education. It may help the ADF but it would most certainly improve the income sources of the providers of education in non-military subjects. However, the proposal to increase Joint Service training for junior officers is hard to justify on the assertion that "... the proficiency of the ADF in joint operational command will be enhanced." It is a pity that the Committee did not consider the demands on training time for junior officers to attain expertise in navigation, seamanship, coordination of fire control, or the making of appreciations and operational plans. But then its Report seemed more concerned with the process of officer education than the qualities of the officers needed in the ADF.

**Staff Training**

Another theme in the Recommendations concerns the establishment of an ADF Command and Staff College. Three undercurrents seem to be at work here. One is the belief by some members that all who wished to attend a staff college should be able to do so. A second is the recurring push for the greater involvement of civilian universities. The third is the desire to make access to advanced military education easier for officers in the Reserve. These undercurrents have obviously led to Recommendations Number 2, 5, 6, 8 and 10.

Why the Committee should resurrect the Australian Services Staff College Project of 1959 is a mystery. That idea failed for two main reasons: excessive capital costs and disagreement on the staff training needed for each Service. In fact the Navy was reluctant to subject its officers to any staff training other than that available in the United Kingdom and could not be persuaded by the long experience of the Army and the Air Force that a six month course was unsuitable. This time the Committee offered no reasons for overturning the decision made in 1978 for the regime which is in place now. Apparently it was not told that, during the 20 years the 1959 Project was kept alive, no major new works were approved for the Army Staff College, the RAAF Staff College or the Joint Services Staff College. May this type of economic stupidity never recur.

It may be that a single ADF institution of higher learning for majors or lieutenant colonels (and equivalents) would more effectively meet the needs of the three Services in the future. In view of the very large investment in capital works such a project entails, and the disruption to careers while the transition to the new system occurs, more careful thought than the Committee gave to this idea is essential. Attention to the following, as a minimum, is necessary:

- Selection of a site suitable for all three Services and large enough for the living and working accommodation for staff and students.
- The benefits, if any, in combining staff and command aspects in the one course.
- Terminal objectives for each Service and the time needed to achieve them.
- That part of the training which should be conducted jointly.
- Selection criteria for the students and the place of the staff college qualification in later assessments for postings and promotion.

There is not the opportunity in this article to explore the issue of providing education to officers of the Reserve equivalent to that for the permanent members of the ADF. One of the first difficulties – exploring the difference in ability and responsibility between an officer in the Reserve and the regular force – deserves an article to itself. But a brief comment in the context of the FADT Report is appropriate. There can be no doubt that the aim "...to provide a more flexible and imaginative approach to the use of the Reserve Force" is a euphemism for continuing to reduce the strength of the Regular Army. This was the publicly expressed intention of the Minister for Defence on 7 March 1985 and has been implied in Defence Policy ever since. As a result dedicated and hard working Reserve officers have been subjected to unreasonable demands and have had unreal expectations of a career in the ADF.

A true Reserve consists of fully trained people kept current by refresher training. The only way this has been done successfully was the raising of Supplementary Reserve units in the Royal Australian Engineers, or in the case of individuals, the commissioning of dental and medical specialists who were prepared to be called up in an emergency. In both cases their value lay in the non-military skills they had gained and which they built on in the course
of their civilian employment. If Australia is to continue its 1920s British policy of relying on the Navy and Air Force for defence and keeping only a token, part-time, Army to deal with minor incursions so be it. In such a case it is cheaper to discontinue all Reserve activities and to provide for any increase in strength by intensive full time training in the first six months of conflict. However, if the Second World War is any guide, the human cost may be very hard to justify.

Open to All

Often the ADF has been criticised for not adequately representing, in makeup or behaviour, Australian society. As far as this may be true it leaves the ADF in wide company: ministers of religion, medical specialists, and in a contrary way, councils of civil liberties. The cry of an unrepresentative military started in the United States in the 1970s when the draft for Vietnam was being avoided by certain privileged groups. Proof was found in the fact that blacks were represented disproportionately in infantry units. The issue was picked up 15 years later by those who wanted to believe that service in the ADF was reserved for Australians of British descent. Now the complaint has been broadened to make a case for homosexuals and women. The Committee was less interested in comparing the composition of the ADF with that of the community than in exporting all pre-commissioning degree education in the hope that this will produce officers who "...would anticipate changing trends in society".

One of the conclusions drawn from their extrapolation of society trends forward for 30 years was the Committee's view that greater flexibility in the organisation of the ADF and in the delivery of education for officers would be needed. From this came Recommendation Number 16 calling for the ADF to sponsor 1000 undergraduates each year throughout Australia. This is a case of setting a course through dangerous waters without asking what happened the last time similar was done. A previous failure to attract graduates, sponsored or not, was a driving factor in establishing a Defence Academy. This cannot be attributed solely to the unpopularity of conscription for Vietnam. It also results from the changing perceptions of young men and women during years of undergraduate study remote from the motivational support given in a military establishment. Assuming that such vocational uplift will occur during breaks in the academic year shows an ignorance of the academic demands for the time to be used for study or field trips. It is a pity the Committee did not examine the tensions and difficulties that arise even at the Defence Academy over the way in which semester breaks should be used. Finally, if the present generous (in the opinion of the Committee) sponsorship scheme cannot provide enough medical officers for the ADF, a less generous one for 1000 in all degree streams is unlikely to provide a steady, adequate, flow of young officers for the Services.

Whether the ADF is sufficiently representative of the Australian community is a matter of judgement. It cannot reflect exactly the ethnic mix unless coercion is used to conscript some and exclude others. The essential, and sufficient, requirement is that officer selection is based on merit alone. No one should doubt that this has long been the case. Acceptance of the ADF by the community and its high international reputation indicate that the mix is not too far wrong. If those lobbying for special interest groups find the ADF less welcoming than was hoped, they ought to admit the probability that this may be no more than a reflection of the views of the community. If re-education is needed, let it be done nationally and not by fiat in the ADF. It is not appropriate to gamble with the system for educating officers in the ADF just to pander to the perceptions of the prejudiced and militarily ignorant.

The Defence Force Academy

The Defence Academy has served the ADF well. That view was expressed by the Committee in its Report. One member described the quality of Academy graduates as excellent when he spoke in the Parliament in November 1995. Why then should there be unanimous agreement that the Academy should close? (Mr WL Taylor, MP spoke against this recommendation in the Parliament but the Report does not record him as dissenting from any part of it.) The reasons given by the Committee are not convincing and amount to a demonstration of prejudice.

Most often quoted by those who spoke to the Report was the high cost of graduates. Although the Chairman denied that he was mainly concerned with effecting economies in the Defence Budget, much attention was given to training costs in the Report. For the Academy, estimates ranged from $194 930 to
$318,261 for a graduate of a three year course. Eventually an average for all graduates of $308,712 was provided by the Department of Defence. On the face of it this is a considerable amount of money. But it would mean more if it were compared with the cost of training (say) a tank commander, a Principal Warfare Officer, or a pilot. It would be even more useful if compared, in like terms, with the cost of graduates from civilian universities. No such comparisons were made even though there were witnesses from the academic community who ought to have been able to assist. Nevertheless, in spite of the remark of one member that inconsistent figures were given to the Committee for training costs and the lack of benchmarks, the Chairman decided that a cheaper way of commissioning could be devised. He is right if little or no consideration is given to the quality of the product.

Mr RA Atkinson, MP, Liberal Member for Isaacs relied on his experience during National Service in the 1960s to state that ADF officers have no experience of the “outside world” and that interaction with the community was more important than tri-Services bonds. Wide publicity to the Chairman’s remarks that the Academy resembled a nursery in which officer cadets were “... removed from all community influences” ensured that this part of his Report was emphasised. The fatuousness of the comment might have been obvious if the Committee had actually talked to some of the officer cadets. I prefer to rely upon the opinion of the Vice Chancellor of the University of New South Wales who stated in 1987 that officer cadets had a greater breadth of experience and variety of contacts than civilian undergraduates. Anyone who has attended a university would know just how narrow is the range of contacts. Little contact occurs across the boundaries of Arts and Science: engineering and medical students are too busy to talk to anyone outside their own peer group; and a very small proportion of students engages in regular sport. The inexcusable perception that the Academy is a type of military prison leads critics to overlook the benefits of regular and close contact between members of different nations, three Services, and all the academic streams. In the ultimate this line of criticism is irrelevant because the real test is the quality of the product and even the FADT Committee said this was very good.

Less sensible is the comment in the Report that some sort of nervous condition might result from cadets coping with a structured authoritarian regime for part of the day and having to adjust to the critical and independent academic approach for the remainder. Such a view was strongly held by the Australian National University in the 1960s and the 1980s and helps explain why that organisation was not the one involved with delivering academic education to the Royal Military College and later to the Defence Academy. If the Australian military training system turned out mindless automatons it would not have been able to earn the high international reputation for effectiveness it has had for the past 40 years. From the start of their service officers are expected to demonstrate initiative, flexibility, judgement, and responsibility. In the ease of civilian undergraduates I seriously doubt that they are encouraged to be critical of their lecturers, particularly in their first two years. One should not confuse rowdiness or absence from lectures as an academic virtue: universities don’t. It would be as sensible if the Committee had rated the graduates of civilian universities as inferior because their studies were confined within one faculty and they had no exposure to the ordered and structured systems they will find in society.

The Committee noted that officers of the Reserve were not educated at the Academy. I understand that this has changed but there are good practical reasons why a general policy that all Reserve officers should study there is not sensible. It will be interesting to see whether the experiment of training Reserve officers at the Royal Military College will be cost-effective for them and not detrimental to the quality of the regulars who are commissioned there.

One criticism of the existing system that appears serious is that it will not provide the standard of officer needed in “the military after next”. The Committee has been sold the idea that this chimera will have features that require more than an evolution of the present education arrangements. The ADF of the year 2010 is described by the Committee as having the following characteristics:

- A greater involvement in UN Peacekeeping and other non-warlike roles. (This prediction is as reliable as the “No war for 10 years” one of the British Government from the 1920s to 1938.)
- Officers will be generalists rather than expert in a particular field, coordinating the work of specialists. (Hospital administrators were given as examples, most infelicitous examples in my view, of what the future ADF officer should be.)
- There will be an organisational structure which is “… not only capable of adapting to a range of potential threats but which is also capable of changing in short time spans.” (It will need to be adaptable in the likely event that the Committee’s predictions are wide of the mark.)
WHAT PRICE OFFICER EDUCATION?

• Leaders of the future must be able to anticipate changes in society in such matters as multiculturalism and equal employment opportunities for all. In addressing this quality the Committee observed that the ADF “... will have much to learn from civilian organisations in the management of change.” (No doubt this attitude led to the complaint by Mr Taylor that the Committee had been driven by ideology.)

This incomplete list of the shape of the ADF of the future may or may not be accurate. However, guesses flavoured with prejudice ought not be the cause of the closure of an institution which has been operating for only 10 years: three cycles of the minimum degree course. Furthermore, it is yet to be proven that evolution guided by competent officers will fail to meet the challenges of the future. From my own knowledge of the Defence Academy it has changed more rapidly since 1986 to meet changing needs than most other ADF organisations. Its graduates are tested as soon as they join their first units by those best qualified to judge them: their commanding officers. The effectiveness of the Academy in developing senior commanders cannot be assessed before about 2010. Even then the influences of post-graduate training and experience will be at least as important a factor as their pre-commissioning education.

If too great a price is being paid for an excellent product this should be examined. I am sure the Department of Defence is vigilant in doing this. The Chairman of the FADT Committee denied he was driven by a desire to cut costs and emphasised that changes should not be made to the system of educating officers if they would interfere with the capability of the ADF. In view of this, the Report, all of it and not just that part dealing with the Defence Academy, should be clearly and finally rejected by the Minister.

The Committee

An excellent book entitled How to Lie with Statistics, by Darrell Huff, was published in 1954. In spite of its title it is concerned more with the exposure of those who misuse statistics than with providing a manual for those intending to deceive. It provides a simple test, in the form of five questions to be asked when assessing the claims of those quoting figures to support their claims. Two of the questions – “Who says so?” and “How does he or she know?” – are directly applicable to the Committee itself. The “how” is easily understood. The Committee relied on a maximum of statements by witnesses and a minimum of personal observation. It is relevant to look briefly at who is the Committee in this case.

Approximately 30 members of Parliament or senators are listed as members of the FADT Committee. Yet during the speeches in the House during November 1995 Mr RA Atkinson, MP stated that the Report was essentially the work of only two members: Mr LRS Price MP, Labor Member for Chifley, and Mr LR Grace MP, Labor Member for Fowler. Mr DW Simmons MP, Labor Member for Calare, endorsed this remark. So while the Report into the education of ADF officers in the “military after next” purports to carry the authority of a bipartisan Joint Committee, it was apparently driven by two Government members who had experienced neither military service nor tertiary education. It would be interesting to discover how many members of the Committee had read the Report, as opposed to the list of recommendations only, before supporting by their silence such radical changes to the system of educating ADF officers.

When the Report was tabled it included only one dissenting view. Senator Margetts objected to Australia educating members of foreign armed forces whose governments had “appalling human rights records." In respect of ADF officers her only point was that higher priority ought to be given to the subject of human rights at all levels of officer education. Perhaps if this had been taken up by the Committee there would have been a stronger reason to educate officers of foreign armed forces in Australia. The Senator was sharply criticised for her dissent by Mr DPM Hawker MP, Liberal Member for Wannon. He thought she had lost credibility by dissenting.

We could be left with the impression that only one of 30 members disagreed with the Report. This was not the case as became obvious during the speeches on 29 November 1995. At that time two of the six members who spoke expressed reservations. Mr WL Taylor MP, Liberal Member for Groom, did not agree that the Defence Academy should be closed. He offered the view that the Report had used inconsistent budgetary figures and was driven by ideology. Mr Hawker believed that the system for commissioning officers should not be changed until a careful trial had been completed. Since six of the 23 Recommendations referred to the discontinuance of the present system and the closure of the Defence Academy in its present form, it remains a mystery...
why these two members did not formally dissent from the Report.

Conclusion

At the beginning of Chapter 13 of the FADT Committee Report, in an attempt to frighten off criticisms of the more outrageous of its recommendations, there appears a quotation attributed to Admiral Crowe, a former Chairman of the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff. He is supposed to have said: “Our minds are like parachutes; they won’t help much if they don’t open when you need them”. This seems an inappropriate simile to come from a senior naval officer. Apart from the unfortunate implication that his mind was closed when not needed, there remains the image of an intelligence whose function is solely to collect hot air and which collapses in a heap when the immediate task is done. The threat from the Committee that those who disagree with its recommendations will be classed as having closed minds adds nothing to its case for a revolution in military education.

Having read all the Report I have concluded that the Committee has cast aside the advice of the professionals in favour of the amateurs. One could argue a case that this is not always a bad thing if not done too often. But surely the minimum pre-requisite is a consideration of, and support for, the end product. This is not evident in the Report. Remarks made by the Right Honourable IMcC Sinclair MP, when he was speaking in support of the Report and congratulating members for their good work, neatly summarised the confusion in its thinking. In essence he said that although its graduates were excellent the Academy should be closed in favour of a cheaper scheme. He said he did not know whether the scheme he supported would produce better officers. I suspect none of the Committee knew either, but they were not about to admit it.

Devising a regime to meet the needs of the ADF for developing officers suitable for senior command or staff appointments cannot be done lightly. In practice the regime must evolve continuously and adapt to changes in society, technology, and Defence Policy. Revolutionary change devised in indecent haste by about ten per cent of a Committee with little expertise in matters military or academic is irresponsible. One hopes that it was not a case of the Committee being confounded by a few academic lobbyists looking for opportunities to access more Defence funds for education and research.

Ultimately the FADT Report carries the gravitas of a Joint Parliamentary body. No doubt advice from the Department of Defence and HQADF will inform the Government’s response to it. If the present system for commissioning and educating officers in the ADF is effective this should be stated clearly and publicly. If improvement or significant changes are necessary they should be identified for wide consideration. The alternative is to abandon the long term health and professionalism of the ADF to those who neither understand its needs nor take responsibility for their delivery.

Major General Day was the Commandant of the Australian Defence Force Academy from December 1986 to March 1990.
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On Parade
Educating the Community’s “Cream”: Common Military Training at the Australian Defence Force Academy

By Major E.J. Stevenson, RAAC

Introduction

While hearing evidence for a Joint Standing Committee on military education for officer cadets in 1995, the Hon Roger Price, MP, referred to cadets at the Australian Defence Force Academy as the ‘cream’ of today’s youth. The use of the term did not come as a surprise to the military and academic staff present at the hearing as they had heard it used on previous occasions in both a complimentary and less than flattering manner. Most staff would agree that Academy cadets are intelligent. Indeed 41 per cent of the 1995 intake achieved in the top 12 per cent of their State, and 48 per cent of the cadets at the end of that year were eligible to undertake an Honours year. However, whether cadets are the cream of today’s society remains open to debate.

In its short 10 years of operation, the Academy has weathered detailed scrutiny from a variety of quarters, with most criticism of its performance being divided between the cost of educating the cream for the Profession of Arms and the content of the military training. The more vocal of the critics (mainly Defence personnel) have been through some form of officer training and often have firm views on the quantity and nature of the training required to prepare cadets to become junior officers. Citing the benefits of their particular exacting training in producing highly competent and professional officers, the critics are not reticent to express their opinion on how the current crop of cadets should be trained. After all, it should be relatively easy to design a military training curriculum that meets both the future needs of the Services and the expectations of Defence personnel. Or is it?

The aim of this article is to discuss the Common Military Training at the Defence Academy, with a view to highlighting the evolution of the current curriculum and suggesting possible improvements. In view of the range of myths surrounding the training and given the controversial recommendations on the Academy’s overall worth detailed in Mr Price’s Report, it is an opportune time to add to the reasoned debate on the issues.

Training Context

In essence, the role of the Academy is to provide cadets from all three Services with a “balanced and liberal university education in a military environment”. The University aspect of this role is well defined and is provided by the University College of The University of New South Wales. The area of military education, which is provided by the military staff, is less clear. Studies conducted at the Academy by the Training Development Section at the end of 1994 found that each cadet was undertaking just under 1,000 military periods per year, which equates to six months’ full-time training. These periods were in addition to a cadet’s normal degree studies and did not include the plethora of extracurricular activities competing for a cadet’s time – for example, motivational and adventurous training, the ubiquitous military inspections and impromptu parades. This is a very heavy commitment considering the term “military environment” has never been clearly articulated and the Services have not specified what qualities they need in a future officer.

Military training at the Academy falls into two broad areas. Training provided to all three Services is termed “Common Military Training” and ranges across a wide spectrum of subjects: Leadership, Defence Studies, Physical Training and Military Law for example. The second area of training is Single Service Training which runs for approximately five weeks each year. Each of the Service Colleges conducts this training and gears the content to the specific requirements for Navy, Army or Air Force junior officers.

Historical Development

A short history of the development of the Academy’s military curriculum serves to highlight
the original aims of the training and the basis for the current content. In 1975 the Chief of Staff Committee stated that the training should imbue in cadets:

a. a sound knowledge of the attributes required, standards expected and responsibilities of a junior officer in the Australian Defence Force;
b. an appreciation of the cadet’s own Service;
c. a general awareness of the capabilities of all three Services; and
d. an acquaintance with broader issues of Defence.5

The role for the military staff in conducting the training was clarified in the 1981 agreement between The University of New South Wales and the Commonwealth which specified that, “The function of the military component shall be ... to provide military education and training for officer cadets ... (and) ... to develop and maintain the military environment as directed by the Chief of Defence Force Staff”.6 The original designers’ intention was to provide broad directives to allow the Academy staff a degree of flexibility to develop the training in detail. The actual content was to be left to the staff’s professional military judgment of what knowledge, skills and attitudes junior officers require. The challenge with this level of guidance is that it is esoteric, difficult to measure, and not written in objective terms that specify the tasks, conditions and standards to be met. More importantly, the guidance did not indicate how the military environment was to be established and a Terms of Reference or Chief of the Defence Force Directive may have been more appropriate.7 I am not objecting to this legitimate use of Directive Control, but caution needs to be exercised to ensure the training evolves in accordance with Defence’s overall scheme for the Academy.

Over the next 15 years the emphasis in the military training moved away from the original architect’s vision to become the reality of the subjects listed in Table 1. Unfortunately, in their genuine desire to produce efficient, highly motivated and well trained future officers, Academy staff loaded the cadets with very valuable, but not necessarily high priority subjects. For example, an awareness of Defence Studies’ issues provides a necessary foundation for a junior officer’s performance in his or her first appointment – 116 periods however seems somewhat excessive. The emphasis changed from one of inculcating officer qualities to one of imparting a large quantity of specific military knowledge, with cadets being given little opportunity to develop any depth to that knowledge. Staff seemed to be using a shotgun approach to learning, a large volume fired widely in the hope that some of the information would hit the target. Of particular note is the time allocated to leadership. Regardless of Service, an officer’s primary reason for existence is to lead, yet leadership only occupies about one tenth of the formal training program – this is roughly equal to the time apportioned to drill. I am not denying that there is value in a measure of drill to generate discipline, confidence, respect for authority and self-esteem, but a realistic balance is required.

Subjects had been added to the curriculum based on a perceived requirement, rather than an objective evaluation or performance analysis of what was actually needed. It is easy to see how this could occur. Each year thirty instructors, all with very valuable, well prepared and interesting information, simply add one period each. To the individual in isolation this seems reasonable, but an holistic view indicates problems with direction and focus may arise. Furthermore, externally directed subjects covering areas such as occupational health and safety, legal rights, and interpersonal relationship skills were included which all compete for a cadet’s limited time. It would also appear that, underlying all the changes was the basic human desire to undertake more commitments than in previous years, or progress is not being made and the learning is stagnating.

All this is not to decry the best intentions of the staff. Over the years they have demonstrated a professional commitment to excellence and a propensity for hard work. But what had happened (as is often the case in training environments) is that staff became emersed in the day-to-day battle of conducting the training, to the detriment of gaining a strategic overview of what training was actually required. Furthermore, external pressures to conform to outside agencies’ preconceptions of what training “must” be covered did not help.8

Current Focus

In August 1995, in a bid to correctly re-focus the Academy, key military and academic staff attended a workshop to redefine the Academy’s Vision and Mission. This resulted in the two statements which follow:

Vision

To be an Academy widely renowned for excellence in military and academic leadership.

Mission

To prepare future leaders for the Australian Defence Force by providing military and academic education and training in a military environment, and to promote leadership and excellence in study, teaching and research.
A major change in emphasis, based on the actual requirement for future leaders, was emerging. The result can be seen in the recent raising of a Leadership Cell to re-orient the curriculum to one more in keeping with the Academy’s charter, and a gradual change in the learning environment to support the moves towards becoming the “university for leaders”.  

**Service Expectations**

The three Services remain unclear as to what knowledge, skills and attitudes they require, or even need in future officers. It is relatively easy to identify skills and knowledge, although the process is time consuming, it is very difficult to measure, let alone...
identify, attitudes. In the absence of specific guidance, it would be reasonable to assume that those attributes and qualities assessed in each Service's annual officer performance report would be those most desired in Academy graduates. Although some slight change in emphasis occurs from time to time, the Services seem clear on what overall attributes they wish to evaluate in an officer, even though the reports are often under review.

In deciding to use the confidential reports as a basis for determining what training may be required, I am aware that there is a danger in allowing the measurement device to drive the training, and that the reports were not specifically written to identify a training requirement. It is still felt however, that the reports are the most realistic means of identifying what qualities cadets require on graduation. Furthermore, Academy external validation surveys conducted in 1994 and 1995 indicated that Commanding Officers were generally happy with the standard of knowledge and skills displayed by graduates: it was their attitudes in a group environment that received the most criticism.

Indicative comments included, "a very homogenous group who were content to work to the minimum standard in the classroom, but when deployed singularly or in pairs they performed very well". All three Service reports involve a written word picture on the officer and either a multiple choice response or numerical grading of the officer's characteristics. The Navy form lists 10 characteristics, the Army form nine (or 12 depending on the officer's rank) and the Air Force's, 21. While it may be debated that the Services require differing attributes in some jobs, the overall qualities required of an officer in each of the reports are often similar if not the same.

The three forms can be compared to determine a single set of characteristics covering each Service. The resulting list, in alphabetical order, is as follows:

1. Adaptability
2. Communications (both written and oral, with subordinates, peers and superiors)
3. Competence
4. Confidence
5. Decisiveness
6. Dress and bearing
7. Initiative
8. Interpersonal relationships
9. Judgement (common sense)
10. Motivation
11. Perceptiveness
12. Reliability
13. Responsibility
14. Self-discipline

To confirm the relevance of the above characteristics, an external validation of the Academy curriculum was conducted in 1995 via a survey dispatched to the Commanding Officers or supervisors of the 1994 graduates. Anecdotal evidence prior to the survey had indicated that the Services were satisfied with the standard of graduate, but this evidence had never been tested. The survey identified that there were a number of problems with the curriculum content. In particular, it indicated that the Academy taught the curriculum subjects well, but it could not identify if those subjects should be taught at all. It also established that the cadet's level of responsibility, integrity and commitment to excellence in a group environment were matters for concern. Individually the cadets were seen as very bright and capable (supporting the "cream" comments earlier), but in a group a negative or 'herd' mentality developed. This manifested itself in many graduates "playing" the system and either not working to full potential, or only applying sufficient effort to achieve a bare pass in most follow-on courses. The Academy is changing to address these concerns and make the military training more appropriate, but any major change of such a complex system takes time.

The overall conclusion drawn from the survey was that, although there is value in many of the military subjects taught at the Academy, the thrust of the training should be directed at a higher level. This level should be one more in tune with what graduates from all three Services will use throughout their careers, not just the narrow courses they will attend immediately upon graduation. This thrust may be seen in the requirements of the Profession of Arms.

**Ethos of the Profession of Arms**

Military officership is no longer a simple business and cannot be responsibly dealt with as such. Raw courage, ritual and regulation, while still required, are no longer sufficient for the task. The existence of technologically sophisticated weaponry and equipment, political conflicts of legal, moral and ethical complexity, and changes in society, have all combined to place increased demands upon the leadership and intellectual capabilities of even the most junior officer...The military officer, during the course of his career, will assume many roles – leader, counsellor, advocate, teacher, manager and administrator."
Much has been written about the requirements for the Profession of Arms, so I will only touch on it lightly in this article. In joining the Services, cadets join the Profession of Arms. It is not merely an occupation with long working hours, as the demands and expectations placed on those in the Profession are unique and difficult to describe to someone who has not experienced them first hand. Few other professions place such a heavy commitment on their employees that they must be prepared to lay down their life for their country. Yet the aim of the Academy’s military training must be to prepare 17, 18 and 19 year olds for just such a Profession in the controlled application of violence.

It is easy to become blasé in peacetime about the nature of the Profession and in particular the goals of the training, and critics may suggest that 99 per cent of a cadet’s time when they become an officer will be spent in peacetime activities. However, training must prepare cadets for the complete range of anticipated jobs and this includes the “worst case” scenario of war. Successive Academy Commandants have been aware of this and have stressed it in their speeches and discussions:

“We are in the business of preparing people for warfighting. This is not to say that we are war mongers, no one abhors war more than the soldier.”

Similarly the previous Commandant, Major General Hickling, shortly after assuming command in March 1995, had no reservations about the seriousness and direction of the military training at the Academy: “There are no prizes for second in war ... We are investing in the intellectual capital of both the Defence Force and the future leaders in Australian Society.”

The military training at the Academy can provide large quantities of information to cadets, but the cadets are unlikely to use much of this information in the short-term. Imbuing the correct ethos in cadets – the integrity, honour, responsibility and commitment of the Profession of Arms, is more likely to successfully prepare cadets for their first appointment and ultimately their career. Few other opportunities exist in the military to inculcate an ethos in personnel at such a highly impressionable stage of their development. This is the key point that the Price Report misses, the role of the Academy is not about
saving money, it is about maintaining the correct environment – one which will inculcate the appropriate ethos in cadets.

**Higher Order Learning**

What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us.

Oliver Wendell Holmes

There is still room in the curriculum for the subjects listed in Table 1, but not at the expense of foregoing the “higher-order” learning. Higher-order learning may be described as that type of education that involves the participants in mastering core qualities and subjects. This normally involves abstract thinking and is designed to challenge, elicit commitment and generate ownership of the ideas. As mentioned, for the Academy this involves instilling the correct habits and attitudes. Providing large quantities of information may indeed be counterproductive to learning. It was recognised a number of years ago in studies in the United States that, if university students did not use information learnt during their course, they forgot 50 per cent of their studies in the first 12 months, and 80 per cent within two years. Observation of cadets by the author over a period of four years suggests that the same memory loss applies to their retention of the military training provided at the Academy. Due to the quantity of information that cadets receive, there is insufficient time to revise the theory and skills taught in military lessons and the information is often lost. Inculcating the correct professional character traits in cadets is likely to be more beneficial than enforcing rote learning. Certainly cadets will revert to those habits when the demands placed on them by the Profession increase and their knowledge wavers.

**Future**

The Academy needs to create an environment more supportive of the needs of the Services and the requirements of the Profession of Arms. Encouragingly, the pendulum is gradually swinging back to the intentions of the institution’s designers. In their submission to Mr Price’s Committee, Defence finally re-stipulated their expectations for what training future officers require:

Pre-commissioning courses provide the minimum technical skills and knowledge to begin the first
There will always be a place for instilling knowledge and skills in cadets. However, the primary emphasis for training officer cadets should be on higher-order attitudinal qualities, rather than zealously insisting on providing large quantities of diverse, short-term information. Furthermore, any military training curriculum should be based on what the Services’ need, not what well-meaning staff believe might be needed. Defence, and the Academy in particular, is beginning to recognise that the real value of the military curriculum lies in the potential to inculcate the ethos and qualities required of junior officers. All those qualities are still used by the same critics mentioned in the introduction to this article – responsibility, integrity and loyalty, long after the lesson content of subjects such as “Colour Drill” have been forgotten. It is the ability of the Academy to create an environment conducive to instilling the higher-order values that the Price Report has missed – a fact that has certainly not been lost on the current cream.

NOTES
3. The Academy has on average two visits per week by personnel ranging from prospective cadets to Heads of State. During four years of conducting tours, the author found that many of the serving or ex-military visitors were quick to provide their perception of the Academy’s training and highlight the success or otherwise of their particular officer training in inculcating learning.
Major Stevenson graduated from RMC Duntroon in 1978 and has had a variety of regimental postings within Armoured Corps and officer training institutions. He is currently the Second in Command of the Corps of Staff Cadets at Duntroon. Major Stevenson completed a Masters thesis on the military training at the Defence Academy in 1995 and is presently undertaking a Doctorate at the Defence Academy on leadership education and training in Australian initial officer training establishments.
Australians in Vietnam gives an account of Australian participation in the Vietnam War 1962-1973 and follows the return visit of veterans to commemorate the 30th Anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan, the first major battle fought by Australian troops in Vietnam.

Australians in Vietnam is an Australian Defence Force Journal production. Illustrated by over 100 photographs and illustrations this case-bound book is the 9th in a series commemorating anniversaries of Australia’s participation in war.

Australians in Vietnam will be available from the Office of the Australian Defence Force Journal at a cost of $29.95.
**Australia Remembers**

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

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

*Australia Remembers* is available from the Office of the *Australian Defence Force Journal* at a cost of $49.95.
An Analysis of a Rating System for Ranking Purposes: Did This Really Happen to Officers in the ADF?

By Dr. Doug MacLean, Centre for Behavioural and Community Studies, Southern Cross University

Assessment and evaluation are grist for the mill in service life. However, assessment and evaluation systems have to make sense from a common sense point of view, and from a more expert perspective have to be psychometrically and statistically sound. When staff feel that somehow the system is unfair, then its very legitimacy becomes questionable. This analysis from documents utilised in an appeal against the system, show the "characteristics" rating and assessment of officers at that time to be a mixture of hocus-pocus and ignorance. Did this really happen in the ADF? More importantly, has anything really changed?

Introduction

This analysis, takes as its data, documents offered to various tribunals and a Ministerial investigation set up to determine the fairness or otherwise of an officer's dismissal from the Army. Other officers have also communicated their concern about the system of rating scales which formed one part of the assessment of their competence vis-a-vis others of a similar rank. This article is not a defence of the officers concerned but an examination of the rating system used.

The material offered in evidence is somewhat contradictory and covers the A26 and PR19 assessment tools. The content of the two assessments may vary but the underpinning rationale is similar. This is the subject of this examination. The reasons given for certain practices are somewhat implausible.

The A26

The theory behind the A26 (Annual Confidential Report on Officers) is summed as follows (extracted from a document entitled “Confidential Report Systems”):

"3. The rationale is that officer effectiveness (or efficiency, or any other general quality) is compounded of three sets of variables:
   a. task competence (e.g. judgement; knowledge etc);
   b. interpersonal competence (e.g. colleagues, subordinates etc);
   c. personal qualities (e.g. interest; appearance; speaking ability)."

The argument in the “Confidential Report System” is that these three variables are crucial to officer effectiveness, and that they are “compounded” (whatever that means) or mixed in some kind of way. Furthermore, the document points out that this is the general rationale followed in other parts of the ADF, in industrial systems and in other systems within the Army (e.g. WO/NCO). The document points out that the A26 “is not designed for all purposes. In particular, it is not the only means of adverse reporting. Hence qualities such as emotional stability and integrity are excluded”. Apart from the interesting juxtaposition of sentences in the quoted paragraph, the question Why not?, springs to mind!

In the A26, there are ten variables that are used for the calculation of a “T-Score”. There is a general definition of the variable which is designed to give the rater an idea of what the variable measures (e.g. “Appearance: Consider what sort of first impression he (sic) makes with regard to his appearance, both in dress and bearing”). Within each of the ten variables “Items are structured to allow degrees of opinion; they are randomised and some are inverted (so that “S” means outstandingly bad in some items). Each shade of opinion has a corresponding weight attached as follows” ...

**Appearance, Interest, Knowledge of Work, Attention to Detail, Paperwork, Acceptability as a Colleague, and Ability to Speak have a five point weighted scheme, 1 - 5 - 10 - 13 - 16.**

**Quickness of Apprehension and Judgement are each rated 1 - 5 - 10 - 13 - 20, and Management of Subordinates has a four point ranking scheme 1 - 10 - 13 - 20.**

It would be interesting to know the rationale for such a strange system of weightings, and its advantages over a simple Likert system 1 - 5. Why a four point scale for Management? Is there any
empirical support for such weightings? What instructions are given to raters with regard to the nature of the distribution of their ratings for each of the variables?

This document goes on to suggest that each report yields a total score. That is, the weighted scores for each variable are summed. These are converted statistically to a common scale with a Mean of 50 and a Standard Deviation of 10.

"This conversion is done:

a. to allow immediate comparisons between officers of same and different ranks;
b. to provide a single and easy to use descriptive statistic that always has the same reference points i.e. mean 50, SD 10.

II. The converted score is called a Standard T Score. To offset the effects of bias resulting, for example from random personality clashes, the obtained T score is further manipulated by doubling it, adding last years T score and dividing by three."

Each variable contributes to the total score. Thus, how one dresses, one's appearance, for example, contributes equally to the total score as one's competence in "paperwork", acceptability to colleagues and the ability to speak in public. Again what is the basis for such judgement that each should contribute equally? Are these all of equal importance? Within each variable, raters are to place a tick against the attribute which, I suppose, best represents their view of the officer. There is a continuum of sorts within the variable — for example, for the variable "Appearance", the rating officer has a choice of two possibilities in regard to "Smart and well turned out at all times". If he believes the officer to be outstanding in this regard, the rating officer will tick that part of the scale marked with "S". This is worth 16 marks to the officer. If, however, the officer is "Smart and well turned out at all times" but not outstandingly so (what really is the difference?) then he will tick that part of the item without the "S" and the officer will receive a mark of only 13. If the officer's appearance is satisfactory, then he will obtain a mark of 10. If having a tendency to be slovenly, he will obtain a mark of 1. and if he "pays some regard to his appearance..." will get a mark of 5. Do these items constitute a continuum? How can you tell a 13 mark officer from a 16? On what basis does the rating officer make this judgement — favouritism? The rating officer has two sets of two options("S") for Interest, Quickness, Knowledge, Paperwork, Acceptability and ability to Speak, and one for each of the other four items. This kind of variation raises questions about the nature of the items and the manner in which they are scored, even before we come to the puzzle of the way in which the T-Scores are generated.

Furthermore, how can there be any valid comparison between officers of different ranks? Why would you want to use this score for that purpose? The attempt to inhibit rater bias is commendable, but what if an individual officer has the same rating officer two or three years in succession? The assertion that the separate analysis of raters assists management to identify rating officers who are lenient or harsh in their ratings, is only useful as an overall measure of that rating officer vis-à-vis other rating officers. It tells nothing of the way he rates particular individuals. Thus, the overall analysis of rating officer behaviour may mask their individual behaviour in rating severely those who do "not fit", or favourably those "who do".

To allow for such a comparison, each variable in the report should be standardised (converted first to a z-score or similar) so that all variables for a particular worn rank will have similar means and standard deviations. Even if two variables have the same five point rating system (1, 5, 10, 13, 16) means and standard deviations could vary quite widely. At the moment, seven of the variables have similar weightings, nine of the ten are five item "scales" and the other is a four item scale. It is somewhat like adding up a miscellany of unlike objects and creating a total score out of them. Thus, from a psychometric and statistical point of view, the mere adding up of items and then converting to a T-Score is flawed. The scores for each variable should be standardised for another very important reason. It would facilitate a real comparison between items within the scale — sought after characteristics. Thus, it would be possible to tell an officer if his performance in a particular area is substantially below that of his other characteristics. For example, your appearance is low compared to your capacity for paperwork. At the present time such comparisons are not possible, and if attempted represent a mischievous use of numbers.

Then, from the summated standardised scores for each variable, the report total score can then be converted to a T-Score for the year in question. It is also a moot point to add and manipulate T-Scores from two differing years, when not only may the N's vary, but the personnel making up any one year vary significantly from each other. But, more of this later...

The document closes by indicating that the A26 has evolved in the "direction of greater specificity of characteristics (on the basis that if you are interested
in specific competence you have to ask specific questions about them,) and provide a structure which will yield information which is reliable and independent of the literary skills of raters. The relevance of the competence in question is supported by current leadership theory and research". Thus concludes the document.

Actually, if you want to measure competence, you don't ask questions about it, you measure it behaviourally. The more fundamental question is, however, related to the quality of the information and its reliability. Thus, the A26 purports to measure task competence, interpersonal competence and personal qualities.

**PR19**

The A26 was superseded by the PR19, which, however, maintained many of the ill-conceived notions implicit in the A26. This ought to be of concern to currently serving officers. In a document entitled *T-Scores from the EDRO (PR19)* paragraph 1 points out that "The T-Score provides, at a glance, a measure of how any particular officer is performing relative to all other officers of the same worn rank".

The T-Score does not accurately reflect how well an officer is performing in his current appointment and is not used for this purpose. *My emphasis*. So, therefore, what is its purpose? How can it tell you how an officer is functioning relative to others unless it measures how well he is doing? It is like saying that our measure compares two cars, but without indicating how well each performs. Therefore, the criteria of speed, comfort, quality of workmanship etc. used to make the comparison, have no role in informing how good each car is!

In the PR19 there are 9 gradings for captains and lieutenants, and 12 for majors and above. Each of the characteristic gradings is of equal weighting. Paragraph 2 goes on to suggest "The T-Score formula is applied evenly to each and every officer, it is an objective mathematical equation, with no subjective allowances made for the personality of the reporting officer, or the relative ease or difficulty of the individuals current appointment. While these and other factors are taken into account in the interpretation of the T-Score by the Military Secretary they do not influence the score itself."

Obviously, the calculation of the T-Score based on the obtained score of an officer and all officers within a cohort is not subject to personal manipulation, but is subject to error whether the errors are in terms of transcription or calculation. (In one officer’s case, for example, an audit of his T-Score calculations over ten assessments revealed six errors between what was called his Mil. Sec. Declared T-Score and those obtained by the auditing officer). Maybe, this was an extreme case, but how do we know? Personal judgement is invoked in making the ratings on an officer in the first place and from which scale scores are generated. Who determines whether an officer's current appointment is easy or difficult? And who checks to ensure that an individual is not being marked up or down?

Paragraph 3 indicates the requirements for a T-Score system and argues that "... a simple quantifiable and verifiable method of comparing the performance of individuals is required. The T-Score system provides this method of comparison. "Thus, it compares the performance of an officer with others. It assesses his performance, despite what was said earlier. It must assess his performance in his current job against others in their current jobs — surely? Indeed, in paragraph 8 the "T-Score can be used as a gross "sort out" ... The total EDRO is always considered once (emphasis mine) any gross "sort out" is complete." The T-Score can therefore open or shut doors to appointments, additional training, special positions and the like.

Now for more hocus-pocus, or ignorance! Paragraphs 10 and 11 in this document assert that a "band system" is preferred to the use of T-Scores, because it is simpler. Not really a good reason, but the argument then is that a precise score fails to take into account a number of factors which may make it difficult to compare officers - for example, job differences, cohort differences, etc. (fair enough) Nor does the actual T-Score number provide PAC's, delegates or career managers with any additional information. So the argument now is that the T-Score is too discriminatory and such discriminations may be discriminatory. The problem with banding is that any one band may indeed encompass officers with a wide range of skills, and yet at the margin - the boundary between two bands discrimination may be unfair. The Army could have established the Standard Error of Estimate surrounding any T-Score obtained, and thus establish the point at which the difference between two T-Scores might be deemed significant.

As a rationale for the banding practice the document tells us that officers making assessments on a subordinate have to take into account the population of Australia as a whole and compare his performance with that of the "man in the street". If this is done then the distribution of scores could approximate those of the normal curve, thus the "numerical average would
lie on the 50 per cent line or the middle of the C band”.

The problem with this kind of thinking, is that the rating system is being applied to skills, characteristics and attributes which are a function of service life. The ignorance or confusion then leads to the following statement, which whilst it may please those in the ADF is really nonsense ...

“12. It must be appreciated, however, that Army officers do not represent a random sample of Australia’s population and that a standard distribution of scores does not apply. Officers are selected from a pool of applicants and must meet certain intellectual and educational qualifications. Added to this is the training provided to officers to suit them to their appointment, (and surely that is what is being measured — my additions) The officer sample is, therefore, substantially above the theoretical average. When T-Scores for a worn rank are graphed the curve is positively skewed. Thus, the actual average is well above the theoretical average.”

The fact is that the instrument devised to measure competence or effectiveness in officers has to be normed on that population, not the population at large. The population at large is not usually interested in their “bearing”, for example. The scores on any one variable within the ADF or Army population will tend to be normally distributed. University students tend to be well above the general population in terms of their IQ scores. Scores derived from their performance on tests and other assessments within the university system tend to be normally distributed. Scores would be negatively skewed, if the normal population were given the tests undertaken by the students. Scores would be positively skewed only if the instrument or test which was designed for the population in general was given to a specific group (e.g., students or ADF personnel; Anastasi, 1988: 208). The test is not designed for the Australian population at large, hence the logic above is absolutely flawed.

The errors continue in the Annex A to the document which is entitled Process For Calculation Of T-Score And T-Score Bands. There are significant differences in scoring procedures outlined in this document from the first document cited.

1. Raw Score. The rating given by the reporting officer for each of characteristics (sic) parts 3 and 4 of the EDRO is translated into a numerical value according to the position of the “tick”. This is the score the characteristic... The sum of the scores for each of the characteristics is termed the raw score. Thus, an individual’s performance over a reporting period may be assigned a numerical value.”

This is consistent with the first document cited. Note, however, previous comments on the difficulties which this presents - the adding together of “unlike” objects.

2. T-Score. Because officers move from job to job and the properties of one job are different from the next, and because there is a different group of individuals in each rank each year and no two Reporting Officers rate exactly in the same manner, the raw score is not a valid basis for comparison of one officer against the next or of one annual performance against another. Therefore, the raw score is equated to a standard (T-Score) to facilitate comparison of individuals. The process by which the T-Score is derived is as follows: (note the differences between the documents!)

a. A matrix of All the raw scores at the one rank level from the previous year is developed (why a matrix? Why the previous year? — no rationale is given for this procedure, but the plot thickens) These scores are divided into five grades (A the top 10 per cent, B — the next 20 per cent, C — the next 40 per cent, D — the next 20 per cent, and E — the bottom 10 per cent) each of these gradings is allocated a range of numbers (T-Scores) against a scale from 1 - 100 as follows...

Thus the very best of the B grade of raw scores would be allocated a T-score of 62 while the worst of the B grade raw scores would be allocated a T-Score of 55, the other raw scores in the B grade would be distributed linearly (?) over T-scores between 55 and 62.”

This means that the derived T-Score is not a T-Score. It may approximate it. The real T-Score is actually based on the difference between the raw score obtained by the officer and the mean for the distribution of scores of which it is a part, divided by the standard deviation for that group of scores. The resultant score is called a z-score which is then multiplied by 10 and 50 added to give a mean of 50 and a Standard Deviation of 10.

It is to this distribution of real T-Scores that the banding system, of whatever ilk should be applied. But what happens?

b. An individual’s raw score is compared (what does this mean? How?) against the
matrix from the previous year and the corresponding T-score value (theoretically between 1 and 100 but, in actual practice between 15 and 80), is derived. This is the uncorrected T-score for the current year.

Wrong again! The usual distribution of real T-Scores tends to lie ±3 Standard Deviations from the mean of 50, that is 50 ± 30 (i.e. 20 - 80). Only 0.13 per cent of the population of scores would exceed 3 standard deviations from the mean at either end of the distribution. That is, out of a sample or population of 4000, only 5 people are likely to appear 3 Standard Deviations above and 5 below the mean.

"c. The corrected T-Score is derived by summing 2/3 of the value of the current year's uncorrected T-Score with 1/3 of the previous year's corrected T-Score. This process ensures some dampening of an individual's reporting peaks and troughs."

So what occurs is that an officer receives a raw score for his current year's performance, which is placed in a band based on the previous year's distribution of scores. It is arbitrarily given a number which is called a T-Score by the Army. It patently is not, when in fact the actual T-Score for an officer should surely be derived from the scoring characteristics of the cohort in the year under scrutiny.

Then only two thirds of the bastardised T-Score currently obtained is used and is added to 1/3 of last years corrected (Army style) T-Score. This composite is called the corrected T-Score by the Army. There are, therefore, continual flow on effects over a number of years in any one person’s current Army-type T-Score.

For example, let’s assume that in 1994 Officer A's T-Score was 51 (in effect 17 from 1993 and 34 from 1994). In 1995 his uncorrected T-Score was 45. In deriving his 1995 corrected T-Score, 30 comes from the present year (2/3 x 45) and [1/3 (17 + 34)] = 17 (6 + 11) from 1994, giving him a corrected T-Score for 1995 of 47.

In 1996, his uncorrected T-Score is 42. Therefore, his corrected T-Score will be (2/3 x 42 ) 28 plus (1/3 x 47) 16 = 44. But the 47 is made up of 17 from 1994 + 30 from 1995, therefore approximately 1/7 of his 1996 corrected score results from his 1994 T-Score and almost 5 per cent is derived from his 1993 score! Interesting, see Table 1.

In 1996, for example this officer’s Corrected T-Score is made up of 28 from his current year (2/3 x 42) + 10 from 1995, 4 from 1994 and 2 from 1993. In other words, of the 16 to be carried forward from 1995, 37.5 per cent comes from years other than the immediate past year. In 1998 approximately 29 per cent of his previous carried forward T-Score emanates from the 4 year period 1993 - 1996.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Officer A (middle of the road) - No Promotions - 1993 - 1998</th>
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<tr>
<td>Uncorrected T Score:</td>
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<td>51</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contribution from Year:</td>
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<td>Corrected T Score for Year</td>
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<td>51</td>
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<td>BAND</td>
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<td>1/3 to be carried to next year</td>
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<td>17</td>
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In Table 2, we will take the case of an officer who did well for two of the years and was promoted in the third year of the cycle. Let us also assume that he made low scores because of a lack of experience and expertise in his new job in the first two years in his new role, and his grades begin to reflect this situation.

Of his 1995 score carried forward is derived from 1993 and 1994, and 39 per cent of the 1997 score carried forward into 1998. So this officer who is beginning to get on top of his new job as a result of promotion, and obtaining better grades, is in the anomalous position of seeing his grades (as measured by the corrected T-Score) go down. Surely this is not what is supposed to happen? There is an inverse relationship between improving in one's job and one's corrected T-Scores.

This means that if an officer obtains high T-Scores prior to promotion say from Captain to Major, his Captain’s T-Scores will be carried on into his new rank, where his duties may be more onerous, where new learnings need to occur and where in relation to officers within the grade for a number of years, he is likely to be lowly rated, quite naturally. Yet his T-Scores will not reflect that position because of contamination from a previous rank. If an officer is badly graded because of personality clashes with rating officers, then the flow on effects can be quite marked over a number of years. Such an officer will have a bad “odour” (give a dog a bad name) and will have negative effects in assessment conferences and so on. On the other hand, an officer may receive high gradings, and this “halo” effect could last for a substantial time. Neither may represent the reality of the officer’s performance.

Banding does not help the situation:

"3. The numerical values are converted into bands which group officers of roughly similar abilities. Six broad T-Score bands are used. These are...

- A: The officer is in the top 10 per cent of the total group for that worn rank (corrected T-Score of 63 and above)
- B: The officer is in the next highest 20 per cent of the total group of that worn rank (corrected T-Score between 55 - 62)"

No! The numerical values do not represent bands of officers with roughly similar abilities. The use of the word abilities suggests fixed or on-going traits or characteristics. The scores represent the summation of a variety of characteristics which are at best transient – a function of job role characteristics – marking criteria of the rating officer and so on. These scores are also a function of time within the rank cohort. A newly appointed major is hardly likely to score highly on things with which he is unfamiliar. This is supported in the Annex (A-3) where it is suggested “Thus, although an officer with a ‘D’ band T-Score is ranked in the bottom third of the worn rank group,
their performance is not necessarily unsatisfactory, just not as competitive as most" (as competent, as experienced perhaps?).

Interestingly enough, the C band is broken into two bands to facilitate discrimination in the middle of the distribution. This is not where the problem lies. The problem lies in the failure of the items to discriminate at all levels of the spectrum. The same kind of logic espoused for the A26 has also been carried forward into the PR19.

In practical terms, on one report on an officer, who appealed against his rankings, it was pointed out that the officer concerned "did not, in any report ... receive a top rating in any of the attributes which had a greater weighting. Therefore, his reports were based on ratings of equal weighting." This is arrant nonsense, and shows clearly complete ignorance of statistics, the instrument and what it was trying to measure. Furthermore, this "officer" points out that "the median point of the T-Score range is 50. The lowest point may be, but is not necessarily as low as one. The highest point ... was usually between 90 and 100 dependent on rank." Wrong again, I suspect that the officer is confusing T-Scores with maybe percentile ranks!

If the scores range from one to 100, then we are hardly likely to be discussing T-Scores, unless the N of the distribution was exceedingly large (for example if the population was 1000, you would expect one person only to have a T-Score above 80, and only one person with a T-Score below 20. How can an officer obtain a T-Score of two? Even if, he was extremely poor, the lowest T-Score likely to be obtained would be 19! Scores less than that are meaningless! They are certainly punitive.

Secondly, why was rank a factor? Do the higher ranks generally obtain higher scores? If this is the case then the distribution of scores for the lower ranks of officers is likely to be truncated at the high end, with a disproportion of lower scores.

The officer making the comments also asserts that "norms only have very slight movement, if any, each year. But we have seen that when the T-Scores for a worn rank are graphed the curve is positively skewed". (T-Scores from the EDRO (PR19) para. 12). For example, the raw scores for one officer was 115 and obtained a T-Score of 50 as a Captain, and yet on an earlier occasion an increase of three marks in raw score as a Lieutenant saw a shift in uncorrected T-Score of eight points (58). This makes a mockery of comparing across ranks. If the Standard Deviations are relatively stable, then the means for these distributions vary widely. If the means are stable, then the dispersion of scores varies markedly from year to year. Thus, how can it be that norms are relatively stable? The norms are obviously based on corrected T-Scores with that huge inertial factor built in. The skewness of scores has nothing to do with the population of Australia, it has more to do with faulty items and an inappropriate scoring system.

If the T-Scores are positively skewed, the question is why is this? The answer is that the items are poor items, and that they fail to discriminate at the top end of the scale.

Summary

In summary, both the A26 and the PR19 are assessment tools of dubious value for anything! Each variable or scale, as it is sometimes called, (if not re-written) probably needs to be expanded to seven to ten points, and reporting officers asked to make an attempt to distribute scale scores in terms of the normal distribution. The scores for each variable should be standardised, as this facilitates real comparison between sought after characteristics. Thus, it would be possible to tell an officer if his performance in a particular area is substantially below that of his other characteristics. (This is the same principle which is allegedly invoked for the use of T-Scores (to permit comparison between officers).

The standardised scores should be summated, and real T-Scores obtained by taking an officer’s score away from the mean, dividing by the standard deviation for the distribution of which he is a part (usually called a z-score) and the resulting z-score multiplied by 10 and 50 added to the score to obtain a distribution of scores for any one cohort with a mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 10.

If a smoothing out mechanism is required, then by all means take 1/3 of the previous year’s real T Score, plus 2/3 of the current year’s real T-Score. Not the corrected T-Scores! Better still might be to have a two or three year moving average T-Score for a person within a worn rank. Scoring of officers across ranks should not be permitted.

The characteristics being measured are those of armed forces personnel, not of the Australian population at large. Thus, there ought to be no skewness in the distribution of scores. The Australian population at large is not trained to defend the country nor to kill. To argue that the distribution is skewed is
because it is based on the population at large is patently false, and merely a rationalisation for what I suspect to be inadequate questions, inadequate scoring with a mixture of hocus pocus and ignorance. How many officers have been penalised by this system? How many officers’ careers have been enhanced by the inadequacy of the system? How long will it take the Army and other branches of the ADF to correct this?

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Xerxes, Salamis, Themistocles and the Principles of War

By Major D.J. McNicholas, RAA

"Unfortunately they were not in the Field Service Regulations, therefore they were incorrect".

Major General J.F.C. Fuller, CB, CBE, DSO.
- Recounting Staff College reaction to his proposed principles of war in 1914.

"All principles, unlike the laws of science, are subject to change with changing circumstances."


Introduction

If the Fundamentals of Land Warfare (1992) is any guide, we have come a long way since the then Captain Fuller's frustrated attempt to codify the lessons of war. Like many lessons, they are most easily seen in hindsight, and best understood by example. Historical examples provide an insight into the conflicting or contradictory nature of the principles of war, and also highlight the primacy of leadership and the influence of individual commanders.

The aim of this article is to discuss the Persian invasion of Greece in 480BC, in the context of the relevant Australian principles of war. It is not intended to offer a definitive history of the campaign, and some details remain the subject of debate amongst historians. Such a situation is not surprising, given the passage of time, however the broad thrust of events seems well accepted. Principles are by definition broad in nature, and the campaign therefore is most appropriate as an example, particularly as it includes many of the more interesting elements of warfare – disagreement, leadership, intrigue, courage, and luck.

The Battle of Marathon in 490 BC had an impact far beyond that of a simple military victory. Although debate continues regarding the size of the forces engaged and the tactics of double envelopment, Marathon proved that the Persians could be beaten, and validated Greek tactics in land warfare. Of equal importance, success gave Athens, and the Greek world in general, a renewed confidence. This was no doubt boosted by the fact that the hitherto dominant Spartans had contributed nothing to the victory. Although agreeing to provide support, the Spartans were unable to go to war until the end of the Carneian Festival. In the event, they did not arrive until after the battle had been fought and won.

Marathon also provided yet another example of success by a ramshackle coalition, based on the dynamic concept of individual city states. In pondering this last point, however, it should not be forgotten that a large part of Greece had been subjugated, and that self-interest and unilateral action had often worked against the city states – and would again. Victorious or not, the Greek respite was not without end, and the long expected resumption of Persian expansion took shape in 480 BC.

The ten year delay might be attributed to a range of factors, some of which have been documented, whilst others can be presumed with a degree of certainty. The former include the death of the Persian king Darius (521-483 BC), who was eventually succeeded by his son Xerxes (485-465 BC), and the need to quell a revolt in Egypt. The latter probably revolved around making good the losses of the earlier campaign – particularly in shipping, cavalry, and trained soldiers; and the internal political problems associated with such a costly and risky venture.

The Persian Aim

"Selection and maintenance of the aim is of primary importance relative to all other principles of war."

Like his father Darius, Xerxes sought revenge upon Athens and to conquer Greece. That course entailed the destruction of the allied Greek army and the neutralisation of the fleet. The Persians had to seize and hold ground, and an occupying force would need secure lines of communication by both land and
sea. A decisive victory against the combined Greek forces would discourage further united activity by the city states, and control of them would in turn force the fleet to terms.

It seems that Athens and Sparta figured most heavily in the king’s mind. Both cities had violated convention in the treatment of earlier messengers and, of all the Greek states, only those two were not given the opportunity to negotiate peace prior to the invasion. In accordance with the prevailing custom, the others were asked for earth and water as a symbol of submission. Aside from any personal desire for revenge, Xerxes’ attitude towards Athens and Sparta would certainly have encouraged the decisive land battle which he sought. Athens was dominant in Attica, and Sparta held similar sway over the Peloponese.

It therefore seems likely that his immediate aim was to destroy the allied Greek army. Such a battle would ideally be fought in the wider expanses of northern or central Greece, where the Persian numbers would decide the issue, however the Persian king had factored in the possibility of a final resolution at the Isthmus of Corinth. The Persian plan was based upon close cooperation between the army and fleet, with ultimate success on land hinging on the destruction or neutralisation of the Greek naval forces.

Greek Preparations

“Economy of effort recognises the need for the prudent management of national and defence resources and, in particular, the judicious allocation of resources to achieve a balance between defence and offence. In this way, combat superiority is assured at the decisive time and place.”

It is perhaps fair to say that the Greek response to Persian aggression lacked the finesse I have ascribed to the actions of their enemy. Having determined to oppose Xerxes, views as to the plan of defence were understandably divided along geographical lines. Those north of the Isthmus of Corinth, lead by Athens, urged a stand as far forward as possible; the states of the Peloponese, including Sparta, argued that the Isthmus was itself a natural defensive position which would counter the numerical superiority of the Persians. The former course risked an early defeat in detail, and the latter assumed the loss of northern and central Greece. Each plan depended on support from the sea, if the smaller defending forces were not to be outflanked.

Despite the doubt caused by an initial abortive attempt to find a northern defensive position at Tempe, the Athenian argument won the day. As Fuller (1954) notes, it seems likely that the threat of losing the Athenian fleet, should that state come to terms with the Persians, was the key factor in reaching the final decision. More than half of the Greek vessels were Athenian, a powerful force which owed its existence to the far sighted Themistocles, who had convinced his countrymen to undertake its construction during the Persian preparations for war.

A compromise of sorts was reached, in which the fleet of some 270 ships would sail to Artemisium and fight in the Euboean Channel, while the Spartan king Leonidas fought a delaying action at Thermopylae with a force of some 7000 men. The pass at that time was far narrower than it stands today, although the odds against the defenders would still be great – particularly if the Greek fleet was defeated. The bulk of the Greek army remained at Corinth, preparing for a final stand on the Isthmus. Eurybiades, a Spartan, was given overall naval command, and the large Athenian squadron was lead by Themistocles.

The Persian Advance

“The art of administration lies in making the best use of limited resources, in improvising, in taking calculated risks where necessary and in overcoming any obstacles which may arise.”

Once the decision to invade was taken, it seems that no effort was spared in planning and administration. Herodotus (Burn 1972) speaks of a remarkably long preparation period of some four years, during which key steps were taken to prevent a repeat of the problems encountered during the earlier invasion of 492 BC. Fuller (1954) details the extent of the works undertaken, citing the cutting of a canal through the isthmus connecting Mount Athos and Chalcidice; the spanning of the Hellespont by boat bridge; and the establishment of depots along the army’s proposed route. Fuller quite rightly notes that such feats of engineering would be difficult enough today, over two thousand years later. Such a methodical approach is not surprising, given that Xerxes was a new king, ruling an empire beginning to exhibit signs of decay. Persian arms had been repulsed by the Greeks, and victory was sorely needed to assert Persian dominance and to secure Xerxes on the throne.
“Cooperation entails the coordination of activities to achieve the maximum combined effort... It is greatly enhanced by the maintenance of joint and combined interoperability.”

Given the obvious difficulties inherent in supplying a large army in ancient times, we can assume that the value of cooperation had always been well recognised in regard to transport and resupply. Xerxes, however, was embarking upon a true combined operation, in which land and sea commanders had a coordinated role to play in the achievement of the campaign's objectives. Control of the sea would support a southern advance into Greece on land, and enable any defence of the Isthmus of Corinth to be outflanked.

The army, probably some 200,000 strong, marched north from Sardis and crossed the Hellespont. Although Herodotus claims more than two million men marched under Xerxes, that figure seems excessive given the logistics involved in such a venture, and the tendency to exaggeration exhibited by many ancient scholars. It is however clear that Persian numbers grew as the force advanced through submissive and subjugated states, and that the reliability of some elements was doubtful. The fleet, consisting of several hundred warships and support vessels, assembled north of the crossing point and shadowed the army as it moved west along the coast through Thrace and Macedonia.

Both forces then turned south, the army marching through Thessaly to Thermopylae, and the fleet sailing to the channel off Artemisium on the north-west coast of Euboea. It seems that the latter was caught in a storm en-route, although the extent of the losses suffered is unclear. Herodotus records up to 400, a figure which, if true, presumably had a significant influence on Xerxes plan of campaign. The aim of the deployment was to entice the Greeks into battle in the favourably wide waters separating Euboea from the mainland, and a Phoenician squadron of perhaps 200 ships was detached southeast to close the southern end of the Euboean Channel. Destroyed, contained, or captured, the Greek fleet would be unable to provide support to an eventual defence of the Peloponese at Corinth.

Thermopylae and Artemisium

The fate of Leonidas and his small army is well known and remains worthy of further study. He had achieved a delay of some seven days, which no doubt encouraged the Persian fleet to engage the Greeks. Although ultimately defeated, Leonidas' stand raises the interesting question of what might have been, had the Greeks committed the majority of their forces to Thermopylae. Xerxes' uncertainty is highlighted by the fact that he waited four days before assailing the Greek position in strength, and a longer delay or heavier losses might well have caused him to withdraw or seek terms. In the event, both sides would pay heavily for Thermopylae – the Greeks for failing to concentrate their forces, and the Persians for a lack of offensive action.

The resulting naval action off Artemisium was indecisive, and both sides suffered significant losses. From the Persian point of view, that setback was far outweighed by the news that the Phoenician squadron had been all but wrecked in a storm off the east coast of Euboea. On hearing of the army's destruction, the Greek fleet was able to withdraw to Salamis in good order, unopposed by the Persians. The detail of events immediately following Artemisium is unclear, and I have assumed that the Greek fleet saw the evacuation of Attica as the priority task – although a small force may have been left to block the Euboean Channel. It also seems likely that the Persian fleet would have sailed down the east coast of Euboea, in order to avoid delay in the narrow waters of the channel.

Salamis

“All plans require inherent flexibility to allow for the unforeseen and to enable advantage to be taken in changed circumstances.”

The Persian army resumed its southerly advance and captured Athens. Most citizens had been evacuated earlier by sea, and the Acropolis was taken after a short siege. Panic seems to have gripped the Greek allies on receiving news of the disaster, with much of the remaining fleet, including Eurybiades, putting sail for the Isthmus of Corinth in support of the army's defensive position.

Themistocles, still commanding the largest squadron, convinced the Spartan General that the narrow waters of Salamis offered a greater chance to the numerically inferior Greek fleet, and again backed up his argument with the threat of Athenian departure. Clearly, the loss of so many ships would both render the Isthmus untenable and ensure the destruction of the remaining fleet, and Eurybiades
agreed to make the stand at Salamis. Coerced or not, the Greeks would take advantage of the opportunity presented by Themistocles' judgement of the situation.

“Surprise ... may be achieved through skilled use of new doctrine, intelligence, secrecy, concealment, deception, simplicity, originality, audacity, timing, speed of action and technology.”

The essence of Themistocles plan was to engage the enemy in the eastern channel separating the island from Euboea. Already narrow, deployment within the channel was further restricted by the small island of Psyttaleia.

The danger, of course, lay in the possibility that Xerxes might choose to bypass Salamis and sail directly to the Isthmus of Corinth. Alternatively, the Persian king could block each approach, thereby containing the Greek fleet, and use the remainder of his vessels to support an immediate assault upon the Isthmus. Although each of those courses would have been in keeping with his aim of destroying the Greek army, he determined that engaging the Greek fleet at Salamis offered the best chance of success. According to Herodotus, this was certainly the view of the majority of Xerxes' commanders.

It appears that two stratagems were employed by Themistocles to ensure that the battle was fought on his terms. Firstly, he left the western approach to the Greek naval position at Salamis unguarded, thereby enticing Xerxes to attempt to capture the fleet intact by a repeat of the abortive Phoenician envelopment. Secondly, claims Herodotus, a message was conveyed to the Persian king that the Greek fleet was in disarray and planning to escape. From subsequent events, we know that Xerxes was preoccupied with the safety of the Hellespont bridge, and he was probably unwilling to risk a sortie by the Greek vessels to cut off his lines of communication.

In addition, it may well be that the combined losses suffered in the storms which had plagued his expedition were far worse than is generally appreciated, and that he was no longer confident of controlling the seas against any significant opposition. Success at Corinth might well depend on his ability to outflank the Greek defenders before they could withdraw. Whatever the reason, Xerxes was determined to settle the issue at Salamis, and he gave his orders accordingly. The Egyptian contingent sailed to block the unguarded western approach, while the bulk of the fleet assembled across the eastern channel.

“Success in any operation is dependent upon the concentration of superior force, when and where it is required, in order to provide the capability for decisive action.”

Whatever disagreement remained amongst the Greek commanders, the closing of both channels removed all options but to fight at Salamis on Themistocles' terms. A small force was sent to hold the Egyptians, and the Greek fleet deployed for battle between Salamis and Heracleion on the mainland. A strength of some two to three hundred can be assumed, with the majority, under Themistocles, on the left of the line. Eurybiades, as overall commander, led the right wing, and the remaining allies took up position in the centre.

In terms of the concentration of force, the Greek dispositions could not have been better. Their enemy's numerical superiority was turned into a disadvantage, and the Greek flank was secure. The Persian fleet advanced towards the enemy in three lines, forming columns as they passed on either side of Psyttalia. Changing formation, coupled with the difficulty of operating so large a force in channels less than a mile wide, saw the Persian fleet thrown into confusion.

“Offensive action is characterised by the determination of a military force to gain and retain the initiative.”

The Greeks took advantage of the Persian's disorder and sailed into battle. It seems unlikely that any real coordination was possible in so confined an area, and a general melee ensued. The Greeks, particularly the large Athenian contingent, could achieve a greater concentration of force at any one point, and began to turn the Persian flanks. Their heavier reinforced boats sheared the oars off their opponents vessels and rammed the weaker hulls. Marines boarded the stricken ships and finished the job.

The Persians no doubt employed similar tactics, but they were severely hampered by the confusion they found themselves in and the shock of the Greek assault. The lead ships faltered, and fouled those pressing from behind. The commitment and loyalty of some elements of the Persian fleet has also been called into question by historians, particularly that of the subjugated Greek states. After several hours, the remnants of the shattered Persian fleet withdrew.

**Outcomes**

Salamis was a major victory for the Greeks, both tactically and strategically. The former aspect is often unfairly overlooked or underrated by historians, who tend to emphasise the strategic implications of the
Themistocles’ plan was daring, and he managed to seize the initiative from a far stronger enemy. As a lesson in tactics, his approach warrants greater merit than it has been accorded.

That being said, the strategic implications of Salamis were remarkable. No longer in control of the sea, Xerxes withdrew the majority of his army back across the Hellespont. A concern that he might be cut off in Greece seems to have clouded his judgement. Unable to commit himself wholly to one course or the other, he left a force of some 50,000 men behind to resume the offensive in the new year. That force, under Mardonius, was to suffer defeat at Plateau in 479 BC, thereby finally ending Persian dreams of conquering Greece.

Did either side do a better job of applying the principles of war? Yes and no. The Persian aim was clearer, and their administration first class. The Greek approach to economy of effort was questionable, and yet they were able to concentrate force in a decisive fashion. Both sides understood the value of cooperation, although the Greeks relied heavily on Themistocles to hold them together. In the latter stages of the campaign, the principles of surprise and offensive action were predominantly the preserve of the Greeks. Whilst the Persian invasion provides insight into many principles of war, our doctrine
asserts the primacy of selection and maintenance of the aim. I believe it is against that criteria that we must judge the Persian king.

Xerxes managed to compel or cajole an entire empire to his endeavour in Greece. It was a massive undertaking by any standard, which would have demanded leadership and management skills of the highest order. Most importantly, the preparation involved could not have been achieved without single minded determination and a clear focus on the aims of the campaign. The massive engineering works undertaken prior to the invasion stand testimony to clear objectives and a coordinated plan. At the operational level, however, Xerxes seems to have suffered lapses in commitment to his aim on at least two occasions.

After a masterfully conducted advance into Greece, the Persian king waited four days before attempting to force the pass at Thermopylae. This despite the fact that he had overwhelming numerical superiority on land. It is possible that he was deliberately awaiting the outcome of the naval action off Artemisium, however the benefits of such a course are unclear. What decisive contribution could the fleet have made to this particular action, given the favourable odds involved?

An outflanking manoeuvre seems as unlikely as it was unnecessary, as such an operation would require operating in the narrow waters of the Euboean Channel – precisely the situation that the tactics at Artemisium were designed to avoid. No. Having determined that victory would rest on a combined operation at the Isthmus of Corinth, the Persian king should have pressed on at Thermopylae. The four day delay may well have cost all. Although the chronology is unclear, Thermopylae provided sufficient time for the Greek fleet to withdraw and evacuate Athens – and to prepare their stand at Salamis.

The second area of doubt concerns Xerxes decision to fight at Salamis. Having sensibly avoided an engagement in the Euboean Channel, why did he throw away his numerical advantage and fall into Themistocles trap? As noted earlier, it may be that the Persians had suffered too many losses to achieve the twin objectives of containing the Greek fleet at Salamis and supporting an assault at the Isthmus of Corinth. Unfortunately that possibility doesn’t seem to be supported by the available evidence.

Contemporary reports claim that Xerxes had a clear numerical superiority over his opponents, and the Greek plan certainly seems predicated on such a situation.

It therefore seems more likely that Themistocles’ ruse was successful and that Xerxes was distracted from his chosen course. The possibility of capturing the Greek fleet, coupled with his fear of losing the Hellespont bridge, caused him to misjudge the situation. He may well have assumed that naval defeat would bring the Greeks to terms, thereby avoiding a costly land battle.

Greek behaviour to date hardly supported such a view. The Spartans had died to a man at Thermopylae; the Athenians fought on despite the destruction of their city; and a stand was being prepared at the Isthmus of Corinth. If the Persians wanted Greece they would have to fight for it on land and outflank the defenders by sea. This was a point well understood by Xerxes during the planning of the campaign – a plan which had offered an excellent chance of victory.

Despite the undoubted abilities of Xerxes, the judgement of history is harsh. The first principle of war had been violated. The Persians lost because their king took his eye off the main game.

NOTES

1. A comparison between the life of this great statesman and the British war-time Prime Minister Winston Churchill is almost unavoidable – even to the point of electoral defeat at the very time he had delivered his greatest victory!

2. Mardonius, the son-in-law of Darius, had been forced to provide safe passage during the new campaign.

3. If logistic support is included, Herodotus suggests a total land and sea force of some 5 million.

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Major Des McNicholas enlisted in the Army as a soldier in 1980, and graduated from OCS Portsea in 1983. He has served in a variety of regimental and instructional appointments, and is a graduate of the Royal Military College of Science, Shrivenham, in the UK. Major McNicholas is presently the Officer Commanding, Proof and Experimental Establishment, Port Wakefield. He would like to acknowledge the assistance of Mr Ron Ramsay in the preparation of the accompanying map.
Amphibious Warfare in the ADF: The Poverty of Non-Offensive Defence Strategy in the Australian Context

By Sam Roggeveen, Deakin University

Introduction

The March/April 1996 edition of the Australian Defence Force Journal contained an article by Major R. E. Moyse which criticised the ADF's current neglect of amphibious warfare capability. Because amphibious warfare lacks an obvious service "sponsor" or advocate, the case for amphibious warfare has not been put as strongly as it might within Australian defence circles, and Major Moyse makes an excellent contribution to the redressing of this state of affairs.

Although Major Moyse's article does not rule out the use of amphibious forces in out-of-area operations, his emphasis is on a capability which would enhance the defence of Australia. He premises his arguments on the widely accepted view that given this country's small defence forces relative to the area it is asked to protect, mobility is an essential force multiplier. Major Moyse then points out the shortcomings in land and air transport as providers of this mobility, and suggests an amphibious force as a viable alternative.

In questioning the case for air mobility, Major Moyse points out that when the UK decided to deploy five per cent of a commando brigade by air to Northern Iraq during Operation Provide Comfort in 1991, this five per cent was still arriving three weeks later when the rest of the brigade arrived by sea. As for land transport, Major Moyse claims that the number and type of equipment the ADF has available to quickly move forces around the continent are more appropriate for the distances involved in European operations and are inadequate for Australia's needs. Further, northern roads are vulnerable to weather, and rail infrastructure in the north is in the embryonic category. Lastly, neither road or rail transport allow for route variation to avoid enemy interdiction.

As a strategically sound and cost-effective alternative, Major Moyse proposes that forces be moved around Australia's north by sea, as an amphibious group would be capable of covering 600km in any direction in 24 hours. This means that such a group could "threaten" any area over 1200km, which translates into between 2 and 3000km of coastline, all in a 24-hour period. In contrast, a force moved by land could not hope to move so far so quickly, while one moved by air would arrive perhaps quicker but in much smaller numbers.

Non-Offensive Defence

Major Moyse's article was cogently and convincingly argued, yet his proposal, if it were to be seriously considered by higher authorities within the Defence Department, may incur the wrath of one school of thought within the Australian defence debate. I refer to the "non-offensive defence" (NOD) school, a school proposing an alternative defence strategy which advocates that Australia be able to defend its own territory without having the capability to militarily threaten a potential enemy.

The NOD school makes several claims about the current regional security environment and Australia's role in it:
1. ...Australia's "offensive" weapon systems (those capable of reaching far to Australia's north, potentially into an adversary's homeland, such as the submarine fleet, the F-111, and air-refuelled F/A-18s) cause nervousness amongst our neighbours.
2. ...This nervousness encourages our neighbours to themselves invest in offensive armaments as a form of deterrence against Australia.
3. ...Thus does the region spiral into an uncontrollable arms race.
4. ...In a worst case scenario, a regional adversary might even attempt a pre-emptive strike in order to remove the threat of the ADF's offensive assets.

The argument of those who propose such a scheme (the most prominent is Graeme Cheeseman, who is a member of the "Secure Australia Project", a pressure group advocating NOD for Australia) is that...
a "non-offensive" defence posture would create a more benign regional environment.

Specifically, Cheeseman (in his 1993 book The Search for Self-Reliance) proposes a territorial defence strategy, in which the ADF’s area of direct military interest is restricted to the Australian mainland and surrounding waters only. Cheeseman suggests that enemy forces be met at Australia’s frontiers, and, in recognising the vastness of territory the ADF is being asked to defend, that airborne or amphibious forces be countered by mobile reserves.

As mentioned above, Cheeseman recommends the scrapping of what are currently central elements of the ADF’s force structure in line with his radical strategy. In this he includes the F-111C strike aircraft, the Oberon class submarines (and presumably the Collins class in future) and, most interestingly in this context, the two Newport class helicopter support ships.

This last inclusion is of interest to us because in fact, the defensive amphibious capability which Major Moyse is proposing (for which the Newport class ships would be central elements), would in fact suit Graeme Cheeseman’s territorial defence strategy ideally. As noted above, Cheeseman acknowledges the fact that a “frontier” defence strategy would not be able to cope with breakouts along Australia’s long northern border, and it has also been noted by Major Moyse that the ADF’s land and airlift capability is inadequate to cope with such contingencies. Moyse’s defensive amphibious force seems a masterly solution.

No doubt Cheeseman and other NOD advocates would see the strength of this case, but would presumably counter with the argument that it will be very difficult for Australia’s neighbours to distinguish between a defensive and an offensive amphibious capability. After all, if an amphibious group can move 600km per day east or west, why not north?

It might be said that this argument ignores the importance of air support. An amphibious force operating on our own shores can rely on close air support from FA/18s and F-111s flying out of the RAAF’s string of northern “bare bases”, but a similar group operating well to Australia’s north would not, given the fact that Australia has no aircraft carriers and very few airborne refuelling aircraft, enjoy such a luxury.

However, the Newport class landing ships, once modified, will be capable of supporting three helicopters, some of which could be gunships. Combine this with the limited support available from FA-18s and F-111s, plus air defence and naval gunfire support from the navy’s destroyers and frigates, and Australia could certainly conduct amphibious operations hundreds of kilometres to Australia's north in low to medium/low level threat environments.

Inevitably, then, Major Moyse’s excellent scheme, if considered seriously by the ADF, will suffer from the argument put by NOD advocates that the capability it provides will cause nervousness, and hence instability which may lead to arms racing, amongst our neighbours. This has certainly been the argument used in the past to justify the demand by the Secure Australia Project and other advocates of NOD to dump the ADF’s “offensive” assets. The question is, are the arguments of the Secure Australia Project valid?

Ten or even five years ago one might have dismissed out of hand the suggestion that the South-East Asian region was engaged in an arms race, although the situation seems less clear today. Assuming, then, for the purposes of argument, that the region is engaged in an arms race, is it reasonable to claim that this race was somehow caused or provoked by the long-range strike capabilities acquired by the ADF over the last three decades?

It certainly seems a long bow to draw. After all, the F-111C was first ordered by the Menzies Government in 1963, and not only is there no country in the region today (thirty-three years later) which can match the capability of this aircraft, none are likely to in future. The same goes for the RAN’s ocean-going submarine capability (as opposed to small, coastal submarines such as those in Indonesian service), to which no country in the region has any equal (unless you wish to argue that India purchased Kilo class submarines from the USSR in response to the Australian capability).

In short, there are many reasons why nations in the South-East Asian region are purchasing technologically advanced armaments (e.g. defence budgets may be increasing because previously, when these states were poorer, defences were simply inadequate. Alternatively, the creation of larger economies and higher living standards implies that one then has more assets to defend. Naval and air force expansion especially could be justified on grounds that in order to protect the economy, SLOCs must be kept open and safe. Lastly, armies could be expanding to suppress internal dissent), but it is not because they feel threatened by Australia.
On the contrary, Ross Babbage claims that the presumption that Australia will be a stimulant in a future regional conflict is “Austrocentric”, and that regional states in fact focus their security policies to their north. Indeed, Australia does not even rate a mention amongst Indonesia’s threat perceptions. Further, according to Steve Hoadley, Australian naval deployments and reconnaissance flights in fact provide reassurance (not to mention valuable intelligence) to South Pacific states.

**Conclusions**

The non-offensive defence school could never endorse the creation of a defensive amphibious force because they fear (despite historical evidence to the contrary) that it might be destabilising, yet as I have argued, such a force would be essential to effectively implement the kind of continental defence strategy which NOD advocates like Graeme Cheeseman recommend.

In criticising the ADF for relying too heavily on land and air forces to move troops rapidly around Australia’s north, Major Moyse claimed that high command was operating within a European, rather than Australian, mindset. I believe Graeme Cheeseman and the Secure Australia Project could be accused of much the same thing. Non-offensive defence strategy is a product of the 1980s European defence debate, an effort to find a less provocative alternative to Airland Battle 2000 and Follow-On Forces Attack. If Major Moyse’s proposal for a defensive amphibious warfare capability achieves nothing else, it has at least exposed the poverty of non-offensive defence strategy in the Australian context.

**NOTES**

2. ibid, p.26
3. ibid, p.26
4. See titles such as *Threats Without Enemies, The New Australian Militarism,* and *The Search for Self Reliance.*
6. ibid, p.208

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The Impact of Socio-Economic Factors in Regional Asian Nations and Illegal Immigration on Australia’s Security Outlook

By Andrew Rice, Department of Defence

Introduction

The Australian Government has a range of objectives for ensuring this country’s security. Two key aspects of our security policy are the protection of Australia’s sovereignty and the desire for a stable environment in our region of the world. Among the forces that influence the success or otherwise of Australia meeting these objectives are socio-economic conditions in regional nations and illegal immigration into Australia.

The aim of this article is to evaluate the influence and significance of socio-economic factors in regional Asian nations and illegal immigration into Australia.

Socio-Economic Factors in Regional Asian Nations

Asia is experiencing strong economic growth and is likely to continue to do so for some time to come. Growth in Gross Domestic Product for 1994 for Asian nations is on average 8.7 per cent (as compared to 3.8 per cent for Australia). In a strategic sense, strong economies complement national and regional security, not least because they can give countries the appearance of cohesiveness and power. However, as the Keating Government’s Defence White Paper Defending Australia points out, economic growth has permitted countries to examine new force structure options and equipment purchases; these would have implications for the intensity of any conflict that might break out in the region.

Additionally, rapid economic growth can introduce internal tensions into nations, which has the potential to influence regional security and Australia’s as well.

Socio-economic conditions in Asian nations are produced by a range of influences. Firm political control – either through outright suppression, as with Burma, or in more subtle ways – exists in the region. Asia’s population is growing steadily, and there are examples of overcrowding in the countryside. This leads to environmental damage, with the deforestation and the overuse of land, and also to social dislocation and a flow of people to the cities in search of prosperity. Social systems may become strained and an under-class can develop if economic growth does not match population flows. Disadvantage leads to problems with health, education, living conditions and crime (both in the city and the countryside), which eventually can create internal instability, particularly if it appears the Government is only interested in economic growth for the benefit of a few.

The potential for dissatisfaction is not limited to the “have nots”. Well-educated professionals, who have increased knowledge of freedoms elsewhere through the global information boom, are less likely now to accept strong central control without question. The Thai uprising of 1992 pitted the new elite against the traditional power of the military; Singapore – where Prime Minister Goh is reported to have said that democracy is not good for development – has an elite that will need to be kept convinced that the Government has the right policies. Actions like China’s banning in 1993 of privately-owned satellite dishes – to preserve “socialist spiritual civilisation” – are hardly a long term solution to the problem.

Instability caused by socio-economic factors has the potential to affect regional security. These factors can cause the loss of national potential (a country’s ability to grow economically and to contribute to the world community), through the combined effect of social dislocation and political dissatisfaction. Weakness is damaging in a geo-strategic context; a weak member of the international community can become a target for opportunistic, stronger nations. It is no secret that the Philippines has experienced some economic difficulty, and internal unrest there brings into question its cohesiveness; one assumes that this
appearance of weakness was a consideration for China in the 1995 Spratley Island dispute.

There is also the added danger that internal instability may cause a nation to fall out with the international community, through a disproportionate (to external observers) response to unrest. China's Tiananmen Square experience and the Thai situation quoted above are good examples of how national sensitivities to external criticism can lead possibly to differences of opinion on human rights or, at worst, ostracism or self-imposed exile from the international community. (The same situations can arise over disagreements on environmental, economic and social policies.) A nation out of sorts with the international community will also be less able (or willing) to contribute to regional cohesiveness and its basic principles: the exchange of ideas, free trade and security dialogue. In this regard Australia can find itself in an invidious position if, in the interests of bilateral relationships and regional cohesiveness, it is forced to take a policy position that differs from its friends; for example, Australia and the Clinton Administration's difference of response on human rights issues in Indonesia. This can undermine the positive influence our diplomatic relations have on our security outlook.

The Hawke Government's policy paper Australia's Regional Security points out that economic circumstances and repression were some causes of migratory movements in the region. As described above, internal migration is already in evidence in regional nations. Australia is seen as a land of opportunity, free from the pressures found in many other countries in the region. To date the vast majority of illegal immigrants seeking entry to Australia have come from China and Indo-China. There will be an effect on our security outlook if more people in regional nations decide that the imperative of seeking their future in Australia means that they must bypass Australia's formal immigration controls. This theme will be explored in more detail below.

Illegal Immigration into Australia

The Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs (DIEA) estimated in 1995 that there were 69,000 illegal immigrants in Australia: the majority were at large, their visas expired, although some were in detention. Some came to Australia by aircraft, some as stowaways on ships, and others by boat to locations in northern Australia. Australia's vast and underpopulated north offers many opportunities for the latter to enter illegally.

Illegal immigration has a significant impact on Australia's financial and human resources. In 1994-95, DIEA spent $16.8m on dealing with the problem (it spent just $13m more on administering the temporary entry category and the immigration programs which improve our skills base and foster social harmony through family reunions). Add to that Coastwatch's $24m budget, its extensive air and maritime assets, and the assistance lent by the Australian Defence Force and other Government agencies. Money is not the only consideration; the provision of people to this task draws heavily on our national resources. In short, illegal immigration impacts on our security simply because it takes money and people from other projects, such as unemployment, health and education, that can enhance Australia's security, net wealth and social cohesiveness.

Illegal immigration can affect the Australian Government's domestic and international image. A range of domestic interests groups - including ethnic and refugee advocacy groups, social welfare and civil rights organisations, and the odd Chief Justice and retired Prime Minister - are adept at focusing attention on the Government's policy for handling illegal immigrants, particularly their detention. When measures appear draconian, it reflects badly on Australia's image overseas (no matter how assiduously it follows relevant UN covenants). Australia's security outlook is affected if it loses respect in the international community; this can lead to a diminished ability to shape security mechanisms and promote exchanges between nations.

However, by far the greatest impact on Australia's security outlook of illegal immigration, particularly the arrival of the so-called "boat people" on our northern coastline, is the impression created that Australia's borders cannot be secured. The Montague Sound landing in 1991 demonstrated to the world that Australia was unable to secure its borders and the Government's Report on Investigation into arrival of Suspect Illegal Entrant Vessel (SIEV) Into Montague Sound admitted as much. Since that time boats have continued to arrive: 21 came in 1994-95, of which three were not detected in Australian waters until they had landed. This compares to the six that came in 1993-94, all of which were located before landing. The ease of entry is of concern from a sovereignty, law enforcement, public health and integrity of primary industries point of view, and significantly it demonstrates a fundamental weakness
in defending against our most likely foreign incursion threat (as described in Defending Australia), that of small groups of armed infiltrators seeking lodgements in northern Australia. Much the same as economic and social weakness is noticed by a potential adversary, the inability to secure one’s borders is as well.

It could be argued that the ADF’s commitment to countering illegal immigration – 253 P3C hours and 1775 Patrol Boat days in 1994-95, plus the indirect cost of the Jindalee over the horizon radar and other new surveillance and intelligence capabilities – influences our security outlook, as it distracts the ADF from other important defence tasks. It diverts resources that could be used to further regional security (such as fisheries enforcement in the South Pacific and aircraft patrols in South-East Asia), and occupies platforms and personnel in tasks that are not related to traditional defence activities.

However, this is not entirely correct. Amidst the negative effects on Australia’s security outlook created by the “boat people”, there is at least one positive result. As eluded to above, such arrivals mirror in part a potential threat to Australia’s security. In seeking to detect and apprehend these boats, the ADF and Government agencies are working together in a fashion that would be vital in times of heightened threat. A result of the 1991 Montague Sound incident was better cooperation between agencies, including intelligence dissemination and interface of communications systems, and a Standing Advisory Committee on Coastal Protection and Surveillance brings together all relevant agencies, including State Police forces, to discuss issues. Each time a boat seeks to enter Australia illegally, the ADF and civil agencies are able to fine tune procedures for detection and apprehension.

Continued cooperation between the ADF and Government agencies on illegal immigration will be important, as only this can give Australia a realistic chance of minimising the damage caused. It will also be an important determinant of our ability to protect against incursions by small enemy parties into our territory in time of conflict.

**Conclusion**

Viewed separately, both socio-economic factors in regional Asian nations and illegal immigration have the potential to influence our security outlook. The former can lead to social dislocation and loss of national potential in individual nations; the effect of this can be diminished regional cohesiveness and security, when weakness presents opportunities for gain on the part of stronger nations. Strong government responses to disaffection can give rise to human rights concerns, which also affects a country’s standing in the international system and its ability to contribute in a regional security sense. Illegal immigration is a drain on Australia’s national resources and undermines our national sovereignty: the Government pays a heavy premium in credibility every time an illegal immigrant boat breaches our borders in peacetime. It will pay an even higher price if the success of illegal entry is mirrored by hostile forces in the event of conflict.

Australia will do well to realise that these two issues have a connection. As indicated above, it is possible that a down-turn in living conditions for the poor of Asia, coupled with a growing awareness of what the outside world, including Australia, has to offer in terms of improved lifestyle, could see an increase in migratory tendencies. Should there be an increased flow of illegal immigrants towards Australia, the Government will be sorely pressed to maintain the integrity of its borders without dedicating more resources to agencies tasked with their security.

**NOTES**

1. For the purposes of the article, these are the ASEAN nations, Burma, Indo-China and China.
3. ibid p.92.
12. Asylum, Border Control and Detention Joint Standing Committee on Migration (JSCM) AGPS Canberra 1994 see tables p.17-25.
14. ibid, p.42.
15. ibid p.27.
18. UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees 1951 and its Protocol of 1967; the International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights 1966; and the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment 1984. Source JSCM. Asylum, Border Control and Detention, p.54.
23. ACS 94-95, p.77.
25. ibid p.15.

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This is the 6th book in a series produced by the Australian Defence Force Journal. It highlights the role of Australian sailors and airmen in the liberation of the Philippines and General Douglas MacArthur's promise to return.

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Australian and Indonesian soldiers during exercise K95
Australia’s Post WWII Relations with Indonesia

By Lieutenant Commander P. Flynn, RAN

In the fifty years or so since the end of the Second World War the nature of the relationship between Australia and Indonesia has varied enormously, improving or deteriorating in response to a range of internal and external factors which in turn were, until the collapse of communism, frequently generated by the prevailing regional and international political situation. Additionally, particularly recently, cultural and social attitudes, varying ideologies and economic and military issues have all played a part in defining the relationship. Essentially, both Australia and Indonesia have been trying since the end of the war to clearly define their national identities, their relationship as neighbours, and their roles within the region. Even though the rapport between the two countries is slowly increasing, many mistakes have been made, and will continue to be made, until such time as both learn a great deal more about each other.

With two countries as dissimilar as Australia and Indonesia there are numerous ways in which misunderstandings and differences of opinion can arise; in the broad sense we are "... perhaps more strikingly dissimilar culturally to our region than almost any other country in the world". More precisely, the very real differences between Australia and Indonesia further complicate the situation, as highlighted by a former foreign minister:

No two neighbours anywhere in the world are as comprehensively unlike as Australia and Indonesia. We differ in language, culture, religion, history, ethnicity, population size and in political, legal and social systems. Usually neighbours share at least some characteristics brought about by proximity over time, but the Indonesian archipelago and the continental land mass of Australia might well have been half a world apart.

Until the Second World War, the Indonesian islands were firmly in the grip of Dutch colonialism and Australia, although no longer a colony, was still very much a part of the British Empire. The national focus of both countries was on the needs and dictates of European powers rather than on regional issues, and there was little if any acknowledgement of a neighbourhood relationship - they simply had nothing in common. By the end of the war the situation of both countries had changed dramatically in a number of ways, and it was those changes which combined to usher in the commencement of the bilateral relationship. Declaring independence in 1945, and achieving it in 1949, Indonesian nationalists received strong support from the Chifley Labor Government, which represented their aims in the United Nations.

Becoming Prime Minister in July 1945 after the death of Curtin, Chifley and his ministers were aware that the war was in its last days. They, like many ordinary Australians, had been exposed to South-East Asia and its peoples to an unprecedented degree by the war, and had developed an understanding of the aims of regional nationalists and a degree of admiration and respect for the resistance movements which had fought the Japanese at great cost. Consequently, in 1947 Australia, as a member of the United Nations Good Offices Committee, put forward a strong case in favour of Indonesian independence and lobbied for support in the international arena. When Indonesia was admitted to the United Nations in 1950 as a parliamentary democracy, Australia was a co-sponsor, an ambassador was appointed, and all seemed well.

From the Australian point of view there were additional, more pragmatic reasons for these actions; long wedded to a policy of forward defence, which essentially means militarily supporting friendly states which are located between yourself and potential threats, there were sound reasons for encouraging Indonesia to become a stable democracy. Certainly the nationalists appeared to have broad support among the disparate social groups of Indonesia, and their platform of unity through diversity, underpinned by the credo of the Pancasila, seemed to promise a good chance of establishing a workable parliamentary system. Along with forward defence, Australia adhered to a doctrine of collective security through alliances with the major powers, Britain and America. With Asia in turmoil after the war, and Australia still lacking the industrial base, economic wealth or population to adequately defend itself, both policies were prudent.

In government from 1949 to 1966, the conservative Menzies led Australia through an era of unprecedented regional change, most of which was initiated by communist activity. With the humbling of the European colonial powers during the war, and
joined ANZUS in 1951 and SEATO in 1954; neither influence in Asia in the late 1940s with the establishment of communist governments in North Korea and China.

In the years after Indonesian independence, while the Australian military was committed to fighting communism in the Korean War (1950-53) and the Malayan Emergency (1948-60), the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), whose membership consisted to a large extent of ethnic Chinese, had been gaining strength and fomenting trouble. Although there was originally a strong communist presence in Indonesian politics, President Sukarno was able to exercise a degree of control over it during the period of parliamentary democracy, which lasted until 1959, by playing the communists off against the Islamic parties. Despite this, a feeling of unease about the future direction of Indonesia began to grow in Australia, which viewed the early example of the communist Madiun Rebellion of 1948 with some trepidation. Even though the uprising was savagely suppressed by the fiercely nationalist Indonesian army, and the communist cause crippled, the ideology remained.

With the Soviet and Chinese communist parties declaring war on capitalism, vowing to achieve world domination, and ideologically based warfare erupting throughout Asia, there was obviously an enormous degree of apprehension about the future in Australian eyes. By the early 1960s President Sukarno's grip on power relied more and more on the support of the PKI, who provided the popular adulation he needed as a charismatic demagogue, while the Indonesian armed forces (ABRI) grew increasingly restless at the influence of the PKI. In line with the dual doctrines of forward defence and collective security, Australia had joined ANZUS in 1951 and SEATO in 1954; neither organisation included Indonesia, and both were pro-western, staunchly anti-communist military arrangements. Originally heavily influenced by the Soviets, the PKI had moved into the Peking communist camp by the 1960s, and the connection between the overseas Chinese in Indonesia (and Malaysia for that matter) and their homeland appeared to be clear.

Although Australia and Indonesia seemed to be moving inexorably towards conflict, and indeed their troops fought each other during the Malaysian Confrontation (Konfrontasi 1960–1965), this was primarily an ideological dispute with few other grounds for mutual animosity other than Australia's fear of the spread of communism and Sukarno's increasing adventurism. With the advent of the bloody 1965 coup, which saw ABRI and the Islamic organisations destroy the PKI, Sukarno toppled and Suharto eventually replaced him in 1967, the immediate tension was removed and a semblance of political normality restored between the two countries. Since 1967, politically at least, both have been drawing gradually closer to each other, although there are still major differences which are entirely understandable as there is very little common ground to work on. As the Indonesian foreign minister is reported to have said in 1986 “... Australia is an appendix in the abdominal cavity of South-East Asia. You only know it's there when it hurts”.

Lack of common ground would not be too difficult a hurdle to jump if there was a physical connection between the countries, as borders tend to aid the migration of ideas and knowledge of neighbours, and to force a degree of acceptance of the cultural and social oddities of others. Not only is this element missing, but the differences between Australia and Indonesia are often magnified, distorted and manipulated by the press and electronic media of both countries. As the Indonesian media are rightly or wrongly firmly under the control of the government and will not irritate a neighbour without a valid political reason, it is elements of the almost totally independent Australian media who must bear the brunt of the blame for promulgating a distorted, stereotypical, emotive and ideologically driven picture of Indonesia, and for continuing to act as an irritant and a barrier to understanding and acceptance.

A very simple concept lies at the root of Indonesian political and military activity since independence, the need for national unity; this concept encompasses both the physical environment of the country and its social cohesion. To this end the Indonesians have not nor will not brook any interference in what they see as their search for national survival. The need for unity drove the expulsion of the Dutch from West Irian in 1962, the recovery (or annexation in some eyes) of East Timor in 1975, and the suppression of ethnic, religious or political organisations which would cause dissension within the body politic. As Gough Whitlam put it, no
recently independent country had "... settled for smaller boundaries than those it enjoyed as a colony." Never having faced any of these issues within Australia, or having suffered despotic colonialism or the need to fight for independence, Australians cannot, with the best will in the world, really understand these basic drives and the fear of social collapse and civil war that is present in the Indonesian political psyche.

This lack of understanding, combined with the power which the media has to influence the public, provides fertile ground for those with an ideological point to make. Although stated in 1986, the views of an expert commentator still retain a high degree of validity today. While emphasising that a great deal of goodwill exists towards Indonesia and its people amongst ordinary Australians, despite lingering vestiges of racial superiority and the White Australia Policy, Professor Arndt goes on to describe the reasons for a "... virulent hostility [towards Indonesia] among a vocal minority" of Australians. Originally supportive of the Sukarno regime despite its many failings, left-wing Australians have remained deeply opposed to the Suharto Government, which they regard as right-wing and essentially totalitarian, a view supported by regular instances of repressive Indonesian military activities in the field of human rights.

Certainly elements of the Australian intelligentsia and media abhor the Dwifungsi and Middle Way roles of ABRI, so different from that of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and the Western concept of the military simply as servants of government. This antipathy towards the controlling force in Indonesian society provides a rich source for criticism each time a particularly violent or inept situation occurs, despite the fact that under this regime Indonesia has become a stable nation with steady economic growth and a generally benign presence to our immediate North. As the overarching concern of both governments is to achieve regional and national security, the ADF and ABRI have maintained contact over the years, engaging in training programs, ship visits, personal contact and equipment transfers culminating in the Kangaroo 95 exercise in which Indonesian troops were deployed with Australian and Americans in the North of Australia. Although this initiative was openly questioned in the media, it is only one of the range of confidence building measures which both countries apply to strengthen their relationship.

With the end of the Vietnam War in 1975, which had seen the most sustained, violent protests in Australia in living memory, thousands of politicised young radicals were able to turn their attention on Indonesia when it occupied East Timor in the same year. As Arndt puts it:

Since their viewpoint was strongly represented among the Australian media, it was no less natural that, particularly after the deaths of five Australian journalists during the Timor fighting, the Australian public for some years received a highly slanted picture of events in Timor and of Indonesia generally.

Perhaps resurrecting latent Australian fears of the Yellow Peril and evoking memories of Konfrontasi, the Indonesian move into East Timor marked a low point in the bilateral relationship, and coincided with the constitutional crisis in Australia and a change of government in Portugal. When reporting on the issue then and now, the Australian media largely chose to ignore the essential facts, painting Indonesia as "... the congenital bully boy of South-East Asia." Although racially and geographically part of the Indonesian archipelago, East Timor had been ruled by the Portuguese for centuries, and its people kept in abject poverty and ignorance. Famine swept the country regularly, and the illiteracy rate was over 90 per cent; the colony had "... not yet reached the stage of underdevelopment." As the Portuguese chose to leave without a legacy of stability, repeating the Angola and Mozambique debacles, the Indonesian leadership believed that they had little choice (and certainly no inclination) to act in any other way than they did.

Although the furore that East Timor created in the Australian press has diminished with time, the issue still remains the centrepiece of our relationship in some sections of the media and is resurrected at every opportunity. The "vendetta against Indonesia" as Gough Whitlam termed it, has the potential to cause trouble between the two countries out of all proportion to the number of Australians who actually support those views, or who would continue to do so if they were aware of the full facts. Recent examples include the uproar over the military past of the latest Indonesian ambassador to Australia, since recalled, and the burning of the Indonesian flag by Timorese activists in Darwin, an event involving a handful of demonstrators and a large contingent of media. While the former example displayed diplomatic clumsiness by the Indonesians, the latter was a calculated act by refugees against a country which is strongly nationalist and essentially friendly towards Australia.

Australians, who have changed their national anthem and are debating changing their flag and moving to a republic from a constitutional monarchy, would find it hard to understand the outrage felt in Indonesia over the burning of their flag. Nationalist
movements rely heavily on symbols of unity to forge consensus and cohesion, none more so than the Indonesians who are trying to keep together what must be one of the most fragmented and disparate groups on earth. With more than 13,000 islands, hundreds of languages and ethnic groups, and a range of religious and politically based internal pressures, the last thing that Indonesians need is a neighbour harbouring dissidents and televising their actions. Rightly or wrongly, the Indonesians have followed a path of development which has seen their country rise from a poverty stricken economic basket case, to a newly developing country with a strong sense of national pride which is now a major Australian trading partner; both countries are resource rich, and both are maritime nations depending on trade across the seas.

The totally different political structures of the two countries have a significant impact on the relationship, as once again there is no real common ground. With a strong, paternalistic, some would say dictatorial government dedicated to development and unity as the only leadership most Indonesians have ever known, they must view the Australian model of party politics and the role of minority pressure groups with some bemusement. The internal pressures that both governments face in their day-to-day business with each other are often mutually exclusive, particularly given the Australian interest in human rights, the paramount place of the individual, the provision of universal social welfare and freedom of speech. As the aims and structures of the two governments are so different, so must their leaders differ in their styles, yet there is room for discussion and understanding, which is undertaken often on a personal level between the foreign ministers, with Keating and Suharto also now engaging in regular talks.

Although harbouring deep reservations, Australia gave de facto recognition to Indonesia's take over of East Timor in 1978, and de jure recognition in 1979; it was to take another ten years, and much hard work, before the two countries were able to demonstrate their commitment to regional partnership by signing the Timor Gap Treaty in 1989. Along the way there were a number of problems, most notably the Sydney Morning Herald article in 1986 which exposed the graft, corruption and nepotism of the Suharto family and caused outrage in Indonesia where such matters are dealt with privately, not in the glare of the media spotlight. Differences in race, religion and culture all have a significant impact on relationships between countries, and once again there is a gulf in understanding each other's ways of approaching personal matters; certainly the Indonesians prefer consultation to confrontation, the oblique approach to the direct, and regard Australian media and political criticism as totally unacceptable and highly intrusive.

After the high point of the Timor Gap Treaty, the roller coaster of bilateral relations took another downward swing in November 1991 with the Dili massacre, and “With the active participation of the Australian media, a veritable hate campaign was launched against the Indonesian Government and people”. The massacre continues to provide fuel for the ideologues within the Australian media, particularly the ABC which broadcasts throughout the region, and to keep alive the media profile of the Fretilin representatives living here. In reply to the criticism, the Indonesian foreign minister addressed the World Conference of Human Rights in 1993 and, in a dignified tour de force, used a wide range of Western social concepts – quoting the authors directly – to give Indonesia’s critics a lesson in reality. The essence of his speech was that:

"The universal validity of basic human rights and fundamental freedoms is indeed beyond question. (But) human rights questions are essentially ethical and moral in nature. Hence, any approach to human rights questions which is not motivated by a sincere desire to protect those rights but by disguised political purposes or, worse, to serve as a pretext to wage a political campaign against another country, cannot be tolerated."

In conclusion, the bilateral relationship between Australia and Indonesia has frequently been placed under extreme pressure, yet still survives intact and is gradually improving despite the heavy handed tactics of the Indonesian military and the Australian media. The essence of the relationship is the need for security; Australia could not be comfortable without a friendly presence on its northern approaches, and Indonesia, focussed as always on maintaining internal security, surely appreciates a southern neighbour that presents no military threat. Additionally, with international trade now the key to growth and prosperity, it is in the interests of both countries to maintain open and friendly relations, to help rather than criticise. Australia is politically committed to a comprehensive engagement in the region, to becoming the odd man in rather than the odd man out, and could achieve a great deal more from the bilateral relationship with Indonesia by modifying its approach.

Having survived the Cold War era and its attendant social and political ills, both Australia and Indonesia have the opportunity to thrive in the current Asian trading environment and can only improve
each other's prospects by coming closer together. Having said that though, there are still far too many areas of ignorance and grounds for misunderstanding between the two countries which will require a real effort to eradicate. That effort will require a willingness on both sides to appreciate their differences without necessarily overreacting, and should ideally involve a commitment from all elements of society, rather than to continue to present tired stereotypical images of each other based on outdated or erroneous data and ideology. As both countries are still developing, particularly in the political sense, and searching for their role in the region, the nature of the future relationship between them promises to be very interesting.

NOTES
3. ibid., p. 186.
7. Arndt, op. cit.
11. Arndt, loc. cit.

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The Royal Australian Navy guided-missile frigate HMAS Darwin seen at speed off the West Australian coast during power trials. (Photo: LSPH Peter Lewis, RAN)
Trafalgar Night?

By Sub Lieutenant Tom Lewis, RAN

Over the last few years, an age-old tradition of the Royal Australian Navy – the Trafalgar Night Dinner – has been discarded. This article suggests that Trafalgar Night should be reinstated, because we would do well to always remember Horatio Nelson, the greatest fighting sailor who ever lived, and one who should serve as a model for navy people.

Horatio Nelson, the victor of the Battle of Trafalgar, fought against his country’s enemies for much of his life. A short, thin man not blessed with good looks, he first entered the British Navy as a midshipman at the age of 12 years and three months. His father was a parson and Nelson had behind him a boyhood that had not been characterised by anything except need. He was one of eight children, his mother had died when he was nine, and his prospects did not look hopeful. However, even at a young age Nelson had initiative – he persuaded an older brother to appeal to his father to arrange an entry to the Navy via the good graces of an uncle, who commanded the 64-gun Raisonable. Bending the rules which should have rated Nelson as a captain’s servant, his uncle made sure the boy was accepted.

The British Navy in those days was the greatest in the world in terms of power, and also the most professional, with high standards both expected and met, and characterised by discipline and great ability from sailor and officer alike. With hundreds of years of tradition behind it, this was the Navy that had sailed the seven seas in exploration under great navigators such as James Cook and William Bligh, and defeated Britain’s enemies at sea in fleet and single ship action, often achieving victory against the odds. It was a harsh Navy too, with unrelenting discipline that often had to keep crews on its ships by force, which was often the way the sailors had arrived there in the first place – by being “pressed”. (The British sailor, for all his tremendous stamina, courage and resourcefulness, was also no fool, and often preferred a more comfortable and profitable existence ashore). Even for the most junior officer – midshipmen such as Nelson – the life was hard. These young officers lived in discomfort, often with poor food, were as disciplined as their sailors – they were often beaten in the gun room rather than flogged at the gratings – and had a great deal to learn; from navigation to naval combat techniques along with all of the complex construction and handling of a wind-driven ship of war. And of course, there was always the prospect of being shot at with all of the horrors of combat in those days: chain shot, grape shot, musket fire and cannonball along with the cutlasses and pistols of the enemy; all combined to kill, maim or wound – with no recourse to attention under anaesthetic – the sailors of Nelson’s navy.

Into this doubtful future in 1771 came the young midshipman, to his first ship. Despite being prone to sickness: “I have had all the diseases that are” he once said; he adapted well to the vigorous and often dangerous life that was the Navy. He volunteered early in his service for a two-ship voyage to the North Pole, where he and a fellow midshipman left the ice-bound ship in the middle of the night to hunt a polar bear. The two adventurers were later seen attacking a bear some distance from the ship; the signal was made for them to return; which they did reluctantly – Nelson’s excuse was that he wanted to send the bear’s skin to his father.

Passing his Lieutenant’s examination in 1777, Nelson gained promotion to Post-Captain in the following year. His early commands were frigates, and he saw varied action: against privateers; river forts; on blockade. He married in 1787, but while he and his new wife were able to spend time together ashore in a comparatively peaceful period of Britain’s history, Nelson hankered after a new ship. With the beginning of the French Revolution war looked imminent, and the young captain, now 34, was given his first line-of-battle ship, the fourth rate 64-gun Agamemnon.

Nelson employed in his leadership style the modern effective philosophy of management, which we in the Navy know as Naval Quality Management. One characteristic of this is to invite others to contribute their ideas for a campaign, or a battle, or a change of some sort. Nelson embarked upon the Battle of the Nile in a reasonably haphazard fashion; he had detected the French fleet some five miles away at anchor in a bay after a long and frustrating period of pursuit. Not wanting to have battle slip away again; already having missed the French fleet several times due to the lack of scouting frigates – the “eyes of the
Nelson let his ships advance towards the enemy by virtue of whoever was the fastest sailor.

For the autocratic manager this would be disastrous. The captains of the individual ships would have no choice but to engage and hope others followed them, not knowing how a fellow commander would fight, and indeed, an overly authoritarian manager would not trust his subordinates to make such momentous decisions. Nelson, by comparison, had been having regular meetings with his “Band of Brothers” during the long chase: the officers would pool their ideas for forthcoming battles; the best use of tactics; what a following ship would do when its fellow was sighted engaged and so on. Consequently even the necessity for signals within the ensuing battle was dispensed with; the captains knew each others’ minds. There are many other such examples of this attitude: Nelson detested a formal meeting but rather preferred informal sessions where his fellows could relax and speak their mind freely. Perhaps this is one of the many aspects of the man that inspired such loyalty from his peers: Hardy, who was with him when he died; Collingwood, whose battle line he enthusiastically raced to be first to engage at Trafalgar; Berry, who followed him from ship to ship; Hallowell, who after the Battle of the Nile made him a present of a coffin fashioned from the mainmast of the French ship L’Orient – Nelson kept it in his cabin for some time and was indeed buried in it.

Nelson was the supreme naval tactician. He demonstrated this many times in battle; his earlier commands of frigates having given him an understanding of the advantages of manouvrability and speedy action which he later brought to bear against the more textbook examples of action such as the commitment of a fleet into line of battle order. One of his notable tactical decisions – typical of a frigate captain – was action in the 1797 battle of Cape St Vincent, when fighting against the Spanish fleet and commanding HMS Captain. Nelson without orders put his ship across the advancing line of Spanish warships his two-decker of 74 guns facing a four-decker of 136 guns – then the biggest ship afloat – with three-deckers behind. In this way Nelson forced the Spanish ships to alter course, thus allowing others of the British van to join the battle. As historian Christopher Lloyd says: “Only a tactician of genius and a man totally without fear would have dared to do this on his own initiative”.

The development of “the Nelson touch” – that singular appreciation of the battle to come and the right actions to take – was part of his tactical repertoire time and again. For example, we may look at his pursuit in the van of the British fleet to capture the 84-gun Ca Ira in 1796. In the ship-to-ship encounter Nelson’s manoeuvring allowed him to inflict damage on the French ship repeatedly while avoiding damage himself. The French ship looked like being relieved when one of her peers arrived to help, but then both surrendered to Nelson. He was even capable of showing brilliance in land assaults, as he did at the siege of Bastia in Corsica, taking command of 12,000 troops and 300 seamen, bringing the town to capitulation. But innovative tactics did not prevent Nelson from understanding the brute force necessary for naval battles of the day; at the peak of his success he was to declare: “No captain can do very wrong if he places his ship alongside that of an enemy”.

Nelson was master of naval strategy. He demonstrated this repeatedly. He was recognised by one of the great Admirals of the age, Sir John Jervis, later to be Lord St Vincent, to be “more an associate than a subordinate officer” as Nelson wrote to his wife, and Jervis made him a Commodore. An occasional diplomat, Nelson never lost sight of the “Big Picture” of victory against Napoleon Bonaparte, and was always one to rise against personal rivalry with fellow officers, and the inter-service rivalry which then as now was a pestilence upon campaigns. Nelson, for example, was the commander of the force at the Bastia siege, while his Army equivalent, the famous Colonel Sir John Moore, “sulked in his tent” as Lloyd put it. Before the battle of Cape St. Vincent Nelson was to write: “A victory is very essential to England at this moment”. He was truly an instrument of his nation rather than himself.

Nelson knew also when to fight and when to seek peace. Having fought the Danish fleet into a standstill at Copenhagen, he negotiated with Denmark's Prince Royal afterwards, seeking to stop the Prince’s country from moving towards Bonaparte. A successful armistice of 14 weeks was concluded by Nelson, demonstrating his mastery of statesmanship and strategy; a vote of thanks in the House of Commons commented: “that Lord Nelson had shown himself as wise as he was brave, and proved that there may be united in the same person the talents of the Warrior and the Statesman”.

Nelson was a leader, who demonstrated ruthlessness when necessary; he sacked his secretary after the Battle of the Nile, when that man broke down at the sight of his leader’s wound and failed to carry out Nelson’s orders. But he also demonstrated a willingness to learn, to change bad old ways for new better ones, and he was always willing to take advice, from anyone of any rank. Nelson learnt from Admiral
Jervis, for example, of the importance of cleanliness on board ship to prevent typhus, and the necessity of lemon juice to ward off scurvy. But he also looked for greatness in his juniors, having Edward Berry, his First Lieutenant in Agamemnon, promoted to Captain because “he is an officer of talents, great courage and laudable ambition”. The biographer Southey observed: “he could electrify all within his atmosphere” while St. Vincent, not a man who was prone to flattery, said that Nelson: “possessed the magic art of infusing the same spirit into others which inspired their own actions”.

Nelson was a man of courage, honour and action who we would do well to emulate. This is the sailor who lost an eye when an enemy shell, exploding during the siege of Calvi in Corsica, drove splinters and dust and rock fragments into his face. He suffered most terribly and often from wounds, paradoxically being not so much a man who loved combat as one who stood back as demanded of a senior commanding officer crucial to the course of battle. His wounds resulted from being quite willing to lead from the front if that was what it took to win an action. His right arm was amputated after the battle of Santa Cruz in Teneriffe due to his being hit by grapeshot. On the way back to the ship – at that time the Theseus – Nelson was lying in the bottom of the boat with a tourniquet around his arm, half conscious from loss of blood. When they reached the ship, he was half-hauled on board, clinging to the rope with one arm while he climbed up the ship’s side. Once on board he gave orders for the surgeon to be called immediately, saying: “for I know I must lose my arm, and the sooner it is off the better.”

During the battle of Cape St Vincent – we recall Nelson had thrown Captain in the path of the vastly superior 136-gun Santissima Trinidad – this man of courage and action himself led the charge up the side of the Spanish 80-gun San Nicolas, followed by “my old Agamemnon” – a detachment of the 69th Regiment of Foot. Together they stormed the ship, Nelson leading with a cry of “Westminster Abbey or Glorious Victory” and if that was not enough, when fired upon by the San Josef, which had collided with her sister ship, he led the way aboard her too. Together the men from Captain took this ship as well. Nelson himself was immediately promoted to Rear Admiral. His wife meanwhile, begged him to “leave boarding to Captains”.

This too is the man who had the courage of his own convictions, who could often have left off and blamed superiors for failure, but instead the man who chose to advance when he knew defeat was attainable and essential. At the Battle of Copenhagen, walking the deck while the guns roared their broadsides, and deadly splinters whistled about his ears, this is the man who confided to Colonel Stewart, commander of infantry, who was with him on the quarterdeck, that he would not be “elsewhere for thousands”. And when his uncertain superior, Admiral Parker, made the signal to leave off the action, Nelson refused to see it, putting his telescope to his blind eye and exclaiming “I really do not see the signal”. The British won the battle.

However, Nelson was never one to be less than magnanimous in victory and brave in defeat. He once took on with his own two frigates two ships of equal size belonging to the Spanish. Before the fight began, the following dialogue took place between the lead ships across the water.

“*This is an English frigate. If you do not surrender, I will fire.*” “*This is a Spanish frigate. You may begin as soon as you please.*”

A fierce fight then took place, and the English began to get the better of things. Called upon several times to surrender, the senior Spanish officer, Don Jacobo Stuart, replied with: “No sir, not whilst I have the means of fighting left”. When the Spanish eventually struck, Don Jacobo was most generously treated, and Nelson wrote personally to the captain general to whom was given the prisoners, and asked that they be looked after, saying:

“It becomes great nations to act with generosity to each other, and to soften the horrors of war.”

Nelson was a Humanitarian ahead of his times. Although he served in a time when naval discipline was harsh indeed, he was never one to flog a fleet into shape, as even some of the more intelligent naval commanders were wont to do: Admiral Sir John Jervis, for example, although Jervis attained a reputation as harsh but very fair. While the famous naval mutinies of Spithead and the Nore raged, Nelson’s ships remained aloof from the dispute, although the stories had leaked through. Perhaps it is significant that when the Theseus, a ship implicated in the mutinies, was sent to join Nelson’s ships, a scrap of paper was casually dropped on her quarterdeck a fortnight later. It read:
Success attend Admiral Nelson! God bless Captain Miller! We thank them for the officers they have placed over us. We are happy and comfortable, and will shed every drop of blood in our veins to support them, and the name of the Theseus shall be immortalized as high as the Captain's—Ship's Company.

This was the commander, who even before his fame grew to its eventual immense proportions, who had men petition to serve under him, and who often took a personal interest in their welfare. Although we might think such interest as being perfectly normal, this was a hard and savage era of history, with the "mob" below and leaders such as Nelson far above. Nelson, unusually for the age, while not rubbing shoulders on all occasions with his men, saw them as being humans and worth his time. On one of the many occasions he was wounded, Nelson refused to allow attention to be paid to him before the others of the ship's crew awaiting the surgeon's attention. On another occasion, after the Battle of Copenhagen, and again unusually for the age, he visited the hospital in which his men lay wounded even before visiting Emma Hamilton, and took especial interest in them, giving their nurses a guinea each as a mark of especial encouragement in their duties.7

On the 21st of October 1805 the British fleet, after months of pursuit, met the French and Spanish forces under Admiral Villeneuve at sea off Cape Trafalgar. The British, in two lines according to Nelson's instructions, raced to intersect the enemy's line of battle. In the late morning Nelson directed his famous signal be hoisted. The flag lieutenant suggested a more economical hoist of 12 flags, and therefore the word "confides" was changed to "expects". The rolled flags raced to the masthead of Victory and snapped open: "England expects every man will do his duty". At 11.45 the battle was joined. On Victory the band played "Rule Britannia" and "Britons Strike Home" as followed by Téméraire and Neptune. The ship's log records. "Partial firing continued until 4.30, when a victory having been reported to the Right Honourable Lord Viscount Nelson KB and Commander in Chief, he then died of his wound."

While Australia is perhaps taking new directions, surely we must remember the origins of the Royal Australian Navy, born before the First World War and initiated in fire and blood under the aegis of the British Navy. We have inherited its uniforms, its ranks, its tactics and techniques. Although we now learn from and teach other navies, and our ships are a mixture of our own design and the best from around the world, surely we must take the most from our history as we continue to build this force. Nelson is part of our tradition; part of our past, and he and all that was his should never be forgotten. The Tradition of Trafalgar Night and its toast - "To the Immortal Memory" should be reinstated.

NOTES
1. Trafalgar Night seems to have disappeared from many wardrooms from about 1993, perhaps in a quest for increased national identity.
2. Sailors were subject to the will of their officers and Captain, rather than a set of understood rules. A Captain was required to read at compulsory Sunday Service the Articles of War, which literally gave him power of life and death over his sailors—officers were more formally court-martialled. A sadistic or embittered Captain could make life for his lower deck crew a living hell: ordering floggings, placing in irons a harsh punishment on board a constantly moving ship—hangings for serious offences such as mutiny or striking an officer or a variety of other punishments. (See John Winton's Hymn for the Life of a Sailor for a comprehensive description of life in the Victorian Navy and how the grim and often unfair discipline of Nelson's and the Victorian Navy gave way to a system of better management.)
3. The rank structure of the British Navy in those years employed Lieutenants of varying seniority as the ship's commissioned officers. The second-in-command (especially if the Captain fell in battle) was known as the First Lieutenant, even if the position of the ship's commander was held by a Lieutenant, with other lieutenants following on in the command hierarchy as dictated by their promotion date to the rank as given in the Navy List. However, a Captain could assign duties as he wished, and a detested Lieutenant could be given very little or onerous duties. The position of Lieutenant Commander was not known and that of Commander was generally given to officers commanding ships that did not take part in the line of battle; i.e.: frigates, sloops, bomb-ketches and so on. A Post-Captain was one step above Commander, and meant its recipient commanded a line-of-battle ship and could mean he was actually in the post; i.e.: at sea, although he could hold the rank on land too. Promotion to full Captain meant one held the position irrespective of being at sea and meant that the Captain gradually ascended the Captain's list to become an Admiral.
4. It is not suggested however, that Nelson was a man of absolute virtue who was without personality traits others disliked. He
could be vain, was fiercely xenophobic, often sublimated everything else to his drive for success, and positively planned for personal glory; it is interesting to wonder if he carried out all of his more public acts of nobility out of intrinsic goodness or a thirst for publicity. His public love affair and eventual cohabitation with Emma Hamilton is another aspect of a career which is at once curious and fascinating.

5. One of Nelson’s earlier commands, the fourth rate 64-gun Agamemnon, which he was given in 1793, had on board a detachment of men from the 69th Foot Regiment; such soldiers serving as marines: a curious blend of sea-goers who could tail onto a sheet or man the capstan, but preserving step and other land-going soldierly habits all the while. Men from this regiment were later deployed on board Captain and accompanied Nelson in the boarding action; Nelson handing to one of them, William Fearney, the surrendered swords of the Spanish officers. It is said Nelson referred to them as “my old Agamemnons” – certainly the authoritative biographer Southey refers to them as “his old Agamemnons”.

6. Nelson, by comparison with many of his fellow Captains, was often merely logical: he did not have the eccentricities of many of his peers, some of whom dressed their gig crews somewhat strangely according to their personal taste; were hopeless drunkards, or simply dull. Although promotion was not purchased, as was the curious norm in the British Army, incompetent officers were not unusual, some having risen to their rank through patronage or semi-political plotting.

7. It should be noted that the British public had become to a certain extent largely inured to the brilliance of some of their officers. It was expected that British fleets would win against numerical odds, and a single-ship action (i.e. one frigate against another) was always expected to result in a victory; such an attitude persisted in the minds of “the mob” for years, and indeed in the minds of many of its captains: Captain Philip Broke in Shannon epitomised this attitude in 1813 against the United States ship Chesapeake. Although the expectation was somewhat deserved – the British Navy was then (and perhaps is now) the most expert naval force the world had ever seen; perhaps Nelson was simply insuring himself by actions such as these with the fickle crowds who could quite often influence the government.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Australians and Burma During World War II

By Andrew Selth, Department of Defence

In late August 1995, a group of Australian veterans returned to Burma, as one of the “pilgrimages” being made to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the ending of World War II. The main aim of this group was to visit the large Commonwealth War Graves Commission cemetery at Thanbyuzayat, site of a World War II Prisoner of War camp and the Burmese end of the infamous “death railway” from Thailand. While they were in Burma, the veterans also paid tribute to the thousands of other Australians who fought and suffered in the China-Burma-India (CBI) Theatre between 1941-1945. For, while the Bunna Campaign is usually seen as an exclusively British and Indian effort against the Japanese, some 7500 Australian servicemen and women also served there, in all three Services. Many never returned.

With its invasion by Japan in December 1941, Burma was thrust to the forefront of the Australian consciousness. The speed of the Japanese advance and the chaotic Allied retreat to India shocked Australians and heightened awareness of their own vulnerability. For the Japanese won a resounding victory. As James Lunt has put it:

In five months they had out-maneuvered, out-fought and out-marched an army no less well equipped than themselves. They had secured dominance in the jungle and in the air — the two elements vital for success when campaigning in Burma against a road-bound enemy. They had destroyed the myth on which so many European empires had been built, that in some way the white man is superior to all others.

By May 1942, when the last refugees and Allied soldiers from Burma reached India, Japan controlled South-East Asia, the South-West Pacific and much of China.

On two occasions before this occurred, however, London raised with Canberra the possibility of sending Australian troops to Burma. The first was in September 1939, when the British Government proposed that, if the Japanese did not “adopt an attitude of reserve towards the democratic countries”, and Australia was not itself threatened, then Australian troops might be sent to Burma to relieve British units there for active service against Germans in Europe. Australia was unable to assist, but it was not unsympathetic to the proposal. At the time, the government of Prime Minister John Curtin was anxious that the supply route along the “Burma Road” from Rangoon to China be kept open. Not only could its closures be interpreted as a sign of Allied weakness, but a Japanese victory in China could release Japanese forces for “adventures” elsewhere in the Pacific, possibly against Australia.

The second occasion was on 18 February 1942, three days after Singapore surrendered. Prime Minister Winston Churchill asked the Australian Government to divert the 7th Division AIF, then en route back to Australia from the Middle East, to Burma. By the time the Advisory War Council in Canberra met to discuss the question, however, Darwin had been bombed by the Japanese. An increasingly fearful Australian Government refused to make available either the 7th Division, or the 6th Division which was following it. Despite confirmation of this decision on 19 February, two days later Churchill ordered the 7th Division to change course for Rangoon, while he again appealed to Canberra to reconsider. United States President Franklin Roosevelt, anxious to keep open Allied links with China, added his weight to the request. The Curtin War Cabinet held firm, however, and twice more refused permission for the 7th Division to go to Burma. On 23 February Churchill finally accepted the Australian Government’s decision and the troop convoy was ordered to resume its homeward course.

As Raymond Callahan has pointed out, “Australian stubbornness may have saved Churchill from a second Singapore”. The implication of the telegrams exchanged between London and Canberra that February was that the entire 7th Australian Division was in the troop convoy. Yet it only contained one Brigade Group. Ships carrying the second Brigade only arrived in Bombay, 2,500 miles from Rangoon, on 19 February and were not ready to continue their journey until 26 February. Thus the Division could only have reached Rangoon piecemeal between 16 February and 6 March. It would have taken at least another week before it could have undertaken major combat operations. Yet Rangoon, and with it Burma, was effectively lost to the Japanese on 24 February. To add to the inevitable confusion that would have resulted had Churchill
won the argument, the 7th Division ships were not tactically loaded, nor had its men received any training in jungle warfare. Also, the Division Commander with part of his Headquarters was at that time steaming west from Java to Colombo. Clearly, any Australian landings in early 1942 would have been a complete disaster. These events, however, were not widely known until years later when Australian Foreign Minister Dr. H.V. Evatt was moved to correct a highly distorted account of events published by Winston Churchill.

There was one other attempt during World War II to send Australian troops to Burma. In December 1944 the Supreme Allied Commander of South-East Asia Command, Vice Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten, raised with General Douglas Macarthur the question of an Australian Division being made available to fight in Burma. Mountbatten feared that, as two Nationalist Chinese Divisions were being withdrawn to China, he would not have sufficient forces with which to reconquer Burma. In his reply, Macarthur stated that the Australian Army was fully integrated into the South-West Pacific Area (SWPA) and “comprised an essential part of current operations”. No Australian troops could be sent to Burma unless they were replaced by additional troops from the United States, something which was not contemplated. According to a record prepared by SWPA General Headquarters some months later:

“The matter had been discussed a number of times with Australians, including the Prime Minister, all of whom are bitterly opposed to the use of Australian troops elsewhere than in the SWPA”.

Macarthur advised Mountbatten that the matter be dropped “as quietly as possible” in order to avoid an adverse reaction by the Australian public. The matter does not appear to have been raised again.

To most people in Australia during the war, Burma was not the main focus of their attention. Developments in the South-West Pacific Area were of more immediate concern. If Australians thought of Burma at all, their perceptions were shaped largely by the official news releases and propaganda films issued on behalf of South-East Asia Command. Understandably, these concentrated on the Allied forces, the Japanese enemy and the bitter fighting between them. In some respects, the actual location of the battles was incidental. Little attention was given to other developments in Burma, where the country’s nationalist leaders had been installed as a puppet government by the Japanese. It was still possible, however, for people in Australia to glean from official despatches, and from other first hand reports, something of Burma itself. Australian war correspondents, like George Johnston of the Argus, Roderick McDonald of the Sydney Morning Herald and Wilfred Burchett of the Daily Express, all sent back stories and wrote books about their experiences in and around Burma, which were published or distributed within Australia. While sometimes unimpressive as literature, they nevertheless gave Australians a sense of Burma as a place other than just as an area of military operations.

George Johnston in particular contributed to a greater understanding of Burma and its people. While in the CBI Theatre, Johnston wrote more than 150 articles, not just on the war itself but on subjects like the Kachin hill tribes, Burmese national pride, the local scenery and the effects of the monsoon on the fighting. As Alison Bronowski has written:

“...his syndicated accounts from New Guinea, China, Burma, and India brought these places to life in the minds of many Australians who had scarcely heard of them — more than his official dispatches, which tended to contribute to the camouflage effort”.

Johnston’s articles later formed the basis of a book, entitled Journey Through Tomorrow. In it, he shows considerable sympathy for the plight of the Burmese people and anger at the wanton destruction of their culture. Yet, for all his insights and worldly cynicism, Johnston also helped perpetuate the romantic image of Burma that was commonly held in Australia before the war.

It is a rueful thing, to me, [he wrote] that the only memories I have of Burma are memories of war. I know nothing of the real Burma, this lovely, placid land of charming, beautiful people, the Burma that the Burmese themselves call Shwey Daw Pyee, “the Golden Land”.

In one revealing passage, in which he describes his first sight of Mandalay, Johnston’s images are pure Kipling, whose poem “Mandalay” he constantly invokes.

Wilfred Burchett seems to have made an impact of a different kind. He was sent to Burma by the Daily Express in January 1942 to cover the Japanese invasion. According to Phillip Knightley, he was not very successful in completing this appointed task, but was responsible for encouraging the British in Burma to request the use of Nationalist Chinese troops to help fight the Japanese. Burchett then walked out to India as part of the Allied retreat. After a period in China, he returned to India, where he was to develop a close relationship with the eccentric Major General Orde Wingate, founder of the Chindit Long Range Penetration Groups. Indeed, it could be claimed that
Burchett's subsequent book and news stories about Wingate were largely responsible for the highly inflated image of the General that was to develop at that time.

In addition to official news releases and personal accounts by war correspondents, the Australian public were able to form images of Burma from pictorial supplements in Australian newspapers and popular magazines like *Pix*. There were often maps of various campaigns, showing the geography of the CBI Theatre; in some detail. Also, throughout the war, these and other magazines (like *The War Illustrated* from Britain) showed scenes of Burma which, if nothing else, confirmed the well established perception of Burma as a beautiful but rather strange and primitive country. Trained elephants helping to load American transport aircraft, and Chindits marching past the *chinthe* statues depicted on their shoulder patches, were typical fare. These stereotypes were further strengthened by the rash of memoirs and novels about war-time Burma which were published in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

Thanks largely to the 14th Army under Lieutenant General William Slim, Burma was eventually re-won by the Allies, but only after the longest campaign fought anywhere during World War II. Since then, to most Australians Burma has come to mean the infamous “death railway” from Thailand. In the circumstances this is hardly surprising. In May 1942, 3000 Australian Prisoners of War (POWs) were formed into ‘A’ Force and sent to Burma from Singapore, to provide labour for the construction of an airfield at Tavoy. In September 1942 they were shifted to Thanbyuzayat, some 240 kilometres to the north. There, together with other Allied prisoners and Asian labourers, they were put to work building a railway line over Three Pagodas Pass, to link Burma with the Siam-Malaya railway system. In October they were joined by Williams Force (884 men) and Black Force (593 men) who had been shipped to Burma from Java. Group Five (consisting of 385 Australians commanded by Major L.J. Robertson) arrived from Java in January 1943, making a total strength of Australian POWs in southern Burma of 4851 men.

By the time the railway project was completed in November 1943, 771 Australian POWs (or nearly 16 per cent of those on the Burma side of the border) had died from disease, malnutrition or the brutality of their Japanese and Korean guards. Casualties among the POWs working on the railway in Thailand were even higher. These figures do not take into account the deaths among the 270,000 conscripted labourers drawn principally from Burma, Thailand and Malaya, which some authorities place at 72,000 or more.

In addition to the POWs, some 7,500 Australians from all three Services took part in the Burma campaign which, as Louis Allen has written, was arguably the war’s fiercest and most varied, in both terrain and styles of fighting. Except for some 6100 members of the Royal Australian Navy, however, the Australians who fought in the CBI Theatre took part as members of British or other Commonwealth units, and not as separate Australian formations. By the end of the war, for example, there were over 1300 Australian airmen in the CBI theatre, scattered among more than 60 Royal Air Force units. Also, 48 Australian soldiers formed part of British Military Mission 204, which trained in Burma for six months before being sent into China in 1942 to teach Nationalist Chinese soldiers the elements of guerrilla warfare.

The Burma Campaign is now largely forgotten, but there are three Commonwealth War Graves Commission cemeteries in Burma. In addition to the cemetery at Thanbyuzayat, there is a small cemetery in central Rangoon and a much larger one at Htaukkyan, just north of the capital. All three memorials testify to the sacrifices made by Australian servicemen and women in the effort to free Burma from the Japanese, or to survive their long imprisonment there by them. In 1989, after a campaign almost as long as the war itself, local veterans of the CBI Theatre managed to have “Burma” added to the names of other Australian campaigns which are listed on the cloister walls of the Australian War Memorial in Canberra. It is a fitting tribute to those Australians who were part of that long campaign.

NOTES


8. General Headquarters SWPA, Historical Division, Note: 'Employment of AIF Division in Burma without South East Asia Command', File: 'Proposal to Use AIF Division in Burma', Australian Archives MP1587/1, 50K.

9. Ibid.


15. Phillip Knightley, 'Cracking the Jap: Burchett on World War Two', in Ben Kieman (ed), Burchett Reporting the Other Side of the World, Quartet Books, London, 1986, pp. 3-12. Despite Knightley's claim, the decision to use Nationalist Chinese troops to help defend Burma was hardly one which would have depended on the advice of an inexperienced young journalist.


17. "Chindit" is a corruption of the Burmese word chinthe. These are lion-like creatures, large statues of which guard the entrances of pagodas to keep away evil spirits. The chinthe was adopted as the emblem of Orde Wingate's Long Range Penetration Groups.

18. One such novelist was Nevil Shute, who wrote The Chequer Board, William Heinemann, London, 1947. While often described as an Australian, Shute did not in fact emigrate from Britain until 1948. The Australian author Jon Cleary also wrote a novel about wartime Burma, but it was not published until much later; See Jon Cleary, Forests of the Night, Collins, London, 1963.


22. All together 330,000 workers, including 61,000 POWs, were employed on the railway. About 13,000 were Australians, of whom 2815 died, See Wigmore, p. 588; and McCormack and Nelson, p. 161.

23. Louis Allen, Burma: The Longest War, 1941-1945, Dent and Sons, London, 1984. No precise figure is available for the number of Australian servicemen and women who took part in the Burma Campaign. 7447 were awarded the Burma Star medal, or the Burma Clasp to the Pacific Star. These decorations, however, were also awarded to people who fought in China, parts of eastern India and even Malaya (in specified areas and between certain dates). See R.D. Williams, Medals To Australia, Pocket Book Publications, Dubbo, 1990, pp. 33-34.


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"HELLUVA PELICAN"

Published by Aerolian Publications, Australia, 1996

The history, recovery and restoration of a USAAF Fifth Air

"Helluva Pelican" traces the complete wartime and contemporary history of the most intact
WW2 aviation relic ever recovered from the Pacific. To reconstruct the aircraft's history in its
entirety the author, who participated in the 1984 recovery operation, interviewed the aircraft's
surviving pilot and drew on more than 160 first-hand sources including his own diary kept during
the recovery. Above all, "Helluva Pelican" is aviation nostalgia for anyone with more than
passing interest in the 1942-45 Pacific War.

16 April 1944... a late afternoon weather front seals off New Guinea's Markham Valley to
a returning formation of USAAF bombers and fighters. Thirty-seven aircraft are forced-landed,
destroyed or disappear on what the men of the Fifth Air Force would come to call Black Sunday.
One of them is a Douglas A-20G Havoc twin-engined bomber, which puts down into an isolated
jungle tract. Its two crew take fifteen days to evade carnivores and retreating Japanese to make
safety. October 1984... a five-man recovery team from the Royal Australian Air Force are
dropped into a clearing by Chinook helicopter to recover the aircraft. In a coincidence of history,
the gremlin-ridden salvage operation also takes fifteen days. Due to political and economic
factors the aircraft is not restored until April 1996. The book contains rare photos and seven
appendices.

Cost is $20.00 – copies can be obtained by sending cheque to:
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Republic of Fiji
THE DUAL FUNCTION OF THE INDONESIAN ARMED FORCES. MILITARY POLITICS IN INDONESIA by Ian MacFarling, Australian Defence Studies Centre, 241 pages.
Reviewed by Lieutenant Colonel N. Sproles, (Retired).

This book studies the relationship between the Indonesian Armed Forces (ABRI) and the Indonesian political system through the dual functions, or dwi fungsi, of internal security and political involvement. The thesis is that dwi fungsi is in reality one function, namely that of national stability. The author, Wing Commander Ian MacFarling, is a serving RAAF officer and is a visiting military fellow at ADFA.

The early part of the book gives a history of the development of ABRI from colonial times, through the Japanese occupation during World War II up to the present. ABRI’s rationale for claiming a right to participate in politics is explained as stemming from its involvement in combat operations against the Dutch and British; in quelling subsequent insurrection and because its predecessor organisations were, at one time, the only government in many parts of Indonesia. This is followed by a history of the events surrounding the communist uprising of 30 September 1965 and its suppression by the Army. This led to the consolidation of the armed forces into what we now know as ABRI with the Army as the most influential service. By using and interpreting both the law and the five basic principles of Pancasila, the state ideology, ABRI was able to define its own role in Indonesian society and so develop dwi fungsi. The chapter on Pancasila, gives a valuable insight into the way of Indonesian thinking and is a useful reminder that, as Westerners, we are from different cultures each marching to the beat of a different drummer. Those who criticise the Indonesian way of doing things may need to remember that there are different value systems at play and who can say which one is the better? This chapter reveals that there is a difference between theory and practice of Pancasila just as there is in the application of our Western democratic values so in some ways we do have something in common! Finally the book looks at a typical ABRI officer and his or her perception of ABRI’s role in Indonesian society.

We are told that the book is an extension of a doctoral thesis but, on reading the book, the reader gets an impression that it may have been compiled from several papers. The flow of the book is not always smooth and, to borrow a software engineering term, it does not feel “seamless”. A legacy of the academic background can be seen in the extensive end notes but it is tedious continually having to refer to them. In some chapters, there is a page of notes for each three pages of main text and it would be an improvement if some of the material could be incorporated instead into the main text as a means of reducing the size of these end notes. Despite its academic heritage, the book is written in plain English which is easy to digest and the author avoids the obtuse language some academics consider is a necessary sign of rigorous argument. The tables and diagrams used are informative and understandable although the maps used are no more than outlines. If the reader wishes to locate towns where events took place, access to a good atlas is necessary. The photos and brief biographies of key players is of great benefit but one wonders at the relevance of a series of photos of Indonesian POWs captured by the Australian Army during Confrontation.

Appendix I discusses professionalism and praetorianism in detail, matters which are briefly discussed in the introductory chapter along with a reference to the Appendix. When reading the Appendix, we are told that it was originally at the beginning and I feel that it should have remained there as the material in the introductory chapter is not sufficient to give the reader a full appreciation of the author’s argument in the latter stages of the book. I would recommend that the appendix be read at the beginning rather than at the end of the book.

The book is full of singkatan, or acronyms, which is an inevitable result of writing anything on Indonesia. For an Indonesian speaker, cracking an unfamiliar singkatan is as much fun as solving a cryptic crossword but it can be hard going for those not familiar with the language or the culture. However the author has fully explained each singkatan and usually provides an English translation of the Bahasa Indonesia expansion but a glossary would be helpful to help the reader keep track of them throughout the text.

Having read the book, questions arise such as: what did the Dutch do about establishing a strong indigenous public service (probably they did nothing); if such a service existed, would it have been able to fill the vacuum which ABRI’s predecessor
organisations filled following independence: would Indonesia’s history be different if they did; what do the ordinary Indonesians think of all this? It was not the intention of this book to address these questions but it does cause the reader to think about these issues and, in good academic tradition, the author provides a comprehensive bibliography to enable the search to be pursued. For those wishing to pursue the reasons for Sukarno’s flirtation with the Indonesian Communist party, Ian MacFarling even provides a recommended reading list.

I spent just over two years in an ARBRI headquarters under the Defence Co-operation Program and in that time I assimilated much about Indonesian life and ARBRI but there were many unanswered or partly unanswered questions which I brought back with me. I found myself saying “Aha – that is why such and such is so!” on many occasions and I only wish that I had available to me a book such as this before I went to Indonesia. While the topic of the book is very narrow as befits a doctoral thesis, along the way Ian MacFarling provides a good overview of Indonesian history and politics since World War II. The general reader will find as much of interest here as in the detailed discussion of dwi fungsi. This book is therefore not only a valuable resource for the researcher but is one which I would recommend to anyone wishing to develop a background knowledge of post revolutionary Indonesia and the make up of its political system.


Reviewed by Dr. Frank Cain, History Department, University of New South Wales College, ADFA, Canberra.

Dr Ross originally commenced writing this book as a means of explaining how the Australian Government became involved in munitions manufacturing from the turn of the century until the end of the Second World War. The author soon found that the munitions industry formed an integral part of Australia’s manufacturing industry and that this industry in turn owed its origins to the policies of state governments before Federation (and to the Commonwealth Government thereafter) in establishing tariffs on imports of manufactured goods. This policy helped build an Australian-wide industrial base and it encouraged the development of local skills. It led to increased employment opportunities and it provided an industrial manufacturing base for exports to countries in our region. An important benefit of this economic policy was that it provided a good income for government which was used for national purposes including the establishment of Australia’s armed forces (together with a naval fleet) and a modern ammunition factory at Lithgow.

Dr Ross explores this larger economic view of the Australian economy and demonstrates how the then protected economy provided the suitable background for the Government to develop a range of industries that would be brought on stream in the years before the Second World War broke out. Andrew Ross demonstrates in this book that were it not for the existence of this protected Australian economy the Commonwealth Government would have had insuperable difficulties in establishing a locally based munitions industry and could not have contributed to the Allied war effort to the degree that it did. The book is recommended reading to all economics students as an antidote to the prevailing fashion in Australian economics departments which preach belief in the virtues of Adam Smith’s free trade notions.

The first three chapters of Dr Ross’s book describe the development of the secondary industry in Australia during the 1920s in an era when new technologies was being developed overseas and from which Australia faced the risk of being excluded. These industries covered the new technologies of telecommunications, industrial chemical production, automobile manufacturing, electrical generating industries, electrical consumer goods manufacturing, and last but not least, aircraft manufacturing. The establishment of these industries was to be of significant importance in maintaining a viable munitions industry and the capacity for Australia to establish its own new high technology wartime industries.

The author outlines the strategy which the Government adopted in an effort to have these new industries established in Australia. Such tactics including offering to introduce a protective tariff to a manufacturer as means for persuading that firm to establish a manufacturing plant in Australia or having a government department such as the Australian telephone section of the PMG’s Department or the Munitions Supply Board initiate planning for the possible establishment of a small manufacturing plant to undertake production of a commodity for which the overseas manufacturer was reluctant to establish a local factory. Ross shows that by using shrewd economic policy, the Government was able to attract essential wartime industries to Australia well before the war and that the Munitions Department was able
to plan for huge increases in production of military material from 1936. Shadow factories were established before the war commenced and skeleton staffs employed for the day when the expanded wartime munitions production was to be put in hand.

In all these proposals to have Australia expand its industrial manufacturing base, the Government had to ensure that British industry and the British Government were not put off-side. Most of Australia's primary production export was sold to Britain or marketed through British firms. The new factories in Australia would displace British manufactured goods either by compelling the British manufacturer to establish a small plant in Australia or by having a competing American manufacturer establish a local factory. Dr. Ross explains how the Government managed to prevent the British from discriminating against Australia's agricultural production while the British Government was trying to link itself to the US into a trans-Atlantic trading arrangement. This would have operated to the disadvantage of Australian agricultural exports, but the war commenced before the British realised that they were losing exports to Australia through the Federal Government's policy of enlarging our own industrial base.

One measure that gave offence to the British aircraft industry was the action of the Prime Minister, Joe Lyons, in having the Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation established in Melbourne in order to build the American aircraft, the Wirraway, in 1936. That aircraft was rapidly becoming obsolete, but its single-row Wasp engine, also manufactured in Melbourne, had a great potential because another row of cylinders could be added to make it the twin-row engine thereby doubling its capacity. This engine was then used to power the second generation of aircraft to be manufactured in Australia. Dr. Ross argues that these important decisions to establish an aircraft industry were driven by Joe Lyons, regarded by many as a dull and disloyal politician, and Richard Casey, whom his Party continually dismissed as a dilettante. The author argues that Australia owes these men a significant tribute for their foresight in establishing this essential war industry. The Corporation represented one of the earliest attempts to amalgamate US and Australian companies in the manufacturing of military aircraft.

The British were placated in 1939 by the Government agreeing to manufacture the Bristol Aircraft Corporation's Beaufort bomber through the Aircraft Production Commission led by Harold Clapp, Commissioner of Victorian Railways. The author describes in telling detail how whatever could go wrong went wrong in this enterprise. The British company was mainly at fault having little idea of how it should itself manufacture this aircraft which was rapidly becoming obsolete in any case. The British engines were impracticable, but the locally built twin-row Wasp engines saved the day and these were fitted to the Beaufort. Over 700 Beauforts and 345 Beaufighters were built in Melbourne and while they were by no means front-line aircraft, they led to the development of high tech industries and the skilling of thousands of Australian workers. They could not have turned the Japanese tide if Australia was left on its own to fight, but the project meant that we did not have to sit idly by waiting for the US to parcel-out what lend-lease aircraft and other equipment it might decide to give us during the course of the war.

Dr. Ross also describes how the RAAF entered the field for producing the Lancaster bomber in November 1943 partly as a measure for affording Australia some long-term strategic influence in post-war years. General Douglas MacArthur, in his normal bossy fashion, was firmly opposed to the proposal. The Curtin Government refused to give way on this issue to the American Caesar and circumvented MacArthur's refusal to supply lend-lease machine tools to manufacture the Rolls Royce Merlin engines by importing British machine tools. It is a good illustration of how a small country can occasionally challenge the more powerful and dominating partner and somehow survive.

This 14-chapter book explores a huge range of topics relating to personalities, industrial-military relations, technology, the economy, international politics, general incompetence at high civil and military administrative levels and how to win a war when starting about 10 years behind the main players. One episode that has not been fully documented hitherto is the history of the Australian-built tank. None other than the British officer, then CGS of the army, Lieutenant General Squires, urged in October 1939 the need for Australia to have an armoured fighting vehicle (AFV) to meet the Japanese counterpart should the Japanese land in Australia. Nothing came of that and when the army approached the Department of Munitions to produce a tank in June 1940, the army was confused about the specifications for such a vehicle. The army floundered about for years unable to give a clear indication of what type of tank it required. As Ross explains, the army's real task was for a generally light tank to face the Japanese tank of 10 tons with armour of 10mm and a 37mm gun. The army's experts were diverted by images of producing a tank to face the German Panzers. In the light of the
army’s internal confusion about what AFV it required, it was remarkable that the Department of Munitions was able to produce its first prototype, the AC1, in 1942. General Blamey did not like it and did nothing to ensure that his armour experts clarified their ideas on what was required. There was a promise that US tanks would soon arrive in Australia, but there was no guarantee about the numbers that would be supplied. Ignoring the fact that it was the Japanese tank that would set the Australian AFV parameters, further prototypes, the AC2 and the AC3 (this one code named “Thunderbolt”) were produced by 1943 at the army’s request by the Department of Munitions. Another tank model, the AC4, was on the drawing board, but still the army was uncertain of what it actually wanted. Ross demonstrates that much of the army’s obstructionism arose from its several technical branches seeking to take control of tank production. On 1 July 1943 the army informed the Government that it no longer needed an Australian-made tank and that it would take delivery of the M4 Sherman tank from the US. These deliveries were not to occur, but the Government accepted the army’s request at its face value and stopped production. In all 66 AC1 and one AC3 had been produced by that time.

Dr Ross adds a sequel to this sorry tank-tale. The army was forced to put its house in order on this matter of giving contradictory instructions on design and specifications to production departments. Major General L.E. Beavis was put in charge of these activities and by using tested army bureaucratic tactics, sidelined various people and amalgamated the sections in the design and specifications areas into one department under his control. Thereafter, the difficulties faced by the Department of Munitions in having to confront confused and contradictory instructions from the army diminished significantly.

The book will stimulate debate on the various arguments that Ross mounts. His point that Australia was not as naked and unarmed at the start of the Pacific War (as other Australian historians make out) will attract reactions. His closing chapter which suggests that the 12 Japanese divisions which the enemy planned to land in Australia could have been defeated by 8 AIF divisions, given their better Australian-made armaments and that they would be fighting on their home ground, will also attract argument. Dr Ross includes numerous statistical tables to support his many propositions and his opponents will have to produce more convincing sets of statistics to get the better of him.

The book was published by the Department of Industry Science and Technology, who now manage the quondam Munitions Department, as its contribution to the Australia Remembers campaign. It is certainly an excellent choice to celebrate the anniversary of the war’s end. It should be put in the hands of all sceptics of Australian nationalism and those economic theorists preaching about deregulation and who see no necessity to protect and maintain a significant Australian industrial base.