Regional Reactions to the Defence White Paper 2009
Reproduced from Australian Strategic Policy Institute’s online Strategic Policy Forum

The Pashtun Cultural Code: Pashtunwali
Lieutenant Colonel Jonathan Hawkins DSM and Bar, Australian Army

Peak Oil Theory: implications for Australia’s strategic outlook and the ADF
Dr Matthew Gray, Australian National University

Uniting the Tribes: managing the change to a joint health culture
Air Commodore Tracy Smart, RAAF

Clausewitz and a General Theory of War
Dr Andreas Herberg-Rothe, Assistant Professor, University of Applied Science, Fulda (Germany)

Finding Australia’s Role in a Collapsed North Korean State
Captain Jonathan Stafford, US Army

First to Fight: an inside view of the US Marine Corps
Review by Colonel Chris Field, Australian Army

Of Men v Machines: who knows what lurks in the hearts of man?
Lieutenant Colonel Nick Floyd, Australian Army

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Chairman’s Comments

Welcome to Australian Defence Force Journal Issue No. 180.

We conclude the year with a range of topics addressing contemporary military and broader geo-strategic issues. Readers should find interesting the regional viewpoints on the recent Defence White Paper, provided by courtesy of the Australian Strategic Policy Institute, as well as the article by Lieutenant Colonel Jonathan Hawkins on the cultural underpinnings of contemporary Afghanistan. The articles by Dr Matthew Gray on ‘peak oil’ and Captain Jonathan Stafford on regime collapse in North Korea are thought provoking analyses of high-risk scenarios that the authors would argue are already in train.

On the military side, the article by Air Commodore Tracy Smart argues the need for a truly joint, integrated ADF health capability. Dr Andreas Herberg-Rothe further refines his interpretation of Clausewitz, and Colonel Chris Field, in his review essay on First to Fight, concludes by questioning the comparative narrative for the ADF. The final article is a review essay by Lieutenant Colonel Nick Floyd on the employment of uninhabited aerial combat vehicles, adding to the discussion from last issue and complementing the adjoining book review by Dr Patrick Hew.

On the subject of book reviews, we are keen to hear from readers interested in joining the list of reviewers. We typically receive 4-5 new releases each month from publishers keen to have their books reviewed by the Journal. Reviewers get to keep the book, so it is a good way of adding to your professional library. If you are interested, please provide your contact details and your subject areas/speciality to the Editor at publications@defence.adc.edu.au

I am pleased to announce that Lieutenant Colonel Jonathan Hawkins, with his article ‘The Pashtun Cultural Code: Pashtunwali’, has been chosen to receive the $500 prize for best article in this issue. As advised previously, the next issue (for March/April 2010) is being themed on the subject of ‘joint professional military education’ and readers are encouraged to submit relevant articles by early January. Finally, I am pleased to advise that Air Commodore Mark Lax (Retd.), who was Editor of the Journal from 2007-08, has joined the Board of Management.

I hope you enjoy this final edition for 2009.

James Goldrick
Rear Admiral, RAN
Commander, Joint Education, Training and Warfare Command
Chairman of the Australian Defence Force Journal Board
Regional Reactions to the Defence White Paper 2009

Reproduced courtesy of the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI)

(see ASPI’s online Strategic Policy Forum, 'Regional reactions to the Australian Defence White Paper 2009', posted 21 September 2009 at www.aspi.org.au)

All views are the authors’ and do not necessarily reflect those of their organisation or country.

Introduction

Dr Rod Lyon, Director, Strategy and International Program, ASPI

In early May, the Prime Minister released Australia’s 2009 Defence White Paper in Sydney, on board HMAS Stuart at Garden Island. The paper, Defending Australia in the Asia Pacific Century: Force 2030, presents a detailed statement of Australian strategic policy in a complex international and regional security environment.

While the White Paper has attracted its fair share of commentary within Australia, ASPI wanted to solicit a range of opinions from regional commentators and so provide some insights into how the White Paper is being viewed around the region. To this end, we contracted a small collection of prominent strategic analysts from around the region to send us their views. Our contributors include:

- Rizal Sukma from the Centre for Strategic and International Studies in Indonesia
- Teruhiko Fukushima from Japan’s National Defence Academy
- Zhang Chun from China’s Shanghai Institute of International Studies
- Uday Bhaskar from India’s National Maritime Foundation
- See Seng Tan from the Rajaratnam School of International Studies in Singapore
- Thomas-Durell Young from the US Naval Postgraduate School, and
- Lance Beath from the Centre for Strategic Studies in New Zealand.

Like all Defence White papers, the current one runs the risk of offending some and pleasing others. In such a complex environment, it even runs the risk of puzzling some, despite Australia’s best intentions of promoting the ideas of transparency and openness about
strategic policy planning. In the contributions to this Strategic Policy Forum, readers will find an interesting range of views and thoughts from a talented pool of regional strategic analysts. That range of views is a confirmation of the old adage that White Papers have many audiences.

In all cases, we think the contributions are thoughtful and engaging, and we thank our contributors for their efforts. But it would be wise for readers not to take the contributions as the defining word on each country’s ‘national perspective’ on the White Paper. Each contributor has essentially given us a personal view about the paper. In all countries, there are probably multiple views about that document. And our authors are not officials commenting on behalf of their governments but academics and analysts expressing their own thoughts. Still, we are pleased to present here a set of ‘regional perspectives’ on this year’s White Paper.

An Indonesian perspective

Rizal Sukma, Executive Director, Centre for Strategic and International Studies, Jakarta, Indonesia

Indonesia’s reaction to the release of Australia’s latest Defence White Paper (DWP 2009), Defending Australia in the Asia-Pacific Century: Force 2030, is a curious one. Unlike previous releases, the document did not attract much discussion among Indonesian officials, defence analysts or Australia watchers. Media reports on the document have also been sparse, focusing primarily on the event when the document was officially released, rather than on the document itself.

The only official statement came from Minister of Defense, Juwono Sudarsono, who confirmed that Indonesia is not worried about Australia’s plan to boost its defence capability. He even maintained that the plan is ‘natural’ and ‘will not threaten regional stability’. In the absence of public reactions from others in Indonesia, Minister Sudarsono’s views suggest, overall, a positive reaction to Australia’s DWP 2009.

What explains that reaction from Indonesia and the absence of a more wide-ranging debate about this latest iteration of Australian strategic policy? Several reasons might have contributed. First, the latest White Paper views Indonesia in a much more positive light—the first time that an Australian DWP has done so. It assesses that ‘Indonesia will continue to evolve as a stable democratic state with improved social cohesion’. More importantly, the DWP 2009 also recognises Indonesia as ‘a strong partner’ for Australia.

Second, the DWP was released after a time when the relationship between Indonesia and Australia had experienced a substantial improvement. Bilateral relations between the two countries, which grew stronger in the wake of the Bali bombings in October 2002, were consolidated further with Australia’s support for the reconstruction of Aceh since 2005 and the ratification of the Lombok Treaty on Security Cooperation in 2008. More importantly, since the election of Kevin Rudd as Prime Minister, Indonesia has been determined to transform its relations with Australia into an enduring partnership.
Third, the position of Indonesia as a source of problems or threats to Australia has been apparently replaced in this DWP by China. Within this context, the plan to significantly upgrade Australia’s defence capability detailed in the DWP is not seen in Jakarta as being directed against Indonesia. Judging from the fact that Indonesia’s perceptions of China are still characterised by persistent ambiguity, Indonesian elites seem to hold ‘a degree of understanding’ about the defence upgrade plans.

However, the place of China in the DWP has also caught the critical eye of Minister Sudarsono. He believed that the China factor had been exaggerated in the DWP 2009. ‘If you look at China’s internal problems’, he said, ‘I wouldn’t worry too much about their so-called military rise’. Despite those reservations, Minister Sudarsono acknowledged that, in light of the ‘recalibration’ of the US military presence in the Asia-Pacific, Australia’s plan to strengthen its naval strike force with extra submarines and frigates was justified (The Age, 27 May 2009).

Still, Minister Sudarsono’s remarks about China’s place in the DWP point to an unspoken question in some Indonesian minds about the real reasons behind the plan to significantly boost Australian defence capability. While real security threats to Australia come from non-traditional sources—such as people smuggling, refugees and internal conflicts in the immediate neighbourhood—one would be hard-pressed to understand why it needs to boost its warfighting capability by acquiring 12 new submarines, eight new frigates and 100 F-35 JSF.

Indeed, it is rather hard to grasp Australia’s real intention contained in this defence policy document. The language is cautious and measured but at times registers a degree of ambivalence. For example, while the DWP believes that US primacy will continue at least until 2030, it also implicitly believes that the US will be increasingly tested and challenged ‘as other powers rise’. And, according to the DWP 2009, the ‘rising power’ with the greatest potential to challenge the US is none other than China.

What matters most to Indonesia is that the DWP 2009 provides a stronger foundation for Indonesia and Australia to work more closely in addressing regional security issues. The DWP clearly recognises and advocates the need to promote shared security interests between the two countries. One such shared security interest is the imperative of preventing the emergence of ‘a security environment dominated by any regional power or powers’. In that context, Indonesia, Australia and also South Korea, need to start working on a new regional security architecture that would prevent any power or powers from coercing and dominating others in the Asia-Pacific.
As a Tokyo-based 'Australia watcher', I was a bit surprised that the weight given to Japan in the 2009 Defence White Paper (DWP) was larger than I expected. Paragraph 4.21, for example, raises a concern that without the reliance on the US alliance, Japan's 'strategic outlook would be dramatically different and it would be compelled to re-examine its strategic posture and capabilities'. On the other hand, paragraph 11.13 hails Japan as 'a critical strategic partner in our region' and advocates a more active contribution by Japan both to 'the security and reconstruction of fragile states' and to humanitarian assistance, disaster relief and peacekeeping operations.

These remarks sound to me like the Rudd Government's hidden messages to Japan: 'you may well feel more deserted with the Obama administration than its predecessor. With North Korea's missile threat looking imminent, you may be enticed to rush into strengthening your military build-up, adopting a strategy of pre-emptive strikes or even considering development of nuclear weapons. But don't be so reckless. It will pay more not only for yourself but also for the Asia-Pacific, including Australia, if we can work together more closely towards regional security cooperation, especially for the fragile states in the Pacific'.

Kevin Rudd's Labor predecessor, Paul Keating, has long warned against the possibility of Japan developing nuclear weapons. It is interesting to point out that Keating and Rudd share much in common in advocating closer regional cooperation and promoting Australia-Japan security exchanges and cooperation. Both the Keating and Rudd prime ministerial periods have also been the ones when North Korea has demonstrated its nuclear weapons and missile programs. But the growing unpopularity of the long-ruling Liberal Democratic Party and the resultant political unpredictability were such that Japan could not handle those crises in an effective manner. Under such circumstances, Japanese voters—who have long been indulged in sentimental pacifism and not well-trained in strategic thinking—may well find the hawkish nationalists' propaganda for nuclear armament more seductive.

Any sign of a nuclear weapons program by Japan would surely provoke extremely harsh reactions not only from North Korea and China but also from South Korea and even the US. This is a situation most likely to cause the sort of 'miscalculation' which may trigger a 'growing confrontation' between the major powers in the region, as indicated in the DWP, paragraph 4.19. It is intriguing to note this judgment is placed only two paragraphs before the reference to the concern about Japan without the US alliance. Growing tension in Northeast Asia would distract the US—and other friends—from Australia's more immediate concerns. Then the worst nightmare for Canberra would be simultaneous crises of instability in the fragile South Pacific states, which Australia would have to tackle almost single-handedly.

That may be why DWP gives special reference to Japan as a 'critical strategic partner'. Rudd's addresses on the Asia-Pacific community proposal carry a similar tone. I interpret these messages as follows: 'You (Japan) can expect far better strategic benefits from security cooperation with Australia than from reckless unilateral actions. Security cooperation will broaden your capabilities to tackle non-traditional threats. It will help promote mutual
confidence building in the region now that South Korea, your closest neighbour, has not only concluded with us a document similar to the 2007 Joint Declaration between Australia and Japan but also participated in the Proliferation Security Initiative. Your peace-building efforts in the region will be highly appreciated and will increase the prospects for Japan eventually attaining permanent membership in the UN Security Council. So let’s turn our eyes to not only Asia but also the Pacific. That will help us a lot too.

Some may wonder whether the newly-elected Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), under Yukio Hatoyama, will listen to the DWP’s messages. Its prospective coalition partner, the Social Democratic Party, persists in purely pacifist lines, advocating immediate withdrawal of the Maritime Self Defense Force from the refuelling mission in the Indian Ocean and the anti-piracy patrols off Somalia. DPJ’s election manifesto is somewhat more ambiguous about those issues. With North Korea’s missile threat still intact, however, it is unlikely that the Hatoyama government would dissociate itself from the US and other security partners in the region.

Japanese voters have recently experienced a change of government. The onus is now on the DPJ to explain—sincerely and in plain language—why the government needs to follow such foreign and defence policies. The problem is that despite the transformation of the political scene, strategic thinking has not matured enough in Japan’s domestic circles to allow a proper grasp of international circumstances and an appreciation of the real benefits of promoting security cooperation with Australia. Such cooperation is still typically seen just as an attachment to the American alliance—a point argued frequently by leftist critics. Tackling this problem will be a challenging but exciting task.

Rebuilding middle power leadership for Australia

Dr Chun Zhang, research fellow, Shanghai Institute for International Studies, Shanghai, China

The 2009 Australian Defence White Paper has raised fundamental questions about what role Australia will play in the future and how to balance its relationship with China, the potential great power, and the US, the current great power. These questions are common for most of the middle powers that once played a leading role in the Cold War period. Within the context of a transformational international system, middle powers are finding new opportunities to rebuild their leadership roles. As far as Australia is concerned, the White Paper is the most recent effort.

Heroes emerge in troubled times

Since the end of the Cold War, we have witnessed important shifts in the international system, namely: the overflow of various crises, from national to international and from traditional to non-traditional; changes in the distribution of global power, especially the rise of China and other emerging powers, while the US has faced a range of troubles; and, most fundamentally, the transformation of the Westphalian system itself, facilitated by the rise of non-state actors. Moreover, since the onset of these troubled times, those once-glorious ‘middle powers’, like
Australia, have lost the privilege of acting as balancers between large and small, between East and West, and between developed and developing.

For the military, however, trouble means opportunity. That’s why the 2009 Australian Defence White Paper emphasises various threats, for example, terrorism, power transition, state fragility, global financial crisis and climate change. To justify increased defence spending, the White Paper highlights the new characteristics of crises, including their ready transmission from the traditional to the non-traditional security field, their durability and their transnational nature.

Thus the troubled times ask for a stronger military force and a leading role for Australia at both regional and global levels. Or in other words, they ask for rebuilding of Australian middle-power leadership.

**China as the perceived threat**

Unfortunately, it’s simply a case of old wine in new bottles. Identifying new threats, the White Paper proposes old resolutions. First of all, it differentiates the future Australian strategy at four levels: the domestic, the sub-regional (or neighbour areas), the regional (Asia) and the global level.

More importantly, it identifies the rise of China as the main source of threat. The White Paper argues that ‘China by 2030 will be the strongest Asian military power, … its military modernisation will be increasingly characterised by the development of power projection capabilities’. It also notes that ‘[t]he pace, scope and structure of China’s military modernisation have the potential to give its neighbours cause for concern’.

As Ric Smith of the Lowy Institute for International Policy argues, since 1968 a ‘China consensus’ has developed in the Australian military community that China’s rise is the best justification for increasing defence spending. Even as that community has embraced the views that China’s first priority is economic growth and that the nature of China’s growth locks it into interdependency with the global economy, it has worried that China’s economic growth will change regional security and strategic relativities.

**US as ally and final resort**

Although it recognises that a power transition from the Atlantic to the Asia-Pacific is underway, the White Paper still adheres to an old and conservative approach as to how to deal with and respond to this process. It proposes relying on Australia’s special relationship with the US to balance against the rise of China.

The White Paper believes that Australia’s alliance with the US—the ANZUS alliance—is still its ‘most important defence relationship’. Indeed, Australia traditionally has enjoyed a close alliance relationship with the US, a relationship that some have called another ‘special
relationship’, similar to the US-British special relationship. Thus, like the traditional logic of using the rise of China as justification for increasing defence spending, this special relationship is the final resort of Australian leadership among the middle powers.

In conclusion, the 2009 Australian Defence White Paper finds new excuses to rebuild Australia’s middle-power leadership role but is still haunted by an old mindset. Most importantly, the fundamental root of current crises lies in lack of development, which has been illustrated by the theory of a ‘development–security nexus’. To address this nexus, there are three different approaches: development first or developmentalisation, security first or securitisation and a development-security integration approach.

With the special relationship with the US in mind, the Australian Government follows the US ‘example’ of securitisation, addressing all issues from a security perspective. That the rise of China is viewed as a source of threat is the best example of this approach. Maybe we can find an excuse for it because it is a Defence White Paper rather than a Development White Paper, even as we hope for future White Papers to strike a better balance between security and development imperatives.

One view from India

**Commodore Uday Bhaskar, Director, National Maritime Foundation, New Delhi**

Australia’s Defence White Paper 2009 (DWP 09) is a comprehensive document and this initiative is to be commended—more so for it seeks to grapple with a very complex subject—national defence. The document is courageous for, in the face of many imponderables and uncertainties about threats to Australian national security, it goes to the extent of outlining a force level for 2030 with a clear objective: ‘capable of meeting every contingency the ADF may be required to meet in the coming two decades’.

From the perspective of one Indian analyst, this clarity about the final objective is not reflected to the same degree in the rationale and assessment about different exigencies that have been elucidated in individual chapters. An inherent ambivalence permeates DWP 09 and much of this relates to the ‘big picture’ as it were. Australia has no doubts about the correlation between its domestic security and the regional strategic-security ambience. Southeast Asia is the proximate region that is central to Australian defence planning and this assertion, that ‘a secure and stable Southeast Asia is in Australia’s interests as neither a source of broad security threat, nor as a conduit for the projection of military power against us by others’, is unexceptionable.

Similarly, it is unsurprising that the Paper looks towards a ‘Southeast Asia [that] should remain largely stable and reform-minded enough to sustain reasonable rates of development’. Allusion has also been made to the primacy of Indonesia in Canberra’s security calculus and I daresay the reference to ‘a heightened defence posture on Australia’s part’ in the event of Indonesia becoming a ‘strategic liability’ will have many regional interpretations and related reverberations.
The ambivalence and, on occasion, contradictory tenor is evident in relation to the specifics of the emerging strategic contours of the 21st century and the texture of the relationship between some principal interlocutors. DWP 09 acknowledges the advent of ‘multipolarity’ (I personally would have preferred the ‘polycentric’ semantic) and the nuance is appropriate. On one hand, it identifies the US as the most powerful and influential strategic actor till 2030—but also notes that ‘China, India, Russia, Japan and the EU will exercise global influence in differing degrees’. It is in regard to China that DWP 09 is at its ambivalent best. The politico-diplomatic dilemma here for the Australian Department of Defence is all too real.

Chapter 4 attempts to contextualise the strategic implications of the ‘rise of China’ in five pithy paragraphs and pragmatic reticence is the preferred orientation. While democracy seems a desirable outcome elsewhere, as for instance in Indonesia, in relation to China, DWP 09 exhorts China only to ‘take its place as a leading stakeholder in the development and stability of the global economic and political system’. Can one infer, therefore, that DWP 09 is tacitly preparing for the emergence of a G-2 within the multipolar construct of the early part of the 21st century? If so, the opaque hedging that is discernible in DWP 09 about how Canberra will deal with the US-China dyad is rather prudent.

Predictably, the Indian Ocean region finds adequate mention and a strong case is made for maritime Australia to invigorate its naval capability. The force levels envisaged are impressive and, if realised as per schedule, the RAN by 2030 will indeed be a very credible navy in the region. As a sailor, I plead guilty of sectarian bias in dwelling at some length about the maritime part of DWP 09. The paper avers that the Indian Ocean ‘will have greater strategic significance in the period to 2030’. This is axiomatic of the post Cold War/post 9-11 international system, for the maritime focus of the world has gradually shifted from its Atlantic-Pacific fixation to a Pacific focus in the early 1990s and is now evolving into a Pacific-Indian Ocean combine. DWP 09 then opines that ‘a number of major naval powers are likely to increasingly compete for strategic advantage in this crucial maritime region’.

The formulation is valid and all trend indicators are pointing to this exigency. But DWP 09 does not stray into examining the implications of such diverse and extra-regional naval presence in the Indian Ocean region. Ambiguity is complemented by reticence and one presumes that this document—public and transparent—may not be the most appropriate forum for such strategic ruminations.

Proliferation of WMD has been flagged and it is instructive that DWP 09 perceives ‘the possible addition of Iran to the group of states with nuclear weapons’. The AQ Khan network is not referred to explicitly but only alluded to, and the linkage with religious radicalism and related terrorism is not rigorously explored.

But the spectrum of issues covered is wide and, on the whole, DWP 09 provides a very useful document for further debate and deliberation in a robust democratic framework.
Not quite grand strategy but part of one?

See Seng Tan, Associate Professor S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (and Head of Research, Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies, a constitutive element of RSIS)

In a key sense, the ongoing debate over Australia’s latest Defence White Paper, launched in May 2009, can be understood as the latest edition of a longstanding deliberation about ‘Australia’s project in the world’, to use defence analyst Alan Dupont’s phrase. Have the trustees of Australia’s national defence devised a coherent security strategy—one that befits the country’s self-image as an influential middle power—or are they muddling through as they have hitherto done? The surfeit of intense reactions to the White Paper suggests that few if any among the company of Australian security intellectuals seem convinced that the document amounts to a national strategy, let alone a grand one.

Anticipating the likelihood of a decline in American primacy and concomitant rise in Chinese power, and with it the prospect for Australia of imminent strategic competition with China, the White Paper prescribes a multibillion dollar build-up of the nation’s naval and air—less so ground—assets in order to balance against growing Chinese military capabilities. At the same time, there are the capabilities of India and a resurgent Russia to worry about as well. Australia’s chariness over China has been condemned by a People’s Liberation Army general as ‘crazy’, ‘stupid’ and ‘dangerous’. After all, China’s rise, as its champions unfailingly insist, is inherently benign and peaceful. Moreover, China has surpassed all others to become Australia’s largest trading partner.

The paradox of balancing militarily the very nation from whom one is benefiting economically is by no means an uncommon practice. That Australia is resorting to hedging against the Chinese is emblematic of how many other countries, including the US, view and treat China today. So while the White Paper seems a radical break from Canberra’s traditional resistance to identifying enemies (while maintaining a technological advantage over its regional neighbours), the proposed plan might equally be seen as a reflection of the indistinct international security environment in which Australians—and, indeed, everyone else—currently find themselves.

Nonetheless, it is not inconceivable to imagine the new defence plan, warts and all, as part of an emerging broader policy that could qualify tacitly as an embryonic national security strategy. Crucially, defence alone does not make a security strategy. Three observations come to mind regarding this rudimentary vision.

Firstly, to the extent Canberra’s broader policy bears, if at all, the hallmarks of a national strategy, it necessarily includes a diplomatic element. In this regard, the planned build-up cannot be seen apart from another equally big idea from the Rudd government, namely, the call for an overarching Asia-Pacific institution. Issued 12 months before the White Paper, the regional community idea positions Australia in a leading role in the creation of a new architecture that spans the entire Asia-Pacific.
According to the Australian Prime Minister, this comprehensive institution would handle ‘the full spectrum of dialogue, cooperation and action in economic and political matters and future challenges related to security’—a one-stop shop for all things Asia-Pacific, in effect. Crucially, Rudd’s proposal identifies five key countries—America, Japan, India, Indonesia and, of course, China—which presumably, together with Australia, comprise the pillars of the envisaged community. Taken together, the complexity of Australia’s emerging multipronged riposte to China—a strategy combining defence and diplomacy, as well as national power, alliance and regionalism instruments—is in fact quite astounding, even if it lacks the requisite coherence.

Secondly, intended or otherwise, the emerging though inchoate strategy cultivates the impression that ‘the Aussies are (still) riding shotgun for the Yanks’, as it were. Indeed, the Americans seem a lot less troubled by the proposed build-up since it converges more or less with their own apprehensions about rising Chinese power and what ought to be done about it. Far from distancing Australia from the unfortunate image, self-styled by the Howard government, of the nation as willing deputy to America’s sheriff to the world, the White Paper in effect nudges Canberra towards strategic congruence with Washington and greater reliance on the American nuclear deterrent than before, even as the two close allies differ over Iraq policy.

Finally, to the extent Australia’s new security posture ends up hardening China’s stance, the prospect of a new cold war in the Asia-Pacific is certainly not good news for the region’s residents, not least the member countries of ASEAN which have worked long and hard at socialising China towards cooperative security. To be sure, it seems unlikely that an Australia-America strategic tandem against China, should it materialise, would cause the Chinese to forsake their strong participation in and promotion of Asia-Pacific regionalism, even a future Australian-inspired one. Yet it is a risk Australia—and, for that matter, any of us—would do well not to ignore.

Something for everyone?

Thomas-Durrell Young, Program Manager for Europe, Center for Civil-Military Relations, US Naval Postgraduate School

The 2009 Defence White Paper is an impressive document, both in terms of its length, and in terms of the Rudd government’s almost tortuous intellectual struggle to find that illusive objective that has long obsessed Australian defence planners. That is, a pragmatic balance between a long-standing Australian desire (some might describe it an ‘obsession’) to create an ADF capable of defending Australian sovereignty, whilst also being capable of supporting the country’s desire to be a responsible and responsive member of the Western world.

Given obvious finite resources and the ADF’s immense geographical area of responsibility, it should not be surprising that there has raged an intellectual battle between those who would have the ADF’s orientation and capabilities limited by geography (‘defence of Australia’: DoA), and those who would argue that priority should be given to structuring the ADF to undertake those missions for which the ADF has been historically employed (expeditionary).
If nothing else, the Rudd government should be complimented for its confidence in issuing a White Paper that for the first time since 1972 does not dwell, in extremis, on the question of the US security commitment to Australia. This past practice has resulted in more officials in Canberra being able to cite line and verse of President Nixon’s 1969 speech in Guam, whereas one would be hard-pressed to find anyone in Washington who can even recall its existence, let alone its content and context. Thus, this should be seen as an attempt to move away from a deterministic questioning of the US commitment which, in effect, weakens a key argument behind DoA.

That said, the document in some ways raises as many questions about the future of Australian defence as it attempts to answer. A thematic practice that the paper regretfully continues is the maddening dichotomy between the planning for the ‘defence of Australia’ (supported by the document’s unconvincing argument for Australia’s unique planning realities) and the cold fact that the ADF continues its distant and dangerous overseas deployments. Whilst the paper does recognise the ADF’s participation in operations in Afghanistan (which has, indeed, recently increased as part of the West’s ‘surge’ policy), such obvious force structure determinants would appear not to constitute a high priority, when compared to the almost ethereal imperatives of DoA.

This is an important point given the fact that following the ADF’s early operational experience in Afghanistan and Iraq, I had the unique pleasure of belonging to an Australian-US team that produced a comprehensive review of impediments to interoperability. At that time (under the previous government), improving the ADF’s interoperability with the US was accorded a high priority. With the benefit of this analysis, one would have either to suffer from operational myopia, or unbridled optimism, to assume that those numerous challenges identified by the review have either been solved or have been sufficiently mitigated. Indeed, one might have thought that improving the ADF’s ability to operate effectively in a dangerous Afghanistan would have been a major priority for force requirements: alas not. In fact, Army is almost an after-thought, and once this deployment is over, will Army be relegated to its previous role, to quote Lieutenant General Peter Leahy, as a ‘strategic goal-keeper’?

For, in the end, a White Paper, perforce, is about establishing resource priorities. In this respect, I find the immense shopping list of new capabilities outlined for procurement ambitious and the means to pay for them unconvincing. The final section on financing Defence is simply too short on details to provide one with any certainty that there has been a comprehensive and accurate costing. And when one considers that these acquisitions (which essentially include the re-capitalisation of the RAN and RAAF) do not include a clearly-articulated list of priorities, it is difficult not to feel that this is something that we’ve seen before. The paper’s assertion that government is confident that it will find A$20 billion in efficiencies to help finance this program simply is not convincing. Perhaps, had government initiated this review (and reforms) before the defence review, it would be a stronger position.

It would appear, therefore, that the Rudd government, like its predecessors, has slipped back into a regrettable DoA orientation and has not fully accepted the reality that Australia is in the mainstream of globalisation and needs to realign longstanding defence policy
precepts accordingly. Thus, the resulting effect of proffering something to everyone. Perhaps, pragmatically, these tensions will never be completely resolved, let alone agreed. But, at the same time, a re-reading of Sir Michael Howard’s incisive (and apparently heretical) analysis of Australia’s defence orientation in 1972 still rings true to this long-time observer of Australian defence policy: Australia’s ultimate security is inexorably tied to the Western international political and economic system, rather than to the security conditions in its own immediate region. Notwithstanding the balancing act by the White Paper, Australia’s defence policy has yet to align itself to these realities.

New Zealand reactions

Lance Beath, consultant and senior lecturer, Victoria University, Wellington

The New Zealand reaction to the publication of the 2009 Australian Defence White Paper in early May was predictably low key. NZ Defence Minister, the Hon. Wayne Mapp, interviewed on television, confined himself to the observation that New Zealand, in conducting its own Defence Review and White Paper exercise this year, would probably take a more restrained view of its future defence capability requirements than had Australia. He did not think that New Zealand would be likely to want to significantly increase the size of its current investments in Defence (currently running at around 1% of GDP or a little less).

For a New Zealand observer, the striking thing about this Australian Defence White Paper is the sheer scale of the intended investment in new as well as upgraded defence capability out to 2030, including the emphasis on enhancing maritime capabilities, upgrading air combat and other long-range strike capabilities and strengthening aspects of Australia’s land forces and special forces. These future investment decisions are all the more impressive considering the constrained global fiscal environment in which even Australia found itself immersed at the height of the White Paper decision making process.

New Zealand ministers and other public commentators have been careful to avoid a discussion of the extent to which New Zealand shares the Australian assessments that underpin the White Paper. New Zealand, like Australia, sees the pre-eminent fact about the future regional strategic environment as being the re-emergence of the great Asian powers of India and China, and the challenge this represents to the strategic primacy of the US. We accept that this means that New Zealand, like Australia, will find itself dealing increasingly with contested agendas based on competing sets of values and that we will need to become comfortable and more agile working within deeply-held cultural and intellectual traditions that are different from the Western values with which we have been more familiar up until now.

New Zealand, partly perhaps because it is an Asianising society, and partly perhaps because of our privileged geographic setting distant from potential trouble spots including contested sea lines of communication, sees no reason to doubt that China and India will be anything other than responsible stakeholders as they seek to secure their own great power requirements in the region. Yet we have also observed that both powers display a deep awareness of their own national identities and a unique sense of their individual destinies. These feelings of
nationalism and emerging greatness are creating, to borrow an expression, a new form of Asian exceptionalism. We will need to be able to deal with this fact and deal with it most likely in an era of sharply-increasing resource competition and other challenges posed by global climate change.

How do New Zealand views on these issues differ from Australian assessments? We will need to await the New Zealand Defence White Paper, due for release in early 2010, for a definitive answer, but my sense is that New Zealand’s views may be more nuanced than Australia’s. Freed from the responsibilities that flow from active membership in a security alliance with the US we would not, I am sure, wish to prejudge in advance whose ‘side’ we might be on in the event of major interstate conflict in the region (to be fair, the Australian White Paper does not regard interstate warfare as a likely outcome in the period out to 2030). And nor would we think \textit{ab initio} that US strategic primacy is a necessary precondition for regional stability and good order, which seems to be an implicit assumption on which parts of the Australian paper are based. I think that a future New Zealand government could contemplate with reasonable equanimity the emergence of either China or India, or both of them, as the great powers of the region, even if that day may still be several generations off.

In the meantime the significance of this White Paper to New Zealand may turn out to lie in the small print. First is the invitation to New Zealand to look for increased opportunities to integrate Australian and New Zealand force elements in the Anzac tradition. Examples given (see para. 11.29) include the possible integration of air transport logistics through to an Anzac task force ‘capable of deploying seamlessly at short notice into our immediate region’. This invitation, reinforced more recently when Prime Ministers Rudd and Key met in Sydney on 20 August and tasked their defence chiefs to get on with the integration studies, is clearly something that deserves serious thought. As the White Paper itself notes, operational integration would need to be without prejudice to future policy options in both Canberra and Wellington, yet would be a sensible and practical response to growing operational demands on what, by regional standards, are still two very modestly-sized defence forces.

Second is the requirement for defence reform. Australia, in the context of this White Paper, has committed itself to a Strategic Reform Program that aims to overhaul the entire Defence enterprise, potentially freeing up some A$20 billion from increased efficiency to reinvest in defence capability. I expect a very similar message to be the main outcome of the New Zealand Defence Review and accompanying White Paper. That we need to increase New Zealand defence capability significantly over the period ahead can hardly be in serious doubt. Given also that the New Zealand Government is unlikely to want to increase the scale of its investments in Defence, the only way that we can increase defence capability is through a serious, indeed unprecedented, program of very deep structural reform. For both defence forces, these reform and modernisation programs will be the most significant non-operational challenge in the period immediately ahead.
The Pashtun Cultural Code: Pashtunwali

Lieutenant Colonel Jonathan Hawkins DSM and Bar, Australian Army

The Pathan tribes are always engaged in private or public war. Every man is a warrior, a politician and a theologian. Every large house is a real feudal fortress.... Every family cultivates its vendetta; every clan, its feud.... Nothing is ever forgotten and very few debts are left unpaid.

Winston Churchill

Introduction

Modern Afghanistan has changed little from 1897 when Winston Churchill fought in a punitive expedition on the Afghan border against the Pashtuns. Today, as in Churchill’s era, Afghanistan is remarkable for the tribal code that permeates the countryside and nowhere is this more defined than in south-eastern Afghanistan, where Pashtun culture overshadows central government authority and the local rule of law. Pashtun culture is dictated by a common law, a set of values, a code and a manner of living termed ‘Pashtunwali’.

Pashtunwali dominates the social connections of south-eastern Afghanistan and any enduring solution to the present insurgency requires a comprehensive understanding of its pervasiveness. This is essentially because Pashtuns arguably thrive on conflict and feuds, and it is very difficult for newcomers to fully understand the intricacies and social origin of such behaviour. However, an ability to identify and better understand prospective sources of friction and the avoidance of further vicious cycles will assist in rebuilding Afghanistan.

This paper seeks to create discussion on how the ADF can achieve success in Afghanistan through considering the cultural facets involved in dealing with the Pashtun, a proud and taciturn people. The techniques of other successful counter-insurgencies will require modification prior to success in Pashtunistan, as it straddles the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan and extends towards Islamabad. In his classic, Seven Pillars of Wisdom, Thomas Edward Lawrence mentioned that counter-insurgencies require time, space and the will to succeed. These guiding principles apply as much in contemporary warfare as they did in Lawrence’s epoch and Pashtunistan provides all three for the Taliban.

‘Time’ for the insurgent is about convincing an opponent that the insurgency will last indefinitely, as few nation states are willing to commit to a prolonged war. This has parallels to south-eastern Afghanistan, where ‘nothing is ever forgotten’. Undeniably, the Taliban, who predominately adhere to Pashtunwali, are endeavouring to whittle away the determination of the Coalition by conducting a protracted campaign.

Insurgents require safe havens, ‘space’ to operate from or, indeed, a sanctuary from where operations can be planned in relative safety, which then allows them to strike at whim.
Pashtunwali provides the Taliban a sanctuary—in fact, it is all of Pashtunistan but particularly the north-west frontier provinces of Pakistan where, since 2001, unfortunately many Pakistani military casualties have occurred fighting the Taliban.\(^3\) However, in the modern era, sanctuaries can also exist in the virtual realm: the internet, banking systems and media.\(^4\) The insurgent also requires ‘will’—the will to succeed versus the will to resist. Pashtunwali is the cultural cement that assists in maintaining Taliban motivation. The insurgent does not need to win, he or she only needs not to lose.

Pashtunwali and ‘Sharia’ law co-exist in Pashtunistan but friction occasionally emanates from the mullahs and village elders who hold equal influence in many regions. Understanding this will allow Western troops to better synchronise their efforts in achieving cooperation with the Pashtun people. In particular, it offers insights for personnel dealing with situations that may appear curious or untenable to Western consciousness.

**Pashtunwali**

Pashtunwali is a series of tenets on how a Pashtun must live. These tenets define how the tribe interacts and provide guidelines for normative behaviours in living a Pashtun lifestyle. The number of tenets differs depending on the particular source utilised; nevertheless, the string listed below is indicative of Pashtunwali and provides a background for extra scrutiny.\(^5\)

The tenets apply equally to males and females and are generally accepted as ghayrat/nang or bravery; badal or revenge; melmastia or hospitality; pirdah or gender differences; namus or face/honour; and shura or council.\(^6\) These tenets form the basis of the Pashtun way of life and, although some historical evidence suggests these principles existed in the 17th century, the tenets are just as fundamental to contemporary Pashtun behavior.

The warrior ethos extends throughout Afghanistan but nowhere is it more important than in the border regions that bestride Afghanistan and Pakistan, the area dissected by the Durand Line.\(^7\) It is here that adolescent Pashtun males are expected to be tested in battle in order to demonstrate their maturity and bravery.

**Bravery**

The tenet of nang or bravery is central to Pashtunwali, as youthful Pashtun males have it reinforced in them that brave and honourable actions on the battlefield define a man.\(^8\) The Qur’an (Koran) also suggests displays of honour are required of the warrior, especially on the battlefield:

\[O \text{ you who believe! When you meet those who disbelieve marching for war, then turn not your backs to them. And whoever shall turn his back to them on that day—unless he turn aside for the sake of fighting or withdraws to a company—then he, indeed, becomes deserving of Allah’s wrath and his abode is hell; and an evil destination shall it be.}\]
Emphasising the Qur’an’s position, Brentz Glatzer highlights that the Pashtun tribe uses the battlefield to display honour and gain respect. He also points out that those involved are required to behave in an appropriate soldierly fashion by not attacking civilians and when spoils are available they must be distributed evenly.¹⁰ This notion of equal distribution of war spoils also epitomises the egalitarian nature of the Pashtun tribal system: all people are considered equal and no-one has the right to establish superiority over other members of the tribe.

Understanding this tenet enables an insight into the Pashtun warrior attitude. It provides a backdrop to Pashtun actions, especially when dealing with displays of bravery on the battlefield. It will allow Australian junior commanders to realise that not all Pashtun battlefield behavior falls inside Western cultural norms. Occasionally, there can be no Western logic attached to Pashtun combat actions, such as the abnormal levels of bravery displayed during Taliban attacks on isolated Coalition positions when they feel they can overrun the outpost.

Moreover, though, the tenet provides insights to a Pashtun code of conduct. There is a form of respect observed by Pashtuns, particularly after ‘honourable’ combat, which may also provide a lagging indicator of how Pashtuns gauge collateral damage incidents. In essence, acts of extraordinary revenge are generally only conducted by Pashtuns in response to actions they deem dishonourable.

**Revenge**

This tenet is a key attribute of the Pashtunwali code, as it defines an individual’s, a family’s and a sub-tribe’s ability to maintain respect and honour. An offended party who does not respond to an insult essentially communicates to the rest of the tribe that they are not deserving of respect and honour. Interestingly, the act of revenge must be in proportion to the insult received. This perception of limitations to revenge is also highlighted in the Qur’an, which stipulates restrictions on revenge:

> And fight in the cause of Allah with those who fight with you, and do not exceed the limits, surely Allah does not love those who exceed the limits. And kill them wherever you find them, and drive them out….¹¹

In Pashtunwali, this action of revenge is generally decided by the tribal council or *shura* but it is taken in committee with others and is not the remit of an individual. For Western troops, understanding that revenge is almost certain is important and, although it is through a Pashtun cultural necessity, it still offers modest justification. Potentially, the positive part of the tenet is that the revenge will be in proportion to the initial act; nevertheless, all too often these acts of revenge spiral into vicious cycles. Maintaining engagement with the *shura* or key elders in the village is important to promote the moral and ethical aspects of Western culture. Interaction with the *shura* or elders will involve receiving hospitality and, more importantly, reciprocating the *shura*’s hospitality.
**Hospitality**

This principle has several layers within Pashtun society, as it not only involves hospitality but also sanctuary and, in a peculiar form of chivalry, also includes affording asylum to a vanquished foe. Hospitality also transcends the gender separation of Pashtun culture. This principle is a physical component and manifests itself not only in the social particulars of being respectful to guests but through feeding them, caring for them and, if necessary, defending them and their property from others, including other Pashtuns.

This idea of hospitality and sanctuary bestows the host greater honour especially if the host’s participation is generally acknowledged in the wider community. Those afforded sanctuary could be Pashtuns, Hazaras, Tajiks, any of the Afghan tribes or Westerners. The fundamental aspect is that once provided hospitality the guest is assumed to be under the protection of the host and great loss of honour will result should the guest be harmed. Pakistani Colonel Mohammad Effendi stated in a *National Geographic* article in 2004:

> Anyone who hands Bin Laden over to the Americans might be $25m richer in reward money but the disgrace would hang over this person, along with his family, clan and tribe for many generations. Whoever betrays him, why, his life wouldn’t be worth an onion.13

This underscores that although many Pashtun would like to support Western troops in securing peace and stability, most are constrained by having to shield the presence of Taliban in their local community. Increased security by Coalition or Afghan troops in a village or region would not change sanctuary being offered to Taliban—the Pashtuns are culturally honour bound to provide sanctuary. The cultural barometer of a village is difficult to measure as the Pashtuns are, by tradition, reserved. Nevertheless, this measurement is often best ascertained through the reaction of children and females to Coalition activities affecting their village.

Lastly, an area that although not directly related to the insurgency still requires highlighting, due to its complexity and closeness to the gender aspects of Pashtun society, is the termination of blood feuds. Female guests, once accepted into the host’s care, can request that blood feuds be terminated. Also, females can sidestep marriage to someone who they do not desire by being accepted into another male’s house. However, this then obliges the male host to marry the female which, if not handled correctly, could set off another round of blood feuds between the female’s family and the insulted male. The hospitably tenet is related to the gender tenet, which is the most complex and difficult to examine.

**Gender**

This aspect of the code is complicated to analyse as little if any writings exist on the topic. Nonetheless, for completeness it is necessary to introduce the issue as it confronts counter-insurgency efforts with many cultural and moral dilemmas. In some Pashtun areas, females are treated very liberally in comparison to other areas, as the socio-economic conditions and geographic location of the sub-tribe dictate the strictness of gender separation. In ultra-strict Pashtunwali areas, females are not permitted to walk outside unless accompanied, while in
other areas many walk the streets alone but only while wearing a burkha. Each sub-tribal area is different and this is often a consequence of the shura that sits in that particular area—some shuras are stricter and follow Sharia law rather than deferring to the shura of the village.

Prior to the Coalition’s arrival in Afghanistan in late 2001, most females were excluded from the benefits of education, freedom of speech and health care due to Taliban-imposed restrictions. However, much has since been done to alleviate that situation. In a recent speech, President Karzai highlighted a notable improvement in female education, saying that ‘about 38 per cent of the 46,500 students who entered universities this year were girls’.16 It is also worth mentioning that, although they may appear individually constrained to the Western eye, the Pashtun female when in assembly with other Pashtun females—which in rural areas is typically at the water well or market place—can wield a significant measure of power.17

Engaging the female segment of the Pashtun tribe is important and this could be achieved by having female soldiers on patrol, by establishing female-only clinics in areas where females congregate and accelerating schooling for girls. However, it is important that moderate Pashtun males who support a more liberal status for females not be estranged from the male Pashtun mainstream through Coalition requests to promote views which may be at odds with the shura’s position, as they will lose respect and suffer social ignominy when it becomes public.

A loss of respect or standing in Pashtun culture is another tenet of Pashtunwali and is comparable to a loss of face. It contributes to the cycle of violence and must be considered when dealing with the Pashtun.

**Face**

This tenet is related to hospitality, revenge and gender separation, as it also involves honour and respect. Overall, it is best categorised as saving face and is very similar to other cultures where, in business deals for example, it is more imperative for everyone to feel satisfied with the deal rather than anyone walking away as the absolute beneficiary.18 When dealing with Pashtuns, in social, business or military matters, it is imperative that there is a sense of equality for the Pashtun involved in the venture. This includes combined operations where the local Afghan Police or Afghan National Army representative must be included in the planning for any activity and be acknowledged as having contributed to the successful outcome of the operation.

It also refers to the notion that rumours must be curbed, particularly linking males and females. It is this area where the females’ power base emerges: male Pashtuns appear very concerned that females will spread rumours and undermine a male’s standing in society. This creates a slight schism between Pashtun females, by having them introduce a sense of altruism into their society through increased Coalition interaction, and male family members who may curtail this access due to potential loss of face. Seldom do males and females mix together in public and the opportunity for Coalition interaction with females is predominately through clinics, schools and market areas. Another avenue is the use of the shura and for senior females this
may be the most appropriate means of ensuring continued female linkages. It is also an area where senior male and female Pashtuns mix together.

**Council (shuras)**

The local political arena is the shura (which means consultation in Arabic)—or in some cases a jirga—and is any council made up of the distinguished men from any particular area or village and requires that they all partake in Pashtunwali. Occasionally, females have been known to participate but this is more so at higher political levels and in larger cities. It is a system whereby each member of the shura contributes to a ruling which impacts on the village or region where the shura sits. No votes are cast and this can place the superior speakers at an advantage when delivering their particular concern. The better the speaker, or the more weight they hold in the society, the more profoundly they influence the outcome of the decision.

It must be emphasised that this system is similar to that of a local government council in Western society. It deals with day-to-day issues on how people live their lives in a regional or village setting. This hints that Coalition members must form associations with local elders and be instrumental in influencing the outcome of shuras. To achieve this influence, the relationship must be based on respect, the ‘face’ tenet, as it is essential for the Pashtun in the alliance to remain influential in the village.

The emergence of the initial ‘Loya Jirga’ in December 2003 (to represent ‘the highest manifestation of the will of the people of Afghanistan’) as part of the national government is not representative of a typical shura. Furthermore, the regional shuras have no relationship with the Loya Jirga and there appears to be a dichotomy between national and regional levels. The Loya Jirga was primarily focused on creating higher level policy, such as Afghanistan’s constitution, and has no formal influence over village shuras.

Until this can be introduced, the national government will have difficulty influencing at the regional level, as the influence of Kabul beyond the confines of the capital is very limited. For the national government to gain credibility—and more importantly respect—at the village shura level, there is a requirement to extend the power of the national institutions, such as the Afghan Army and Police.

Linked to Pashtunwali and Sharia law is ‘power’, the hidden component of Pashtun culture. While not part of Pashtunwali, which is philosophically egalitarian, it is a fundamental principle in south-eastern Afghanistan. In Pashtun society, power is wielded by a few individuals and improved governance will require an innovative distribution of power.

**The covert tenet: power**

Underlying all Pashtunwali tenets is the sense of power in the tribal areas. This is difficult to define but there is undoubtedly a hierarchy in each community, despite the notion within Pashtunwali of a classless society. Generally, the older and more wealthy the man, the more
power he wields. This may be typical of other societies but in the Pashtun tribal areas, due to the culture and a lack of rule of law, power has significant benefits.

Determining who within a village has the most power and influence is often difficult and it can take extended periods to peel back the layers of tribal and family associations. The most powerful are not always the most overt, which can be at odds with Western culture. Again, it requires interaction with the population and gently challenging the limits of village society to uncover leaders. Creating friction in a village society will force leaders to ascend into the public sphere; otherwise, they risk reducing their power in subsequent village interactions.

Pashtunwali maintains a close affiliation with the more fundamental aspects of life and it takes time to live by the code. It may also take Western troops operating in the region several months to recognise a Pashtunwali situation. Osama bin Laden, a Saudi, used it to his advantage and lived under their hospitality code. Western troops too could benefit from the code and engage the Pashtun majority in the south-eastern region of Afghanistan by working with elders to develop a mutually-beneficial relationship. Pashtunwali is a ubiquitous philosophy that cannot be ignored—it is aligned to Islamic law, also known as Sharia law, which is the basis of Afghanistan’s constitution.

**Sharia law**

Sharia is religious law based upon the Qur’an and the work of Muslim scholars in the first two centuries of Islam. Sharia is the totality of religious, political, social, domestic and private life. According to contemporary Muslim scholars, there are a number of essential but general principles associated with Sharia law, which all Muslims should aspire to live by. These principles are often indistinguishable from the liberal democratic philosophies of Western nations, or common law, and it is when a harsh view of Sharia law is taken that a Taliban-type approach to jurisprudence is implemented.

These Sharia principles have precedence when inconsistency occurs with any other source of Islamic lawful ruling, such as the Hadith. Furthermore, these laws and principles must not be incorporated in a myopic way—they need to be viewed holistically. The individual principles are listed below and vary depending on the text utilised.

**Fundamental human dignity: each human a being, not an object**

Every human should be treated as an individual and not an item or possession. This appears to contradict some aspects of the Pashtunwali code, such as the hospitality and gender tenets. In particular, this is exposed when a guest seeks asylum from a former foe, whereby they are considered a prisoner although this is never explicitly declared by either party. Additionally, under Pashtunwali, the females of a family are repressed by a sense of belonging to a man, likely their father, brother or husband.
Justice, equality and freedom

The Qur’an suggests that even-handedness in all things is necessary and must be unambiguous. The notion that Islam is not fair is an aberration founded in the behaviour of the Taliban prior to the US offensive; without a doubt, the regular execution of Afghans for trivial crimes underscored this and was at odds with the Qur’an:

Nor take life—which Allah has made sacred—except for just cause. And if anyone is slain wrongfully, we have given his heir authority (to demand retaliation or to forgive); but let him not exceed bounds in the matter of taking life, for he is helped (by the Law).\(^\text{23}\)

In relation to equality, according to Sharia law all people are created equal. In this principle, Pashtunwali parallels Sharia law, as it also suggests no individual has superiority over others. In relation to freedom, Sharia law is founded on choice and not on intimidation, bullying or terror. Any form of subjugation is not tolerated. Taliban methods of coercion have no place in Sharia law. However, through misrepresentation in the Pashtun areas, these terror tactics have at times manifested a situation where Pashtunwali overrides Sharia law. This notion of misrepresentation is also demonstrated in the context of shared human values.

Universal moral values

Sharia acknowledges the universality of good and evil or right and wrong—it allows for moral values to be stated despite cultural variation. This suggests that Taliban intolerance of local or Western cultural differences is not within the spirit of Sharia which again presents a deviation between Taliban rhetoric and Sharia. The universality of the morals component highlights that Muslims belong to their own family, the tribe, the nation, the Muslim faith and to humanity. In this Sharia principle, it is suggested that Muslims must try and concentrate on people’s similarities, rather than focusing on what differentiates people. In that sense, it is aligned to the humanity tenet and seeks alliances or conciliation, rather than violence.

Rejection of violence as normal

Violence in Sharia is only to be conducted within the constraints of self-defence and the concept of peace is to be promoted as the prevailing ideology. Nevertheless, the \textit{Jihad} is too often perceived to be referring to war on behalf of Islam and this is at odds with the rejection of violence principle stated in Sharia. Also, the Qur’an states that violence is only permissible in self-defence:

Permission to take up arms is hereby given to those who are attacked because they have been oppressed—Allah indeed has power to grant them victory—those who have been unjustly driven from their homes, only because they said ‘Our Lord is Allah’.\(^\text{24}\)
Some argue that the contemporary Jihad is because Islam has been usurped by Western influences and the Jihad is a defensive campaign to re-establish Islam to its rightful place. Another concept that fuels Jihad, especially suicide bombers, is the belief of an afterlife and especially one created through actions to further Allah:

Consider not those who are killed in the way of Allah as dead…. They rejoice in a grace and a bounty from Allah, and that Allah will not waste the reward of the believers.\textsuperscript{25}

According to Sharia, only Allah, in the afterlife, can judge members of humanity. However, Pashtunwali appears to trump many aspects of the rule of law, which demonstrates that Sharia is subordinate to Pashtunwali, although this is often done discreetly.

\textbf{Rule of law and representation}

Sharia, despite suggesting that only Allah can judge, is pragmatic and has defined several caveats for the application of the rule of law in modern society. Firstly, it applies to everyone and should be formed on practical national laws; secondly, the courts must be autonomous and not linked to the state; thirdly, law enforcement is also autonomous and non-partisan; and finally, criminal and civil disagreement should not involve violence and, in most cases, would be determined through the courts, political apparatus or a \textit{shura}. The Afghan constitution reflects these principles; indeed, in some instances it goes further. Two examples are the edicts for women to make up a quarter of the lower house (Wolesi Jirga) and a sixth of the upper house (Meshrano Jirga) and that followers of other religions are free to exercise their faith and perform their religious rites within the limits of the law.\textsuperscript{26}

Discussions through the council process, or shura, are an essential practice within Islam. It can be observed that the shura process has been incorporated into Pashtunwali and some leverage could be achieved through this principle to use Sharia and Pashtunwali for dialogue between the current belligerents to focus on the spirit of reconstruction.

\textbf{Emphasis on an ideal over form}

This principle underscores the importance of value and spirit, rather than the focus being on the form or the physical aspects of an activity. It would appear that, in some areas at least, form has subordinated real meaning. Spirit, or value, has been estranged from the Pashtun ideology. Examples of this are the Taliban censoring the use of televisions, radios and other forms of media as they were deemed evil, yet concurrently conducting kidnappings and executions. There is a dichotomy in these actions, indeed, even duplicity. Sharia suggests that Muslims need to embrace all aspects of the world, to engage in learning and to be open to new experiences:

And one of His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the diversity of your tongues and colours; most surely there are signs in this for the learned.\textsuperscript{27}
Sharia law and Pashtunwali coexist in the rural regions of Afghanistan and it is often difficult to determine which philosophy is predominant. Nevertheless, Western troops need to be aware of both but realise that very often in the Pashtun areas of south-eastern Afghanistan, it is Pashtunwali that overshadows Sharia law in the community.

**Conclusion**

Pashtunwali is a complex, interrelated set of tenets that forms a code of living for the Pashtun people, potentially, since before the spread of the Islam and Sharia law into Pashtunistan. It presents many difficulties for Western troops operating in the region, as the Pashtun people are a proud and historic ethnic group and they believe that any erosion of their culture will surely also see an increase in crime and other more Western type anti-social activities.

Sharia law also has a strong influence in the village areas and often coexists with Pashtunwali but there is friction between mullahs and village elders in navigating rules for villages. It is equally important not to undermine the mullahs or the elders and an even-handed approach is necessary. Further, the Taliban will unquestionably be among those speaking to the Coalition and any errant message, extending support to either side, will become awkward to manage as it filters through a community and potentially to the Taliban propaganda channels. A consistent message addressing local issues, focused on both the village elders and mullahs, will enable closer interaction and allow for improved reconstruction efforts.

The cultural and religious aspects of life in south-eastern Afghanistan are more unusual than anything generally experienced by Australians. The Pashtunwali code links back to the 17th century, possibly earlier, and any notion of instantly understanding the complexity of Pashtun customs would be naive. Nevertheless, an appreciation of the code in conjunction with exposure to Sharia reveals a cultural variation not observed in Western societies. Uncovering this unique culture offers Australian troops an increased consciousness for dealing with the Pashtun, where ‘every man is a warrior, a politician and a theologian’.

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NOTES


14. Blood feuds are feuds that exist between Pashtun individuals or families or sub-tribes, based on legacy Pashtunwali infringements. These breaches can be generated for many reasons and, as an example, could originate through the killing of a family member. The feuds can last for generations and often spiral into compounding vicious cycles of violence.


18. Glatzer, p. 4.
19. Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (Ratified) 26 January 2004 describes the Loya Jirga and the requirements associated with it. In essence, the Loya Jirga is convened in the following situations: to decide on issues related to independence, national sovereignty, territorial integrity as well as supreme national interests; to amend provisions of the Constitution; and, when necessary, to impeach the President in accordance with the provisions of Article 69 of the Constitution. See <http://www.president.gov.af> accessed 20 May 2009.


21. The term ‘Hadith’ is mentioned in Britannica Encyclopaedia as a ‘record of the traditions or sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, revered and received as a major source of religious law and moral guidance, second only to the authority of the Qur’an or scripture of Islam. It might be defined as the biography of Muhammad perpetuated by the long memory of his community for their exemplification and obedience. The development of Hadith is a vital element during the first three centuries of Islamic history and its study provides a broad index to the mind and ethos of Islam.’ See <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/251132/Hadith> accessed 21 May 2009.


26. Article 81 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan mentions the requirement for females in the lower and upper houses, and Article 2 states the requirement for religious freedom.

27. Qur’an 30:22.
Peak Oil Theory: implications for Australia’s strategic outlook and the ADF

Dr Matthew Gray, Australian National University

Although crude oil and other hydrocarbons are finite resources, only recently has the concept of ‘peak oil’ been taken seriously as a global threat to standards of living, quality of life and international stability. Peak oil theory argues that at a certain point—probably when about half the exploitable reserves of crude oil have been exhausted—a gradual decline in crude oil output will commence, raising prices markedly, even exponentially. Prices like the July 2008 high of US$147 a barrel will then seem cheap by comparison. Given how many products are derived from oil, the economic impact will be serious and potentially catastrophic. While observers disagree on when a peak might occur, there is growing pressure from the scientific community to take it seriously.¹

The ultimate risk is not from the world exhausting its supplies of oil but rather from the economic, social and political impacts that would come from oil prices rising to a level where they are unaffordable for most current hydrocarbon uses. This would promote inflation or stagflation and encourage international competition—and potentially conflict—for the dwindling, remaining oil. This paper provides an outline of what peak oil theory argues, why it ought to be taken seriously and what this might mean for Australia’s strategic position and the ADF. It argues that the ADF will need to readjust its structure and capabilities and be prepared to undertake new commitments in our region and more widely. The paper seeks neither to be overly pessimistic nor optimistic. Instead, it argues that peak oil is worth taking seriously because of the potential impacts and because of the benefits of acting sooner rather than later.

Peak oil theory

Peak oil theory was originally proposed by Dr Marion King Hubbert, a geologist and geophysicist who in 1956 predicted that US oil output would peak around 1970.² In fact, US output peaked in 1971 and has largely declined since. Hubbert’s argument and that of peak oil theorists is that, at some stage, oil output will stall and then move into permanent decline until the resource is near-depleted. Its proponents draw on this US peak and later peaks in other states to make the argument for a definable global peak followed by a long-term irreversible decline in output.³ The peak occurs at a specific well when roughly half of the exploitable resources have been extracted because this is the point after which oil well pressure eventually declines to zero.⁴ Peak oil theorists extrapolate this to argue that once overall global production is at the half-way point, an overall global decline in output will occur too.

Arguably, peak oil is the point also at which a finite end-date for the resource becomes evident, which would enhance its value and increase its price. The peak in output will follow sometime after a peak in the discovery of new oil reserves, as obviously the peak in production cannot
occur if output is being outpaced by new discoveries. US output peaked in 1971, after new
discoveries peaked in 1957. Globally, discoveries peaked in 1964 and, since 1984, the volume
of production has been greater than that of new discoveries. The decline after the peak can
mirror the trend during the rise, as Hubbert argued was likely. However, if the peak is delayed
by more aggressive oil extraction as the peak is approached, the decline is likely to be steeper
than was the rise in output.

Most scientists agree that a peak will occur, if only because the quantity is finite and the
resource non-renewable. However, there is enormous debate about when. Estimates of the
rate of fall in output vary—depending on how inflated reserve estimates prove to be and
whether the peak is delayed by a burst of new exploration and drilling—but normally are in the
range 2-6 per cent per annum. The more pessimistic predictions argue the peak is occurring
now or has already occurred. Hubbert originally predicted a global peak in the mid-1990s but
events such as the 1970s oil crisis, the 1990-91 Gulf War and oil conservation measures would
have pushed his peak date back by some years. More optimistically, the Energy Information
Administration (EIA), within the US Department of Energy, argues the peak will not occur until
at least the 2020s, with its prediction assuming a gradual rise in both OPEC and non-OPEC
output.6

The differences between the optimistic and pessimistic forecasts are important for several
reasons. First, the peak date determines the time remaining to prepare for what is likely to
be a dramatic and permanent rise in oil prices. The later a peak is addressed, the less time to
adjust. Acting late may mean increasing output and thus hastening the decline in output and
rise in prices. Further, disagreements about when the peak will occur allow those who would
rather not contemplate the issue to argue the validity of the theory, a similarity that peak oil
shares with climate change.

There are good reasons to incline towards a pessimistic view. It remains a contested issue,
with some arguments that technology will deliver new oil supplies or that exploration and
extraction developments will transfer unproven reserves into the ‘proven’ category. Another
view says oil will peak in an ‘undulating plateau’, making the decline in production slower
and less painful than a sharp peak. However, even if right, such arguments do not negate the
underlying principles of the economic impact. Moreover, given the catastrophic impacts that could accompany any decline in production, it is worth considering what peak oil would mean regardless of when it actually comes and how abrupt it is.

An important issue is that problems with supply and demand underlie both peak oil theory and shorter-term risks of high oil prices. Regardless of peak oil theory, inadequate investment in oil infrastructure is expected to cause a price ‘spike’ in the coming 5-10 years, exacerbated by the time lag in bringing new investment on line. In itself, this will have an impact similar to peak oil, however, the additional risk is that it will occur at the same time or immediately before peak oil.

Beyond a supply crunch, peak oil theory is plausible for several reasons. First, nearly all large oil wells have been found: oil discoveries peaked in 1964 and discoveries since have been from smaller, lower-pressure and deeper wells, and at sea in increasingly-deeper water. Technology has been important—as peak oil sceptics argue—in improving extraction capacity but not enough to exceed demand. Second, OPEC proven reserve figures are probably artificially high, inflated by member states to increase their production quotas.

The greatest rises in reserves were in the mid-1980s, when prices were declining and most states quickly and seemingly arbitrarily increased reserve figures. Moreover, it is suspicious that these figures do not get adjusted downwards each year to account for that year’s production. Any hope that states with large reserves will simply increase oil output is probably misplaced, as substantially increased output will require enormous further investment and there is no evidence that major producers want to expand production dramatically. One study by a peak oil theorist and energy banker suggests that Saudi Arabia’s reserves are inflated and that a Saudi peak is likely soon anyway. Other studies of future Middle East oil supply suggest the amount the region can provide is quite modest—one 2007 study suggests a 5-10 per cent increase over ten years, which is not enough to cover anticipated global demand.

![Chart 2: Gulf OPEC Members' Claimed Proven Oil Reserves, 1980-2007](chart2.png)
Third, many counter-arguments point to new sources, such as heavy oil and tar sands. The reserves of these are enormous, with up to three times the proven reserves of conventional oil. However, there is no sign that unconventional reserves can be exploited quickly enough and in sufficient quantities. Furthermore, they are more energy-intensive and expensive to process, meaning that even if they could be exploited in large volume, they still would be comparatively expensive. Similarly, it is probably ambitious to hope that alternative energy sources will replace conventional oil. For some uses, such as vehicular transport, alternatives are some time off and not likely to be widely on the roads even in the 2020s. The idea of a ‘hydrogen economy’ likewise assumes long-term change over several decades.

This paints a somewhat grim picture, especially as oil demand continues to rise in emerging economies such as China and India. With conventional oil output already seemingly strained, there are two further problems. One is that oil is an input into an enormous range of goods. Arguments can be mounted that alternatives will emerge for certain things: recycling and bioplastics could be used in lieu of new plastic production for example. However, oil is an input into almost everything upon which the economy is reliant—think not just of fuels and heating oils but also of fertilisers, plastics, wax, soapless detergents, chemical-based pharmaceuticals, synthetic fibres, bitumen etc—and the economy relies on these to be affordable.

To think that the economy could absorb substantial, sustained and irreversible rises in the cost of all these products without recession or an inflation-created decline in living standards is delusional. Dramatic oil price rises also are problematic because oil has a negative wages impact and a positive prices impact: that is, it contains characteristics of both inflation (because the price of oil as an input into most goods has risen) and deflation (because consumer and business spending is diverted towards energy and away from other areas, causing profit falls and job losses). This is why it is often held responsible for stagflation, such as that experienced by developed economies in the 1970s, the last time oil prices rose dramatically. The only question, if oil peaks before a transition away from the ‘hydrocarbon economy’, is how dire the economic impact will be.

Moreover, as a second problem, little is being done to contemplate, much less address, the risk of peak oil. There is an assumption that the hydrocarbon economy will continue in perpetuity, or at least for decades, and an expectation of—even a sense of entitlement to—cheap oil. The widespread rejection of the peak oil concept probably comes from the fact that people have predicted oil shortages in the past, combined with an assumption that market mechanisms or technological advances will solve the problem, plus a resistance to change that will be disruptive or costly. Resistance to change is understandable but such resistance will ultimately make the impacts of the peak all the worse.

The impacts on the ADF

If peak oil theory is correct, the impact will be significant. Some states will handle high oil prices better than others, depending on their oil reliance and the energy intensity of their economies. But all will be affected to some degree by high inflation or sustained recession—depending on how their governments and central banks respond—and by greater competition for oil resources and energy security. Some oil states are likely to gain political influence
through their oil reserves, while others—susceptible to the ‘oil curse’—are likely to be less stable. Australia will need to be prepared and the ADF will need to be able to handle financial pressures while remaining capable of responding to an array of possible operational demands.

**Australia, the ADF and the economic impacts of peak oil**

The economy provides the basis for defence and, in Australia’s case, its comparatively high standard of living allows for a quality military and force multipliers, such as military information technology and qualitative advantages in equipment. The health of the economy, therefore, is crucial to Australia’s defence capability. When Australia had sustained high inflation (and high unemployment) in the 1970s, the defence budget was threatened by very tight budget constraints and wages pressure due to inflation. The Army’s manpower declined, due primarily to the end of conscription, but it was expedited by economic pressures.

If peak oil occurs, the ADF will need not only to be able to defend Australia effectively but also maintain the capability for sustained combat and operations other-than-war. Budgetary pressures will be no easier to resolve than in the 1970s. Outsourcing largely has reached the limits of its potential in the ADF, meaning that the Defence budget, if strained in the future, could not easily be cut—the budget parameters are close to what they will be if peak oil occurs in the 2010s.

Time-lags are sometimes useful in allaying major capital expenditure or spreading it over time—as occurred in the 1970s to some extent—but between now and 2020 there are a number of major platform and equipment acquisitions that will require funding. To maintain ADF capabilities and its qualitative advantages in the region, these platforms and equipment will have to be bought and paid for in the coming decade or so, regardless of any inflationary pressures or even recessionary conditions that might accompany peak oil. Moreover, if the fuel for them becomes more expensive, this will impact either the future Defence budget or the ADF’s capability.
A more general point is that because of its geographical size and housing patterns, Australia will face specific peak oil challenges. The physical size of Australia is the first hurdle. The ADF, drawing on a population of less than 22 million and a modest Defence budget, needs to cover a territory 177 per cent the size of the European Union (EU) or 78 per cent that of the US. The defence of Australia is thus a stretch of limited resources and also is an energy-intensive activity that relies on fuels, notably hydrocarbons, for personnel movements, strategic air capability and patrolling extensive maritime territory. A spike in oil prices will prove difficult for militaries such as Australia’s, while less of a problem for developed, geographically small states such as those of the EU. Australia will not be alone, however, as it will share this problem with other large net oil importers, such as the US, China and India.

Finally, there are issues for ADF personnel and housing patterns. The Australian suburban lifestyle would be sorely tested by sustained periods of high oil prices, given Australia’s reliance on motor vehicles and cheap long-distance travel. The ADF would not be immune from this, given the sizeable number of personnel who live off base, often some distance from work, and the remote location of some bases. This, again, will affect some militaries more than others. European states tend to have more compact cities—built as they were before the advent of oil-based economies—and shorter distances between key centres and borders, while states like the US and Australia will struggle. While seemingly a minor problem—in the context of inflation, budgetary constraints and recruitment—issues such as Defence housing will still be important to address.

**The risk of new conflicts**

Perhaps the most significant global problem from sustained, increasingly-high oil prices would be the conflicts likely to occur as states compete for dwindling oil supplies, face a decline in energy security and deal with the ramifications of high oil prices on areas such as food security, particularly relating to agricultural productivity—if oil-derived fertilisers increase in cost—and transportation. At a minimum, states will have to spend considerable time reconstructing their economies as the viability of shipping products for trade declines and as transport becomes increasingly expensive.

A more severe scenario would involve changes to the global political order, including a relative rise and decline of some powers and turmoil within and between states that fail to transition from current levels of oil reliance. The impacts of this would be enormous, even if not as severe as some peak oil theorists claim with their more extreme predictions such as, for example, societal collapse and a return to pre-industrial revolution standards of living. However, the point is that oil and other sources of energy have helped make civilisations and societies very complex and this complexity is also a vulnerability when a shock occurs.

The first and perhaps most obvious observation is that major oil exporters will benefit from higher prices and, concomitantly, their international power and influence is likely to rise. This depends in part on how accurate their oil reserves figures prove to be, the extent to which non-conventional oils and alternatives are brought online quickly, and perhaps the degree to which they work together. However, a number of states are likely to be pivotal in future oil supply, especially Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran, Kuwait, Venezuela, Russia and the UAE. Even
Canada, with large non-conventional reserves, is likely to grow in importance as a producer. The Middle East, with autocratic states that have weak institutions and often fuzzy borders with their neighbours, will continue to be of global strategic importance.

The rise in wealth among oil exporters will in itself create tensions and problems, some of which could create conflict. While the power of exporters will have its limits, given their own rising populations and increased energy consumption, they will have more money. This may be spent on militarisation as large sums of Middle East oil wealth have in the past.\textsuperscript{30} This increases the capability of states to use military force and may also increase the importance of the military as a political actor in oil states.

It also makes pipeline politics—already messy and unpredictable—riskier and more complex, while oil and gas importers, especially in Europe and South Asia, will increasingly rely on energy brought by pipeline.\textsuperscript{31} Oil wealth may also be placed into sovereign wealth funds\textsuperscript{32} and invested abroad. This could be a risk given not only that such investments are controversial, because of economic nationalism or concerns about undue political influence by the investment funds,\textsuperscript{33} but also because such investments could become a coercive tool for oil exporting states.

Second, peak oil is likely to cause disputes among states over oil and other energy resources. This could be from declining oil producers or from net oil importers whose economies cannot afford high oil prices. Declining oil producers face the double problem of losing oil income or self-sufficiency at the same time as coming to rely on oil imports for their economic well-being. To some extent, declining output will be offset by higher oil prices, meaning that income ought not to fall as dramatically as output. However, there will still be adjustments needed and some states’ output and revenue declines may be sharp. At present, output in the majority of oil producing states has peaked—in 33 out of the top 48 countries by one count\textsuperscript{34}—including in the US, Mexico, Norway, UK and Indonesia.\textsuperscript{35} As traditional suppliers decline, world output has been maintained only because of increased, probably short-term output by Russia, Saudi Arabia, Central Asia and Africa.

The risk of conflict will probably vary based on the economic capacity of states to absorb higher oil prices and on the energy-intensity of their economies. Key major and emerging economies are likely to prove vulnerable to an oil price spike. In the developed world, the US faces the prospect of a further decline in its own output and a heavy reliance on imported oil. For the UK, North Sea oil production peaked in 1999 and is expected to run out (in terms of commercial viability) in the mid-to-late 2010s.\textsuperscript{36} Thus the UK will rely on imports for nearly all its oil in only a few years’ time. Furthermore, most EU states are net oil importers, albeit mostly more efficient oil consumers than the US or Australia.

Perhaps of more concern are major emerging economies, especially China and India but also some Southeast Asian states. China and India, both increasingly economically influential and militarily capable, make up a large share of anticipated global demand over the next two decades.\textsuperscript{37} However, while these economies are growing strongly, they do not have the wealth to absorb dramatic spikes in oil prices in the way that developed economies are able. Several strategic possibilities exist in this light. One is that the two will have to adjust their economies and expectations, especially China given its manufacturing-intensive economy.\textsuperscript{38}
Another is that China and India will increasingly compete for oil, in competition with the US, a scenario that increases the potential for international conflict. Another is that China and India will cooperate on energy security, something they seem to be starting to do. In such a situation, Australia may have to balance its strategic relationship with the US against growing economic and other ties with these emerging Asian economies. The latter two scenarios increase the likelihood of US energy competition with China, in particular, for several reasons: the likely increase in aggressive seeking of long-term contracts in the Middle East and Africa, and alliances and arms sales by each that could be construed by the other as proxy conflict and greater military assertiveness.

Table A: Energy Use and Energy Efficiency by Key Regional States

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Population (m)</th>
<th>GDP (US$m)</th>
<th>Oil consumption (m tonnes)</th>
<th>Total energy consumption</th>
<th>Energy consumption per capita</th>
<th>Oil-intensity of the economy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(July 2008 estimate)</td>
<td>(2007 estimate)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>760,800</td>
<td>42.2</td>
<td>121.8</td>
<td>5.91</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>111,700</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>237.5</td>
<td>837,800</td>
<td>54.4</td>
<td>114.6</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>228,100</td>
<td>47.4</td>
<td>53.4</td>
<td>11.59</td>
<td>0.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>357,400</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>57.4</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>127.3</td>
<td>4,429,000</td>
<td>228.9</td>
<td>517.5</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>1,330</td>
<td>6,991,000</td>
<td>384.9</td>
<td>1,889.9</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>1,148</td>
<td>2,989,000</td>
<td>128.5</td>
<td>404.4</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>303.8</td>
<td>13,840,000</td>
<td>943.1</td>
<td>2,361.4</td>
<td>7.77</td>
<td>0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>60.9</td>
<td>2,137,000</td>
<td>78.2</td>
<td>215.9</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Million tonnes of oil equivalent; traded energy only (not counting biomass fuels)

** Calculated as total energy consumption figure x 1,000,000 divided by population = tonnes of oil equivalent per capita per annum. The higher the figure, the greater the energy consumption per capita.

† Calculated as oil consumption in litres (figure x 116,500,000) divided by GDP = oil litres required for each dollar of GDP. The lower the figure, the less oil required to earn a US$ of GDP.


Finally, because oil is such an important input into agriculture and other necessities, high oil prices not only affect energy security but also equally-important areas such as food security. Current global population levels are based on the availability of oil for food, medicines, urban infrastructure and other fundamentals, and it is debatable whether current populations could be sustained without oil. This is likely to be a further reason for international conflict, as well as a source of domestic instability—as demonstrated by the riots in a number of developing states in 2008 as oil prices impacted food costs.
**Australia, the ADF and domestic conflicts and operations other-than-war**

For the ADF, an increased commitment to peacekeeping roles and operations other-than-war seems likely after peak oil. Developing economies will be particularly vulnerable because they lack the funds to compete financially for expensive, scarce oil and because they typically possess poor infrastructure, low resource productivity and limited ability to adapt to alternative energy sources. Peak oil would most adversely hit those that lack food self-sufficiency and which are net food importers, although others will likely face the challenge of declining soil quality and other problems of agricultural production.43

The various scenarios from an environment of permanently high and rising oil prices are not difficult to imagine. Some leaderships could experience serious challenges to state authority, which could cause instability and, for regimes to survive, greater authoritarianism.44 Refugee and other population displacements and movements are likely, including conceivably a long wave of unlawful boat arrivals in Australia. Such situations could draw the ADF into lengthier or more regular peacekeeping or border protection roles, which would be increasingly expensive as a result of peak oil. Peacekeeping requests could come from the UN or from allies, seeking Australian involvement in the name of good global citizenship or for more self-interested reasons, such as the collapse of oil states or the threat of terrorism from weak or decentralised states.

**Table B: Oil Reliance by Key Regional States, 2007**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Oil consumption*</th>
<th>Total energy consumption**</th>
<th>% oil vs total energy use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>42.2</td>
<td>121.58</td>
<td>34.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>40.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>54.4</td>
<td>114.6</td>
<td>47.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>47.4</td>
<td>53.4</td>
<td>88.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>57.4</td>
<td>41.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>228.9</td>
<td>517.5</td>
<td>44.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China &amp; Hong Kong</td>
<td>384.9</td>
<td>1,889.9</td>
<td>20.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>128.5</td>
<td>404.4</td>
<td>31.78</td>
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<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>943.1</td>
<td>2,361.4</td>
<td>39.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>78.2</td>
<td>215.9</td>
<td>36.22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* million tonnes of oil

** million tonnes of oil equivalent; traded energy only, not counting biomass fuels

Conclusion

The most dramatically pessimistic proponents of peak oil theory would argue that the peak is nigh and that, shortly after it comes, it will cause societal collapses and a return to the lifestyles of the pre-oil, even pre-industrial, era. Optimists argue for business as usual, confident that technology, human creativity or luck will step in and avoid any or most of the peak oil theory scenarios. As is often the case, an outcome somewhere in between is most likely. It is too late for a great technological or innovative leap to avoid all the negative impacts that are likely from peak oil—and major economies are likely to baulk at the costs and social changes required. Yet the likelihood of a peak, probably relatively soon and with some quite pervasive and severe consequences, is very high.

Australia faces the challenge of being an energy intensive economy, geographically isolated and heavily reliant on trade for its quality of life. That said, while now a net oil importer, Australia also is a net energy exporter, offering post-peak benefits to its economy. If peak oil occurs soon, most scenarios assume that some oil demand will, in the short- and medium-term, be replaced by substitutes such as natural gas, coal and uranium, for all of which Australia is a key global supplier. In alternative energy, Australia has lost some of the solar lead it once held but this could be made up and we are likely also to become an important actor in alternative and clean energy technologies. This does not mean, however, that Australia will escape all of the problems of peak oil. It is still reliant on oil for transport energy and on oil products for much of its agricultural and industrial performance. So peak oil is likely to be as painful here as elsewhere.

For the ADF, the two core challenges it will face are budgetary constraints and likely greater operational demands. It is not realistic for militaries to move away from oil reliance for some time—especially in key areas such as air and sea transport and combat—and additional costs will be essential if capabilities are to be maintained. The ADF will, above all, need to remain flexible and adaptable, given the likely increase in operational tempo but also the unpredictability of locations and types of future deployments. The last decade has been a period of high operational pace and diversity for the ADF. But if peak oil theory turns out to be correct, the coming decades could be even more so.

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13. For example, Catherine Madden and Jill Feblowitz, ‘Insights on oil and gas August 2008’, *Energy Insights*, August 2008 <http://www.idc.com/downloads/InsightsonOilandGas.pdf> accessed 28 August 2008 puts conventional oil at only 30 per cent of the global total, with oil sands at another 30 per cent, extra heavy oil at 25 per cent and heavy oil at 15 per cent. Other estimates vary but the theme is similar—conventional oil reserves are a minority of total reserves.

15. Despite some recent developments in hydrogen-based electric-powered vehicles, for example, the prospect of any major shift in road transport to hydrogen power lays well beyond 2020: see Bernie Woodall, ‘First mass US crossing for hydrogen cars completed’, The Washington Post, 24 August 2008. The article cites a US National Research Council estimate that hydrogen-based car sales in 2020 will be about 2 million units: to put this in context, total US new car sales were 16.1 million in 2007.


17. A multitude of sources make this point. Jad Mouawad, ‘Rising demand for oil provokes new energy crisis’, The New York Times, 9 November 2007 argues that demand for oil in China and India is expected to double in the 20 years to 2026. An even more dramatic prediction, suggesting a three- or four-fold rise in demand from the two states, is contained in ‘China and India: a rage for oil’, BusinessWeek, 5 September 2005.


21. Estimates of the cost of transitioning away from oil vary wildly but are always in the trillions of US dollars. This, however, is not as problematic as may appear, given that to sustain the oil and gas sectors and expand to meet anticipated demand over the next 20-30 years will also require enormous investment: US$16 trillion over 2001-2030 according to the International Energy Agency (IEA); see International Energy Agency, World Energy Investment Outlook 2003 Insights, Paris: International Energy Agency, 2004, p. 41.

22. The ‘oil curse’ or ‘resource curse’ identifies that ‘states with abundant resource wealth perform less well than their resource-poor counterparts’ and are often less politically stable. Money changes everything but not, it seems, always for the better if that money is external rents. On the curse and the political economy explanations for it, see the excellent and comprehensive review article: Michael L. Ross, ‘The political economy of the resource curse’, World Politics, Vol. 51, No. 2, 1999, pp. 297-322.


28. This type of argument is made, for example, in books such as Leeb, The Coming Economic Collapse… cited earlier, and the very alarmist James Howard Kunstler, The Long Emergency: Surviving the Converging Catastrophes of the Twenty-First Century, New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2005.


30. See Yahya Sadowski, Scuds or Butter? The Political Economy of Arms Control in the Middle East, Washington: The Brooking Institution, 1993. Pages 1-10 give a good summary of the issue, including the links between oil income and military expenditure.


32. ‘Sovereign wealth funds’ is used here as a catch-all definition of investment funds and other vehicles used by states/governments to invest money, usually oil rents, for the future. Such funds are increasingly common—Australia has one in the form of the Future Fund—however, their wealth and degree of transparency varies enormously. The Kuwaiti and UAE funds, and Saudi monetary authority investment abroad, are especially valuable and not very transparent. On the various funds and for some background see the website of the Sovereign Wealth Fund Institute, <http://www.swfinstitute.org/> accessed 2 September 2008.


35. See the statistics available via the webpage BP Statistical Review of World Energy 2008 <http://www.bp.com> accessed 29 August 2008. As a side note, Australia peaked in 2000 at 809,000 bbl/day and has declined notably since—in 2007, it produced only 561,000 bbl/day.


42. Bradsher, ‘A new, global oil quandary…’.


44. Elhefnawy, ‘The impending oil shock’, p. 49.
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Uniting the Tribes: managing the change to a joint health culture

Air Commodore Tracy Smart, RAAF

Introduction

While it is important for the three health services to work closely together and coordinate their efforts as much as possible... I'm opposed to any idea of an integrated solution for all three Services. And while the treatment of diseases... is similar across the three Services, each Service has its own special function. The role of a doctor on a ship... is quite different from that of an Army doctor looking after ground troops. And the Air Force's main concern is aviation medicine—it would be silly to try to put it in some integrated organisation.

Major General C.M. Gurner, Surgeon General, 1978

Provision of health support to the ADF comprises two elements—operational health support (OHS) and maintenance of the health and fitness of ADF personnel in the national support area (garrison health support [GHS]). Both missions were traditionally undertaken by independent health services within the single Services, however, were split in the late 1990s. OHS remained the responsibility of the single Services, while GHS nominally became the responsibility of a joint Defence Health Service (DHS) Branch within Defence Personnel Executive (later DHS Division within Defence Support Group).

This resulted in fragmentation and major cultural changes within the DHS. While single Service health cultures remained strong, particularly given the increased operational tempo post-1999, a positive, operationally-focused joint health culture failed to develop. This resulted in a less than efficient health service, no strategic oversight of OHS and a failure to maximise the synergies of the organisation.

A major review of ADF health was conducted in early 2008 and presented to the Chiefs of Staff Committee in July 2008. The outcome was the creation of a Joint Health Command (JHC), led by a Commander Joint Health (CJHLTH), and a clearer articulation of command and control responsibilities for GHS. Additional outcomes included the transfer of JHC to VCDF Group and the creation of a third one-star health officer within the command, with each one-star designated as the Director-General of their respective health service. This represents a major moment of change for ADF health and provides an opportunity to unite the many cultural groups or ‘tribes’ into one cohesive, professional, efficient and effective health team.

This paper examines the current pervading cultures within Defence health and identifies the challenges and opportunities presented by the creation of a JHC. In particular, it will explain why the creation of a joint health culture is crucial for the future of the Defence health services.
Background

The changes implemented in the DHS post-1998 were poorly implemented and resulted in many organisational problems and cultural issues, both in a joint context and also within the single Services. Of primary concern was a lack of clear accountability and responsibility for GHS delivery and poorly-defined chains of command and control.\(^6\) This was exacerbated by the fact that OHS and GHS assets were often collocated, in part because the two ADF health missions have many areas of overlap.\(^7\) Due to the confusion of roles and responsibilities, a cohesive joint health culture failed to develop. Instead, a culture of learned helplessness evolved, with resultant disempowerment of personnel at all levels of the organisation.\(^8\)

In terms of the single Services, problems were quickly evident in Air Force (AF), which, unlike Navy and Army, transferred the majority of its uniformed health positions to the new joint organisation.\(^9\) In doing so, AF lost control of its operational health assets and therefore of OHS to its deployed forces. In addition, the AF health service culture became fragmented and began to disintegrate, which negatively impacted upon morale and increased resignation rates of AF health personnel.\(^10\) In response, Health Services Wing (HSW) was formed in 2001, as part of Combat Support Group, in order to exercise command, control and management of AF operational health assets.\(^11\) This began a process that has culminated in the ‘brigading’ of all AF health assets under one health commander and, consequently, a strong and vibrant AF health culture has re-emerged.\(^12\)

A joint health culture does exist on operations as, like other elements of the ADF, single Service health units are force-assigned to Commander of Joint Operations (CJOPS) for support to operations. Personnel from the three Services, both full time and reserve, have regularly deployed side-by-side. In fact, on major operations, health facilities are rarely staffed by personnel from a single Service. Inter-Service rivalries are, however, still a factor in determining the health assets required for a particular operation and an overlap of capabilities exists.\(^13\) These rivalries and redundancies often result in an inefficient use of scarce health resources.

A joint health culture

Company cultures are like country cultures. Never try to change one. Try, instead, to work with what you’ve got.

Peter F. Drucker, writer and management consultant\(^14\)

Why is organisational culture important? The culture of an organisation refers to ‘the established ways of thinking and doing things in the organisation … its shared values and belief systems, its traditions and assumptions’.\(^15\) A good organisational culture provides a unified sense of purpose that increases morale. This in turn improves quality of performance and can be a force multiplier.\(^16\)

While underlying cultural assumptions act to unify an organisation, they can also be very hard to break.\(^17\) Resistance is likely when change disrupts or reorients the prevailing organisational culture.\(^18\) On the positive side, a consideration of culture can act as an important change lever.\(^19\) Understanding and identifying potential cultural barriers is thus essential
during the implementation of major changes to any organisation.\textsuperscript{20} Few organisations have a homogeneous culture and therefore successful change implementation also depends on identifying pre-existing sub-cultures.\textsuperscript{21} 

There are several identifiable subcultures or groups within Defence health. These groups include those based on skill or craft groups (doctors, nurses, psychologists, dental staff, medical assistants and even non-health personnel working in health units) and employment status of personnel (uniformed, [active duty or Reserve], Australian Public Service and contractors). The cultures of these groups must be considered, however, by far the most significant cultural groups are those of the three single Service health elements. 

Two approaches to cultural change are possible. In the commercial world, larger companies that acquire smaller ones often impose their overarching culture onto their new employees.\textsuperscript{22} Another approach, advocated by Drucker, is to use the pre-existing cultures to evolve a new culture (see above). This latter approach is more likely to be effective in the ADF given the history and strength of the single Service cultures. 

**Joint health cultures in other militaries**

The US military has maintained separate and autonomous medical services and resisted attempts to adopt a joint approach, despite a number of reviews recommending this outcome.\textsuperscript{23} As well as fearing a loss of control over OHS, the separate US health services have historically resisted change due to the argument that each Service has unique health requirements.\textsuperscript{24} A loss of Service identity is feared, resulting in low morale amongst health personnel and therefore lower productivity.\textsuperscript{25} This is despite the fact that like the ADF, health services are provided under a joint command in wartime.\textsuperscript{26} The most recent attempt by the US Department of Defense (DoD) to create a unified medical command failed as a result of ‘the strength of the cultural challenges to successful implementation’, however, little attempt was made to overcome these barriers to change.\textsuperscript{27} 

Despite the failed review, some functions have been centralised and progress has been made towards a more joint approach. An overarching Military Health System (MHS) Strategic Plan, co-signed by the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs and the respective Service Surgeons-General, has been developed, which calls for the creation of ‘an integrated medical team that provides optimal health services in support of our nation’s military mission’.\textsuperscript{28} This holistic plan for all US DoD health personnel includes strong mission and vision statements, core values, guiding principles and a guide to transformation. The plan begins to articulate a joint health culture for the US military. 

Some militaries already operate joint health services. South Africa established a Military Health Service as a separate fourth Service with the creation of the modern South African National Defence Force in 1998.\textsuperscript{29} The Canadian Forces unified their medical services in 1959, however, single Service rivalries persisted and were not completely overcome until the entire military was unified in 1966.\textsuperscript{30} Other militaries, such as those of the Republic of Singapore, have a single joint medical headquarters but still maintain strong single Service health support elements.\textsuperscript{31}
Implementing cultural change in ADF health

The US military is reluctant to dismantle its single Service health elements for fear of losing the uniqueness and responsiveness of each Service and these concerns, also present in the ADF, are somewhat justified. Other militaries have overcome this problem by maintaining the identities of their single Service health elements within a strong joint health culture. This is vitally important because a health element that reflects the culture of its parent Service will better understand the overarching mission of that Service and deliver more effective and appropriately tailored OHS.\(^{22}\) Single Service health experiences also create diversity within the joint environment and ensure that single Service customer needs are considered and met.\(^{23}\) Thus a joint health culture is made stronger by strong single Service sub-cultures within it, provided these sub-cultures are managed in a positive manner.

The creation of a JHC provides an excellent opportunity to overcome cultural barriers and create a strong joint health culture in the ADF. To create a positive organisational culture within the GHS space and to overcome learned helplessness, strong and committed leadership and organisational clarity are required.\(^{34}\) These are clearly more achievable with the creation of JHC. A stronger sense of being part of an ADF joint health organisation and a more ADF-centric customer focus is also more likely with the move of health from an enabling organisation to VCDF group.

Although OHS still remains the responsibility of the single Services, the repositioning of JHC can also influence health on operations, as ownership or command of assets is not necessarily required to develop a joint culture or provide coordination. For example, Commander Joint Logistics is neither the owner nor provider of all logistic support to the ADF but has a role in coordinating this support and developing a joint logistics culture.\(^{35}\) In a similar vein, in 2008, VCDF was assigned the role of Joint Capability Coordinator.\(^{36}\) Single Service health rivalries can be ameliorated by CJHLTH in the role of joint health capability manager and coordinator—the champion, leader and advocate for all ADF health (including OHS, health training and ‘organic’ health elements within the single Services).\(^{37}\)

The creation of the single Service Directors-General will also assist in uniting the three tribes into one cultural team. This can be facilitated by encouraging strong individual single Service health cultures but at the same time better defining their roles in the joint space to eliminate destructive rivalry. This will require an analysis of current OHS capabilities to identify overlaps and gaps in OHS capability.\(^{38}\) A successful example of reducing OHS overlap is the removal from service of the AF Air Transportable Hospital due to its perceived overlap with the Army deployable hospital capability.\(^{39}\) The result was a re-focus on core AF health capabilities that provide both AF-specific support and niche capabilities within an overall joint ADF OHS construct.\(^{40}\)

To implement these changes, a robust change management plan is required, with specific strategies to overcome existing cultural barriers. Creation of an implementation team whose sole purpose is one of transformation is crucial, both to manage change and measure outcomes. In producing such a plan, key cultural attributes or ‘masters of change’ should be considered. These include senior management involvement, an empowered and participating
workforce, a focus on customer needs, consensus driven management, awareness of social responsibility and communication.\textsuperscript{41} Frequent and consistent communication of a joint health vision is essential and this can be facilitated by the creation of a Joint Strategic Health Plan, similar to that of the US MHS, which includes OHS roles and clearly articulates the mission, vision and values of the ADF health.

**Conclusion**

Despite the continued high quality health support provided to ADF personnel on operations over recent years, the lack of a strong and cohesive joint health culture has reduced the efficiency and effectiveness of ADF health services. The creation of JHC provides the opportunity for the development of a truly joint, integrated ADF health capability. This cannot occur without the development of a culture that incorporates the most positive aspects of the existing single Service health sub-cultures and allows for the creation of a true team approach. Needless competition between the Services must be eliminated but, at the same time, their cultures and Service-specific knowledge must be maintained. Experience has shown that a strong joint health culture is best served by three strong single Service health elements committed to working together in a joint environment.

Through development and implementation of a well considered cultural change-management plan, barriers to change can be overcome and fear of change can be replaced by genuine excitement at the prospect of building a better ADF health service. This is very much achievable but, as stated by Harper (1993) in his review of cultural change in the US Army in the post-Cold War period, ‘[e]verything begins and ends with leadership’.\textsuperscript{42} Ensuring that all senior health leaders are actively engaged in leading these changes is therefore absolutely essential to its success.

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4. Australian Defence Force, Minutes of Chief of Staff Committee, 23 July 2008 (copy held by author).

5. As well as leading a Branch within JHC, each one-star acts as health advisor to their respective Chief of Service.

6. Problems of a lack of accountability due to the ADF no longer ‘owning’ support functions and the increasingly inward focus of enabler groups following the Defence Reform Program are not unique to health and were identified as a significant problem in a recent review (Australian Department of Defence, Report of the Defence Management Review, Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia, 2007, p. 21.).

7. GHS support is essential for OHS as it includes the preparation of ADF personnel for deployment and their rehabilitation following deployment. In addition, uniformed health personnel need to maintain their skills by working in GHS when not deployed. The same has also been noted in the US military (Susan D. Hosek and Gary Cecchine, Reorganizing the military health system: should there be a joint command?, Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 2001, p. 3).


10. Australian Government Auditor-General, Australian Defence Force Health Services Follow up Audit, 2001, p. 50.


12. 'Brigading' is an Army term that refers to grouping a number of disparate units into a brigade, which itself is defined as ‘a military unit having its own headquarters and consisting of two or more regiments, squadrons, groups or battalions’ (Dictionary.com website, <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/brigading> accessed 26 November 2008).

13. This was evident when planning health support to Operation Sumatra Assist, the ADF response to the Boxing Day tsunami, when deployable level 3 (hospital) facilities of all three Services were activated simultaneously. This resulted in active and unnecessary competition for supply of consumables from the central logistics supply chain. The non-deployment of one of these capabilities (the AF Air Transportable Hospital) also had a severe morale effect on the staff of that facility.


23. Hosek and Cecchine reviewed 13 separate studies of military health care delivery from 1948 to 1991 of which four recommended creation of a unified military health service, six recommended creation of a single centralised authority and only three recommended retention of separate Services (Susan D. Hosek and Gary Cecchine, Reorganizing the military health system: should there be a joint command?, 2001, pp. 57-61).


32. Susan D. Hosek and Gary Cecchine, *Reorganizing the military health system: should there be a joint command?*, 2001, p. 47.


34. Tracy Smart, *Threats to the ‘health of health’* paper, p. 9.


37. Organic health support refers to those health personnel embedded in ‘line’ or operational units. This includes those assigned to Regimental Aid Posts in the Army and ship-based health personnel in the Navy. AF does not have health personnel engaged in organic health support. Organic health elements were not included in the US models for unified command (Susan D. Hosek and Gary Cecchine, *Reorganizing the military health system: should there be a joint command?*, 2001, p. 22).

38. This may involve the designation of a lead Service for particular capabilities. For example, ship-based health support (including surgical capabilities)—Navy; sustainable field surgical capabilities—Army; aeromedical evacuation and aerospace medicine—AF; etc.


40. This includes the deployment of a much smaller footprint, rapidly responsive and short duration surgical capability in lieu of the full ATH (Australian Government Department of Defence: Health Services Wing, *Headquarters Health Services Wing Concept for Operations version 2.0*, 17 October 2007 (copy held by author)). Such an arrangement aligns with the construct proposed by Kumpula for the US military: ‘The Air Force would become the short suspense medical deployment asset; the Army the moderate asset; and the Navy the extended asset’ (Darwin D. Kumpula, *Joint medical command – do it now*, 2005, p. 9).


Australian Department of Defence, Minutes of Chief of Staff Committee, 23 July 2008 (copy held by author).


Hosek, Susan D. and Gary Cecchine, Reorganizing the military health system: should there be a joint command?, Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 2001.


Since the 1990s, various influential authors have argued that Clausewitz’s theory is no longer applicable, not only in relation to contemporary conflicts but also in general. Some have suggested it is harmful and even self-destructive to continue using his theory as the basis for understanding and a guide to political action, given the revolutionary changes in war and violence occurring in the world’s communities. Clausewitz, it is argued by these commentators, was only concerned with war between states employing regular armies, whereas conflict today mainly involves non-state actors.

Both claims, however, are overdrawn with respect to the core contents of Clausewitz’s theory and the unique characteristics of today’s ‘new wars’. With the exception of much of Africa and some very old conflicts at the fringes of the former empires, existing states—along with hierarchically-organised political-religious groups like Hezbollah and Hamas—are still the decisive, if no longer the sole, actors in war. Additionally, Clausewitz has much more to say about contemporary forms of warfare than the highly-selective interpretations by his modern critics might suggest. Nevertheless, the criticisms by Clausewitz’s newest detractors are constructive in that they force one to read Clausewitz more exactly and extract aspects of his work that were previously underexposed.

A number of authors have attempted to articulate the ‘trinity’ that Clausewitz described as his own ‘Consequences for Theory’ as his actual legacy. In it, the world-renowned formula for war as ‘merely the continuation of policy by other means’ is indirectly repeated, while at the same time identified as only one of three principal tendencies from which each war is composed. The significance of the ‘trinity’ as the starting point of Clausewitz’s theory of war is indirectly acknowledged by critics who impute to him the concept of ‘trinitarian war’. The problem with this interpretation is that Clausewitz’s indicated facts were merely one example of a socio-historical construct. Indeed, the concept of ‘trinitarian war’ does not stem from Clausewitz but from Harry Summers who, in the early 1980s (when a US Army colonel), analysed mistakes made in the Vietnam War by drawing on the examples Clausewitz mentioned in the ‘wondrous trinity’.

In the following section, I will introduce the ‘wondrous trinity’ and explain why it must be regarded as Clausewitz’s actual legacy. I will then methodologically interpret the ‘wondrous trinity’ as a uniform, comprehensive concept from Clausewitz’s different—and in part contradictory—definitions, terms and formulas, and try to develop from this a general theory of violent conflict.

The ‘wondrous trinity’ as Clausewitz’s legacy

Clausewitz’s ‘wondrous trinity’ is found at the end of Chapter One, Book 1 in his work On War under the section heading ‘Consequences for Theory’. It states:
War is more than a true chameleon that slightly adapts its characteristics to the given case. As a total phenomenon, its dominant tendencies always make war a paradoxical trinity—composed of primordial violence, hatred and enmity, which are to be regarded as a blind natural force of the play of chance and probability within which the creative spirit is free to roam, and of its element of subordination, as an instrument of policy, which makes it subject to pure reason.7

What is immediately apparent about the ‘wondrous trinity’ is that primacy of policy is identified as one of three tendencies. It must be stressed that Clausewitz argued that war is composed from these tendencies of which at least two are extreme contrasts—‘primordial violence’ on the one hand and ‘the subordinated nature of war as a political tool’ on the other.

In his paragraph on the ‘wondrous trinity’, Clausewitz writes that the first of these tendencies mainly concerns the people, the second mainly the general and his army, and the third mainly the government. However, it cannot be inferred that his ‘second trinity’ is actually Clausewitz’s true and actual concept, as Summers has claimed. Rather, this second trinity in the form of ‘trinitarian war’, of people/population/nation as well as army/general and government, was arguably simply being used by Clausewitz as a practical example.

A fundamental difference between Clausewitz’s ‘wondrous trinity’ and the concept of trinitarian war is that in the latter, the three elements are ordered into a hierarchical structure with people/population/nation at its base, followed by army/general, then government at the top. This hierarchical construction of trinitarian war is, in certain instances, a meaningful, explanatory model. However, it does not correspond with Clausewitz’s formulation and even conflicts with it to some extent.

Clausewitz stresses that ‘[t]hese three tendencies are like three different codes of law, deep-rooted in their subject and yet variable in their relationship to one another’.8 This means nothing more than that these three tendencies, although common to all wars, can—in their respective limited socio-historic instances—have a different meaning and influence (admittedly without leaving out any one of them). In contrast to this, a hierarchy between the three tendencies represents a general established relationship, which directly contradicts Clausewitz’s formulation.

The riddle of the first chapter

Within Clausewitz’s work is a crucial passage that was evidently inserted very late as a result of his analyses of Napoleon’s campaigns and which may explain the whole structure of the first chapter, ‘On War’, with all its internal contradictions, namely:

Once again we must remind the reader that, in order to lend clarity, distinction and emphasis to our ideas, only perfect contrasts, the extremes of the spectrum, have been included in our observations. As an actual occurrence, war generally falls somewhere in between and is influenced by these extremes only to the extent to which it approaches them.9

The statements and counter-statements made by Clausewitz ‘are like weights and counterweights, and one could say that through their play and interplay the scales of truth are brought into balance’.10 From this methodological point of view, Clausewitz’s formulation of opposing, apparently contradictory definitions of war is explicable. Of additional importance is the fact that,
in his first chapter, Clausewitz often interrupts his discussion to highlight a counter-statement to a given idea. For example, he explains the transition of the three interactions to the extreme to the three tendencies of limited war, with reference to the opposition of idea and reality as well as the duration of any war. What is decisive, however, is that there is a very sudden transition from one pole to its opposite.

Similarly, in order to stress imponderability within the fight, Clausewitz argues that war is most closely related (among all human activities) to a game of cards but then immediately breaks the train of thought to insist that war remains ‘nonetheless a serious means to a serious end’. Apparently, according to Clausewitz, the pursuit of only one pole in an opposing pair leads at the beginning of an argument to a true statement, although it does not determine the whole, so the respective counter-statement must be formed from scratch.

The second of Clausewitz’s three tendencies is the ‘play of chance and probability’. Derived from the interpretation of the first chapter, this play relates to the imponderability of the ‘fight’. At the beginning of Book 2, it is stated that ‘[e]ssentially, war is fighting, for fighting is the only effective principle in the manifold activities generally designated as war’. In addition, Clausewitz stressed (at the beginning of the second chapter of Book 1) how varied are the forms of fight in war, how far it may remove itself from the brute discharge of hatred and enmity in a physical encounter and how many variables allow themselves to be inserted that are not themselves ‘fight’—it would be inherent in the very concept of war that all effects which appear must originally derive from the fight.

If we generalise the second tendency in this sense and consider Clausewitz’s very general conception of politics, then the ‘wondrous trinity’ states that war is composed of the tendencies of its primordial violence, the imponderability of fight and its subordinated nature as purposive collective action; in short, violence, fight and the membership of the combatants to a community, or even more briefly put as ‘war is the violent fight of communities’.

In the case of modern states, war is composed of violence, fight and the policy of the state; in the case of other communities, it is also composed of violence, fight and actions derived from the orientation of this community and its purposes, goals or identity. If we differentiate each of these three aspects and investigate their interaction, the inner structure of the first chapter as a guide for Clausewitz’s entire work and as starting point for a theory of war is revealed. Whether this corresponds to Clausewitz’s own thought processes—as formulated here—or whether it represents mainly my own creation, may remain in dispute.

**Violence and fight**

At first glance, war is distinguished from other human actions by the massive use of force; it is a violent action and force is based on the asymmetrical relationship between active power and suffering. With the use of force arises the fundamental problem of its becoming independent, a problem to which Wolfgang Sofsky referred when he wrote that ‘force and violence are self-escalating’. Clausewitz described this independence of the act of force thus: ‘war is an act of violence and there is no logical limit to the application of that force’.
Without denying the tendency for violence to become independent of any rational purpose in war, especially in direct combat, violence in war is not an end in itself but a means or at least an expression of the values and culture of a community—and, consequently, one of its ‘means’ of expressing itself. Uncontrolled violence, for Clausewitz, is dysfunctional in principle and even self-destructive, as he learned in his analysis of Napoleon’s defeat at Waterloo.20

How, though, does war differentiate itself from other forms of mass violence? Genocides are very often accompanied by war—for instance, the genocide of Armenians before the First World War and the murder of Jews in the Second World War. But, even in these cases, they were described as what they were: genocide and not war between nations. In addition to the aspect of mass violence, war needs a minimum of real fight or struggle—otherwise it would be a massacre, mass destruction or mass murder.21 The occupation of Czechoslovakia by Germany, for example, was not war but annexation or occupation. Clausewitz brought this problem to a head in noting that war actually begins with defence not attack. Only when someone defends himself against the massive ‘use of force’ does a real fight and thus real wars arise:

Essentially, the concept of war does not originate with the attack, because the ultimate object of attack is not fighting, rather it is possession. The idea of war originates with the defense, which does have fighting as its immediate object.22

How is ‘violence and force’ on one side and ‘fighting’ on the other differentiated? ‘Violence and force’ are bound to the aforementioned asymmetrical relationship between action and suffering. ‘Fighting’, in contrast, is bound to a minimum of symmetry of the combatants—Clausewitz’s term for this is the ‘duel’.23 Due to this minimum of symmetry between warring parties, combatants in the course of the development of war established conventions whereby war is bound by rules about the purpose and means of fighting and about who may be allowed to do the killing and who may be killed. Without such nonetheless limited conventions, every warring community or society would internally disintegrate and break-up. The outward exercise of violence would no longer have any boundaries that could protect the inner community.

Clausewitz’s wondrous trinity as a differentiated coordinate system

Each of the three tendencies of the ‘wondrous trinity’ is split up further into additional oppositions, in which Clausewitz’s various definitions of war are raised as ‘moments’. Each war is located within these opposites, depending on historical, social, political and cultural conditions, each distinct and yet simultaneously inclusive of them. The following opposites are typical characteristics of every war—each of these is influenced by socio-historic circumstances. These opposing tendencies are like ‘different codes of law, deep-rooted in their subject and yet variable in their relationship to one another.... A theory that ignores any one of them would conflict with reality to such an extent that for this reason alone’, it might be regarded as destroyed at once by that alone.24

Below, four oppositions within the three concept fields of ‘violence/force’, ‘fight’ and ‘community’ are briefly discussed in order to explain the various aspects of the coordinate system, introduced in this article. The basic thesis is very simple, namely, that every real war is in part similarly but also differently composed of these tendencies.
**Violence/force**

1. The crucial opposition within Clausewitz’s concept of violence or force is that of instrumentality of war versus violence becoming an independent tendency within war. The instrumental pole of this pair of opposites is found in Clausewitz’s world-renowned formula, as well as in the third tendency of the ‘wondrous trinity’. Clausewitz discussed the problem of violence becoming absolute and therefore an end in itself in the three interactions to the extreme, directly before the formula, as well as in the primordial violence of war in the first of the three tendencies.

2. A significant contrast that Clausewitz implicitly and repeatedly brings up for discussion is whether the combatants are amateurs or specialists in violence. He did not formulate this opposition explicitly but made it the object of his explanation of the success of the French Revolution’s troops over those of the Ancien Regime. From this, the opposite of the politically, ideologically and/or religiously-defined motivation of combatants takes the lead against that of a ‘knightly code of honour’.

3. Clausewitz also brings up for discussion the fundamental opposition between distance and proximity in the use of force. Distance in space and time makes a relative rationality possible, on the one hand, while bringing the problem of impersonal killings with it, in which the humanity of the opponent is effaced by large time, space or social distances. Using force and acting violently ‘face-to-face’ with an opponent demands totally different characteristics; for example, aggressiveness and hate lead to an increasingly-independent use of force but, at the same time, still make it possible to perceive the opponent as human.

4. A further criterion is the ‘means’ of force and violence, although this is not separately brought up for discussion by Clausewitz. A good example relates to the financing of combatants’ weapons. Very expensive weapons systems and combatants can lead to a certain limitation of war, as these cannot be so easily risked (as was the case in the 18th century). In contrast, wars waged with very cheap means and fighters are more likely to have a tendency to escalate.

**Fight/struggle/combat**

1. The necessity of escalation in war, in order not to be overthrown, is found in Clausewitz’s three interactions to the extreme, whereas the game of chance and probability are discussed in the second of the three tendencies of the ‘wondrous trinity’, as well as in the respective sections of the first chapter concerning war as a gamble.

2. The opposition of symmetry or asymmetry between combatants (so often discussed today) and their strategy, as well as their social composition, is discussed by Clausewitz in the first chapter with reference to the opposition of attack and defence, and in detail throughout Book 6 about defence.
3. A crucial distinction within the first chapter is whether combat in war is directed against the opposing will or if the destruction of the opposing armed forces is referred to. Clausewitz understands the ‘destruction of the opposing armed forces’ as reducing them to such a condition that they can no longer continue the fight. But the original and lasting opposition of combat against opposing wills, or as aimed at the destruction of the opponent, is merely repeated in Clausewitz’s differentiation of the principle of destruction.27

4. For a long time, Clausewitz favoured Napoleon’s warfare—a direct strategy in which the armed forces of the opponent are directly attacked. This direct strategy is pushed aside by Clausewitz’s critics, however, in favour of pursuing an indirect strategy.28 For a general theory, Clausewitz thus needs to be supplemented, such that we consider not only a direct strategy against the opposing armed forces but start from the assumption that every war is a combination of direct and indirect tendencies, which are differently composed in each different instance.

Warring communities

1. With reference to warring communities, it is first necessary to differentiate whether it concerns a relatively-new or already long-existing group or community. The reason for this is that, in newly-constructed communities, violence plays a greater role while, in the case of long-existing societies, more aspects contribute to the war. Thus Clausewitz argues that the category of time is reducing the tendency to escalation in the interactions to the extreme, as other factors must be included, which may affect the course of the war. Clausewitz emphasised that war is never an isolated act, that it does not consist of a single short blow and that its result is never final.

2. A further opposition concerns whether the war serves the self preservation of a community or society or, especially in revolutionary situations, whether it leads to the formation of new ones.29

3. It also depends whether war is subordinated to the following of ‘interests’ or the spreading of the values, norms or ideals of the related community. Herfried Münkler juxtaposed both contrasts (2 and 3), noting the opposition between the ‘instrumental’ compositions of war of the later Clausewitz against the ‘existentialism’ of the early Clausewitz.30

4. Closely related to this, although not exactly congruent, is the question whether the purpose of war lies outside of or within the fight of warring cultures. The social composition of each society, like those of the combatants (regular armies, conscription armies, pistoleros etc), plays an important role here.

If we summarise these fundamental differences, the following coordinate system of war and violent conflict emerges.
Table 1: Clausewitz’s ‘wondrous trinity’ as general theory of war and violent action of communities

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sophisticated, ‘big’ weapons (atomic weapons, tanks)</th>
<th>Cheap, simple, ‘small’ weapons (knives, machetes, Kalashnikovs)</th>
<th>Necessity of escalation</th>
<th>Friction, probability and chance</th>
<th>Spatial and long-existing community (state/tribe)</th>
<th>Short-term community (roadblocks, gangs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Large distance (spatial, social)</td>
<td>Small-distance (spatial, social)</td>
<td>Direct warfare</td>
<td>Indirect warfare</td>
<td>Self-preservation</td>
<td>Creation of a new community/society</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Violence/force</th>
<th>Combat/fight</th>
<th>Warring community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Violence: specialists</td>
<td>Violence: amateurs</td>
<td>Symmetry of the fight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence becoming independent from any purpose</td>
<td>Violence as a means</td>
<td>Goal: fight against opposing wills</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusion

In my opinion, other competing approaches are deriving their theories on the basis of only one of these conflicting tendencies. For example, Marx’s analysis is based on the assumption that the particular war is depending on the economically-determined interests of the warring parties. Despite their differences with respect to other aspects, Keegan and Creveld are concentrating on the violent fight. Additionally, Keegan is just substituting Clausewitz’s concept of politics—or at least his reductionistic interpretation—through the concept of culture. Sun Tsu, Clausewitz’s greatest opponent in the current discourse (although both have obviously been dead for centuries) is concentrating on the concept of struggle as a universal principle.

Despite his different attempts to give a definition of war, Clausewitz is mainly describing a phenomenology of war and violent conflict. With the exception of his trinity, all his definitions, concepts and formula are only one pole within the here-developed coordinate system of war and violent conflict. In summarising, I would define war as the violent fight/struggle of communities. This definition articulates three aspects: at first, violence/force, then fight/struggle and finally, incorporating the communities which are waging war. Based on this assumption, one could further differentiate each of these aspects systematically and historically.

Concerning violence/force, one of the first differentiations would be whether they are a means to an end or are becoming independent from any purpose. The second differentiation would concern the applied means, the third whether the involved fighters are amateurs or specialists and so on. Similar differentiations could be made in relation to the particular fight/struggle; for example, whether the fight is symmetrically structured or asymmetrically. And finally, concerning the warring communities, it is most important in war whether the warring parties are pursuing their interests of defending their identity. By defining war and violent conflict as the violent fight/struggle of different communities, one could observe different types of war and violent conflict and at the same could integrate them into a general theory.
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NOTES


5. Clausewitz, On War, p. 87.


8. Clausewitz, On War, p. 89 and Historical and Political Writings, p. 213.

9. Clausewitz, On War, p. 517 and Historical and Political Writings, p. 859.


11. Clausewitz, On War, pp. 75-8 and Historical and Political Writings, pp. 192-9. For more detail, see Herberg-Rothe Das Rätsel Clausewitz and Clausewitz’s Puzzle: the political theory of war.


13. See Herberg-Rothe, Das Rätsel Clausewitz, Chapter 6 and Clausewitz’s Puzzle: the political theory of war, Chapter 4.

15. Clausewitz, *On War*, p. 95 and *Historical and Political Writings*, p. 222. Paret and Howard translate *Kampf* within this paragraph as ‘combat’. For the purpose of generalising Clausewitz’s concept, I’m using the term ‘fight’ in accordance with their own translation of the term at the beginning of Book 2: ‘Essentially war is fighting’: Clausewitz, *On War*, p. 127 and *Historical and Political Writings*, p. 269.

16. Clausewitz’s comprehension of the state as the most eminent political actor in his own time must be understood as any kind of warring community—such an understanding of his concept of politics enables us to apply his propositions even in our time; for details see Herberg-Rothe, *Clausewitz’s Puzzle: the political theory of war* and Hew Strachan and Andreas Herberg-Rothe (eds.), *Clausewitz in the twenty-first century*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007, p. 7.

17. Hans Delbrück made the connection between war and the social order of the community into the pivotal point of his monumental work, *Geschichte der Kriegskunst im Rahmen der politischen Geschichte* (new edition, 2000); Clausewitz himself clarified this connection specifically in his writing on ‘Agitation’ (Clausewitz, *Historical and Political Writings*, pp. 335-68).


20. Herberg-Rothe, *Das Rätsel Clausewitz*, pp. 44ff and *Clausewitz’s Puzzle: the political theory of war*.


25. For the meaning of this distinction, see Andreas Herberg-Rothe, *Der Krieg: Geschichte und Gegenwart*, Frankfurt: Campus, 2003, in particular the typology of combatants, pp. 60-83.


27. Compare only the beginning of Chapter One, Book 8, in which it is retrospectively summarised: ‘... and we concluded that the grand objective of all military action is to overthrow the enemy—which means destroying his armed forces’ (Clausewitz, *On War*, p. 577) with: ‘We can see now that in war many roads lead to success and that they do not all involve the opponent’s outright defeat’ (Clausewitz, *On War*, p. 94).


Finding Australia’s Role in A Collapsed North Korean State

Captain Jonathan Stafford, US Army

The views expressed in this article are the author’s own and do not necessarily reflect those of the US Department of Defense.

Introduction

The Korean War to many Australians conjures up vague memories of black-and-white television footage of Australian soldiers fighting in strangely-named places like the Kapyong Valley and the slopes of Maryangsan mountain, in a war that seemingly ended long ago. However, today—over half a century after the signing of the Armistice Agreement that ended the Korean War—the two Koreas still find themselves technically in a state of war, with two of the world’s largest standing armies facing off across the world’s most heavily-fortified border, ironically named the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ).

The passing of time since the Korean War and distance from the Korean peninsula causes many Australians to feel that Korea is not their problem. However, not taking an active approach to affairs on the Korean peninsula would be a mistake for Australia. Northeast Asia is home to three of the world’s top 11 economies; combined, the three nations are responsible for nearly one-fifth of global trade volume\(^1\) and compose one quarter of the world’s population.\(^2\) Additionally, China, Japan and South Korea are three of Australia’s top-four trading partners. Australia’s total trade with these countries in 2008 was worth A$133bn and accounted for 35 per cent of Australia’s total trade volume.\(^3\)

The ties between Australia and Northeast Asia have also now gone well beyond trade, with relations between China and Australia maturing considerably over recent years. Ties between Japan and Australia continue to be strong, with the two nations signing a security pact in 2007. Relations with South Korea have been close since the Korean War and remain so today, with Australia continuing to be a member of the UN Command Military Armistice Commission (UNCMAC) that provides military representatives to monitor the ceasefire. It is quite clear that Australia has significant economic, political and security interests in Northeast Asia.

However, no event threatens to unravel the current stability of Northeast Asia more than the collapse of the North Korean regime. North Korea is a country that has a long history of being hostile to the international community and is responsible for tens of thousands of UN forces casualties during the Korean War and multiple terrorist attacks over the years since that have led to the deaths of hundreds of civilians.\(^4\) North Korea also has the distinction of being the only country in the world that holds a commissioned American naval vessel hostage.\(^5\) Additionally, the country possesses stockpiles of chemical and biological weapons, has an advanced ballistic missile program and, in the past three years, has detonated two nuclear weapons.
For years, North Korea has faced the very real threat of internal regime collapse. Famine, in conjunction with crippling economic sanctions, has devastated the North Korean economy and continues to this day to leave large portions of the North Korean population malnourished. The recent disclosure of a stroke by North Korean dictator Kim Jong-il has only further fuelled speculation about the possible collapse of the North Korean regime due to internal power struggles over who would be named his successor. Be it for economic reasons, renewed famine or internal infighting, the collapse of the North Korean regime would lead to one of the greatest humanitarian crises of modern times.6

Background

After the Japanese surrender in 1945, Soviet troops occupied the Korean peninsula north of the 38th parallel, while American troops occupied the area south of it. The Soviets installed dictator Kim Il-sung in the north and oversaw the establishment of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK). In the south, the US installed Princeton-educated Korean exile Syngman Rhee, who established the Republic of Korea (ROK) and became its first president. In 1950, after both the US and Soviets withdrew nearly all of their forces from Korea, Kim Il-sung invaded the south and nearly unified the peninsula by force. An American-led UN intervention prevented South Korea’s defeat but China’s entry into the war forced a stalemate that continues to this day.

During the course of the Korean War, Australia committed two infantry battalions (rotating three units), four naval vessels and air support that saw a total of 8,407 Australian service members rotate through the combat theatre. The last Australian troops departed the peninsula in 1956 but not before the loss of 339 Australian lives. For the past 55 years, the US has kept a troop presence in South Korea to maintain the UN-brokered armistice. The North Koreans have killed more than 750 American soldiers since the signing of the armistice.7

In recent years, the North Korean regime has defied the US and the international community with its ballistic missile and nuclear weapons programs. The US and North Korea nearly went to war over North Korea’s nuclear program before the eventual signing of the 1994 Agreed Framework, which was supposed to impose a freeze on the DPRK’s nuclear ambitions. North Korean belligerence continued, however, even after the death of Kim Il-sung in 1994. Kim’s son, Kim Jong-il, continued the expansion of the DPRK’s missile program, tested a missile over Japan in 1998 and carried out additional tests over the Sea of Japan in 2006 and again more recently. Almost as soon as it signed the Agreed Framework, North Korea began a secret uranium enrichment program in direct violation of that agreement, as well as the Non-Proliferation Treaty and a 1992 Inter-Korean Denuclearization Agreement.8 Its ultimate act of defiance was its October 2006 nuclear test.

Humanitarian costs of defiance

The DPRK’s defiance of the international community and expansion of its military capabilities have come at great human cost. Since the mid-1990s, North Koreans have lived through a mass famine that various scholars estimate have killed between 600,000 and 2.5 million
people (mostly between 1994 and 1998). Many factors have caused the famines but the main ones are the loss of Soviet subsidies, the misallocation of funds to weapons instead of food imports, politically-motivated discrimination in food distribution, poor centralised-farming management and massive flooding brought on by the deforestation of North Korea’s mountains.

North Korea watchers viewed the regime’s 1997 decision to accept international food aid as a sign of desperation, even potential collapse. Because the regime had long prided itself on its philosophy of juche (self reliance), accepting international food aid meant the abandonment of this guiding principle. However, while the international community was spending money and resources to end the North Korean famine, DPRK leader Kim Jong-il was busy consolidating his power by implementing his songun (military-first) policy, which effectively supplanted juche. Under songun, the military received funding and food rations before any North Korean civilians. While the international community tried to end one of the worst famines the world had ever seen, Kim Jong-il was busy expanding the North Korean military.

Signs of collapse

In a 2006 article, Robert Kaplan highlighted how the collapse of North Korea might look, suggesting it would not be a single event but a process with seven identifiable phases:

• Phase One – The depletion of resources.

• Phase Two – The failure to maintain infrastructure around the country due to resource depletion.

• Phase Three – The rise of independent fiefs, informally controlled by local party apparatchiks or warlords, along with widespread corruption to circumvent a failing central government.

• Phase Four – The attempted suppression of these fiefs by the ruling regime.

• Phase Five – Active resistance against the central government.

• Phase Six – The fracture of the regime.

• Phase Seven – The formation of new national leadership.

Kaplan argues that North Korea reached ‘phase four’ in the mid-1990s but was saved from reaching ‘phase five’ (insurrection) by the international food assistance that effectively stopped the famine by 1998. In his book, Rogue Regime, Jasper Becker documents numerous ‘phase five’ acts of resistance against the Kim regime—the most significant in 1995, when senior officers of the North Korean VI Corps, based in Chongjin (North Korea’s third-largest city), hatched a plan to capture key governmental facilities and march on Pyongyang. The plot failed but it clearly showed the cracks in Kim’s control.
Another sign of impending regime collapse has been the growing flood of refugees. The most daunting challenge they face is that North Korea is surrounded by rough ocean waters on two sides. Even so, a few North Koreans have successfully defected by boat. An even smaller number, mostly soldiers, have defected across the DMZ into South Korea. Most North Koreans who escape do so by crossing the Yalu or Tumen rivers into China. Both are heavily patrolled by Chinese and North Korean border guards. Yet despite these geographical barriers and the efforts of the authorities, the flow of North Korean refugees into China continues.

North Koreans who cross into China can either risk trying to survive in China or moving onward, usually to South Korea. Under the terms of what is believed to be a secret agreement between China and North Korea, China returns to North Korea any defectors it apprehends, where they face a term in prison or execution. In 2006, the Chinese constructed fences and concrete barriers along the border to stem the tide of defectors\(^{12}\) and, in 2008, increased the number of soldiers along the border to 150,000.\(^{13}\) Despite the barriers and the increase in border patrols, an estimated 2,800 North Koreans successfully defected to South Korea in 2008.\(^{14}\)

Since the end of the Korean War, it is estimated that over 15,000 North Koreans have successfully defected to South Korea, with over 13,000 occurring over the past six years. The US has recently begun accepting North Korean defectors under the *North Korean Human Rights Act*, further adding incentive for North Koreans to defect. Because defectors are forced to hide from Chinese authorities, there is no way of knowing how many are hiding in China, although some estimates put the figures at 100,000 to 300,000.\(^{15}\) If the lowest estimate is to be believed, around one in every 230 North Koreans has defected to China.

Other signs of the regime losing control are reports of mass defections by border guards, jail breaks, the rise of trading to circumvent the dysfunctional rationing system, the proliferation of cell phones and DVDs from abroad and even a reported mass escape from one of North Korea’s notorious prisons. Several journalists have reported on hunger, dissent and isolated acts of resistance inside North Korea, a noteworthy fact given the extraordinary secretiveness of Kim’s regime. Massive floods have also wiped out many of North Korea’s food crops in recent years, resulting in food shortages that have even affected the elites in Pyongyang.\(^{16}\)

A desperate fear of regime collapse may best explain why Kim Jong-il conducted both ballistic missile and nuclear tests within months of each other in 2006. Arguably, the tests were less for international consumption and more about domestic politics. With the regime showing signs of cracking, Kim may have felt compelled to shore up support for the regime within his military. The North Korean military has long wanted the prestige and security it believes nuclear weapons would bring. In addition, of course, nuclear weapons would give the DPRK a tactical advantage in any conflict with South Korea.

However, while missiles and nuclear weapons may have helped Kim Jong-il win the loyalty of the military, that does not mean they win him the admiration of his own people. Missiles and nuclear weapons do not feed people or develop the economy, which can only be changed through economic reforms—which Kim Jong-il tried in 2002 but then reversed when it became apparent that reforms were accelerating the decay of state control.\(^{17}\) As long as starvation, economic decline and defections continue, the collapse of the regime seems inevitable.
A new strategy

It is obvious that regime collapse in North Korea would have a devastating effect on the world’s financial markets and the overall stability of Northeast Asia. The collapse would also cause a mass humanitarian and refugee crisis. It is, therefore, in Australia’s interest that stability in Northeast Asia be maintained by ensuring an adequate planning response to regime collapse in coordination with the US and its allies.18

Many military and political thinkers today are focused on creating policies to govern stability operations to include North Korea but this invariably presumes the deployment of soldiers to conduct those operations. This paper proposes a new stability operations strategy, based not on the deployment of soldiers but on setting conditions and providing logistical support for a third country to conduct stability operations that advance the interests of Australia, the US and its allies.

Fight the information war

A widespread and persistent, although increasingly-discredited view holds that North Korea is belligerent because it really wants normalisation and engagement with the rest of the world. A more believable theory, ‘Strategic Disengagement’, suggests that Kim Jong-il wants to isolate his people from the rest of the world because allowing them to engage with it would expose the fraudulence of his propaganda and destabilise his regime.19

The US and its allies must therefore challenge the Kim regime’s control of information by increasing radio broadcasts into the country and helping to move more radios across North Korea’s borders.20 Until recently, radios available inside North Korea were fixed to receive a single, government-controlled frequency. Today, more radios that people can tune to stations outside North Korea are being smuggled into the country.21 By creating a radio audience, allied nations can begin building the legitimacy of the South Korean government in the minds of the North Korean people. Radio broadcasts could also combat the official North Korean media’s virulent anti-American and anti-Western propaganda.

We know that radio broadcasts from the outside world already influence the North Koreans. The best single example of this is prominent author and former North Korean labour camp survivor Kang Chol-hwan, who defected after listening to South Korean and Japanese broadcasts on an illegal radio.22 In a December 2005 South Korean survey of North Korean defectors, it was concluded that 45 per cent of them listened to illegal radio broadcasts before deciding to defect.23

The US Congress has already authorised key parts of this strategy with unanimous passage of the North Korean Human Rights Act, authorising the President to fund private and non-profit groups to ‘promote human rights, democracy, rule of law and the development of a market economy in North Korea’.24 The Act also states that ‘the President is authorized to take such actions as may be necessary to increase the availability of information inside North Korea by increasing the availability of sources of information not controlled by the Government of
North Korea, including such sources as radios capable of receiving broadcasts from outside of North Korea. The US recently provided funding to increase radio broadcasts from ‘Voice of America’ into North Korea for up to ten hours per day.

We can and should do more than this and Australia can play an important role. For a start, Australia should begin funding, as well as encouraging other allies to support local radio stations that broadcast into North Korea. There are currently four radio stations broadcasting into North Korea, manned mostly by North Korean defectors, which operate with limited budgets that prevent them broadcasting 24 hours a day. Broadcasting 24 hours a day is needed to ensure that the widest possible audience in North Korea is targeted.

Australia would not be alone in such an effort as the US, European Union (EU) and Japanese governments have already begun to fund and promote radio broadcasts into North Korea. In April 2008, the EU provided US$290,000 in aid to increase broadcast time for these radio stations. These radio broadcasts are relatively cheap to fund. For example, the yearly budget for just one of these stations is approximately US$109,000. Increasing broadcasting for 24 hours a day would more than double the annual budget for these stations but the total cost would still be cheaper than the A$3.75m in aid provided by the Australian Government to North Korea in 2008/09.

Australia should also consider funding some of the organisations—operating in and outside of North Korea—responsible for smuggling digital media into North Korea. Digital media is yet another way to challenge the regime’s propaganda. A recent example was a North Korean defector saying the North Korean news once showed images of egg-throwing students protesting the South Korean government. The news was slanted to say that South Koreans were unhappy with their government and wanted unification with North Korea. However, this broadcast had the opposite effect because the defector was instead amazed that South Koreans had so much food they could throw eggs at the riot police. She was also amazed the police did not arrest or shoot the protesters. This was inadvertent exposure to outside information—imagine what a coordinated effort to fight the information war within North Korea could do?

According to research done by noted North Korean expert Dr Andrei Lankov, up to 25 per cent of affluent areas in North Korea now have DVD players. The smuggling of South Korean dramas into North Korea caused the regime to launch a nation-wide crackdown along the border areas to stop the media from flowing into North Korea—because too many North Korean women were wearing South Korean style clothes and haircuts. If dramas were sufficient to change how North Koreans think about South Korea, imagine what documentaries about life outside of North Korea could do to combat the regime’s propaganda?

**Educating the next generation of North Korean leaders**

The cost of rebuilding North Korea after any regime collapse would be enormous compared to the merger between West and East Germany after the Cold War. East Germany had an economic industrial base, higher living standards and a much more open society than North Korea.
East Germany also had approximately 40 per cent the per capita income of West Germany, whereas North Korea has only 10 per cent the per capita income of South Korea. Estimates from the World Bank put the cost of rebuilding North Korea at roughly US$2-3 trillion, which is five times South Korea’s annual GDP. With such enormous costs needed to rebuild North Korea, the South Korean government would assuredly be looking for economic grants and loans from the international community, including Australia.

However, the international community could help reduce the cost of North Korean reconstruction by preparing Koreans to rebuild their own nation. Australia, along with other Western countries, should begin giving scholarships to a set quota of North Koreans to attend university in their respective countries. The quota should include not only North Korean defectors but students currently living in North Korea. This would show the regime that the western world is willing to engage North Korea and offer the open hand of diplomacy that US President Barack Obama has often stated as one of his foreign policy ideals.

If the North Korean regime agreed to such a proposal, it would of course only allow the most indoctrinated students from the regime elite to accept such a scholarship. However, as history has shown, experience with the outside world can still affect even the most indoctrinated students. In 1957, for example, four carefully-selected students from the Soviet Union were allowed to study in the US. Two of these students would later go on to become leading reformers, with one of them, Alexander Yakovlev, credited as the mastermind behind perestroika. Could some children of the North Korean regime elite similarly become the western-educated leaders needed to help mobilise the people of North Korea to rebuild their country?

**Post-regime collapse planning**

Even if the international community funds and develops a coherent strategy to educate future North Korean leaders and fight the information war within the country, military planners must also prepare urgently for regime collapse. Military leaders who will be called upon to help stabilise North Korea do not have the option to forego planning for things they hope will not happen. However, there are few signs that military leaders have been planning or training for the regime’s fall. This is not due to a lack of vision.

In 2006, US military planners wanted to start preparing a detailed operational plan (OPLAN) with the South Korean military to prepare jointly for the possibility of a North Korean collapse. However, the South Korean Government was concerned such planning might offend North Korea, so the two nations reached a compromise—they would develop a contingency plan (CONPLAN), instead of a fully-fledged OPLAN. The resultant CONPLAN5029-05 focuses on controlling the spread of weapons of mass destruction and handling refugees fleeing the country in the event of a collapse. It might be the beginning of planning for the possibility of a North Korean collapse but it is woefully inadequate.

Recent elections that brought changes to both the Korean and American governments have done little to prioritise planning for regime collapse. The new South Korean President,
Lee Myung-bak, has shown a willingness to conduct more planning in case of a North Korean collapse. However, the new Obama administration has decided to implement a policy of ‘malign neglect’ in order to de-prioritise the North Korean issue in favour of domestic issues.

Stopping nuclear weapons dissemination and the exodus of refugees are extremely important. But as the US military's experience in Iraq has taught, providing for security, the rule of law and government services immediately after a conflict is also essential. Who will stop the inevitable looting that would begin after a regime collapse? Who will prevent North Koreans from taking revenge against regime security forces and others who had oppressed them? The North Koreans rely on government food rations—if the regime collapses, who will provide food for the country’s 23 million citizens? Several infectious diseases—scarlet fever, typhoid, measles, paratyphoid and typhus—are reportedly spreading inside North Korea; who will enforce quarantines and treat the sick? Who will stand up a government that the citizens of North Korea will accept after a collapse?

The virulent anti-Western indoctrination of the North Korean people complicates matters enormously, making it preferable for South Korea to re-establish basic services and order rather than anyone else in the international community. An effective campaign to counter regime propaganda prior to a collapse would lessen the suspicion North Koreans may have of the South Korean military. Everything the international community does after any North Korean collapse should be in the context of building up the South Korean Government’s legitimacy in the eyes of the North Korean people.

**Assisting with humanitarian aid**

In preparing for any regime collapse, the South Korean government would need to develop a detailed, city-by-city plan to provide the same essential services the North Korean regime (sometimes) provides today, beginning with security and food supplies. Dissident groups could prove useful in this planning by providing essential intelligence regarding the population’s post-collapse needs for food, drinking water, medical care and other essential services.

The South Korean military has roughly 600,000 active-duty troops available and can activate hundreds of thousands of reserve soldiers and members of the Korean Service Corps. With a population nearly twice that of North Korea, the South has plenty of manpower but would need to stockpile rations, medicine, blankets, clothing and other humanitarian relief supplies and be ready to deliver them instantly in the event of regime collapse.

Australia should support any reconstruction of North Korea with funding for humanitarian aid plus airlift and naval assets to help transport the aid. The US military has a logistical network in South Korea to conduct the reception, staging and onward movement of troops and equipment in anticipation of any potential conflict. This network could be adapted to transport humanitarian aid and the Australian military could help with its air and naval assets.

Mitigating the flow of refugees and providing immediate humanitarian relief for 23 million people would be an enormous challenge and detailed planning needs to be done for this
contingency now. The more detailed the plans and preparations, the more that nations in the region would have less reason to fear the potential collapse of the North Korean regime.

Conclusion

In March 2008, Prime Minister Kevin Rudd declared his foreign policy philosophy while speaking to the Australian National University’s East Asia Forum, saying

The truth is that Australia’s voice has been too quiet for too long across the various councils of the world. That is why during the course of the next three years, the world will see an increasingly activist Australian international policy in areas where we believe we may be able to make a positive difference.43

The challenges surrounding a collapsed North Korea are one specific example where Prime Minister Rudd’s philosophy of an ‘activist’ international policy can make a positive difference and advance Australia’s national interests at the same time.

It is clear that North Korea is an unstable country that could face regime collapse in the near future. It is extremely important for Australia to take this possibility of regime collapse seriously due to the economic, political and security implications involved in such a scenario. Australia’s involvement in regime collapse preparation would ensure the stability of the economically-important Northeast Asia and maintain Australia’s influence in the region.

Any regime collapse within North Korea requires urgent planning and action now. Australia can help by:

• Fighting the information war by funding defector radio broadcasts.

• Playing a diplomatic role by persuading the US and China that South Korea should take the leading role in any post-collapse North Korea.

• Contributing funding and military assets as part of any post-collapse humanitarian relief operation.

• Offering scholarships to North Korean students to help create an educated class of citizens to help rebuild a post-collapse North Korea.

This is without a doubt an activist international policy where Australia could make a positive difference at a cost considerably less than the humanitarian aid the Australian Government has already provided to the Kim Jong-il regime over the years.

Captain Jonathan Stafford is currently serving as a Future Missile Defense Systems Test Officer with the US Army’s Operational Test Command. He graduated from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in 2000 and was commissioned into the Air Defense Artillery. He has served as a platoon leader and battery commander in the US, the Republic of Korea and Iraq. He has also served as US Exchange Officer at the ADF’s School of Artillery at Puckapunyal.
NOTES


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<th>Country</th>
<th>Total trade 2007-08 with Australia</th>
<th>Total percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>A$ 57,922,000,000</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
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<td>Japan</td>
<td>A$ 54,618,000,000</td>
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<td>South Korea</td>
<td>A$ 20,415,000,000</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
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4. ‘Suspect in Korean crash recovers from poisoning’, *New York Times*, 6 December 1987, see <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html>. The bombing of Korean Airlines flight 858 in 1987, a few months before the Seoul Olympics, continues to be North Korea’s most deadly terrorist attack with 115 killed.

5. Mitchell Lerner, *The USS Pueblo Incident*, Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2003. North Korea remains the only country in the world that holds hostage a commissioned US Navy vessel, the *USS Pueblo*. The North Koreans seized the ship from international waters in 1968 and killed one crew member and held the remaining 82 hostage for 11 months in North Korea before repatriating them. *USS Pueblo* remains to this day a propaganda trophy in the North Korean capital Pyongyang.


7. Tom Murray, *Korean War Educator*, see <http://www.koreanwar-educator.org/topics/casualties>, accessed 30 January 2009. 641 of the post-Armistice deaths came within two years of the end of the Korean War, while 92 US military personnel have been killed by hostile fire between 1955 and the present day.


12. Ng Han Guan, ‘China erects fence along North Korea border’, *Associated Press*, 16 October 2006, see <http://www.breitbart.com/article1>


14. ‘Tighter border slows increase in North Korean defectors’, *Reuters*, 5 January 2009, see <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews>


19. Corey Richardson, ‘DPRK studies’, see <http://www.dprkstudies.org/2006/07/06/north-koreas-strategic-disengagement-explained> accessed 30 January 2008. The people in North Korea believe Kim Jong-il to be something equivalent to a living God. He is able to keep this cult of personality alive by controlling all the media and information entering the country. Allowing his citizens to engage with the rest of the world would erode the regime’s control over the North Korean people. Nuclear weapons allow the regime to further isolate itself from the rest of the world, demand international aid and survive on the limited exports and illegal operations the regime is currently operating to finance the nation.


28. ‘Japan’s radio pleas to North Korea’, BBC, 5 March 2008, see <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific>

29. ‘EU promises 400 million won to promote radio broadcasts into North’, Yonhap, 24 March 2009, see <http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea>


32. Crossing heaven’s border’, PBS, 1 July 2009, see <http://www.pbs.org>


39. US compromise on NK contingency plan’, Chosun Ilbo, 2 December 2006, see <http://english.chosun.com>


41. Christian Oliver, ‘North Korea threatens fresh nuclear tests’, Financial Times, 29 April 2009, see <http://tinyurl.com>


First to Fight: an inside view of the US Marine Corps

Victor H. Krulak, USMC (Ret.)
Naval Institute Press: Annapolis, 1984
ISBN: 978-15575-0464-7

Review by Colonel Chris Field, Australian Army

The recruiting posters told the story. In 1907, when Army posters said ‘Join the Army and Learn a Trade’ and Navy posters said ‘Join the Navy and See the World’, the Marine posters came to the point with disarming simplicity, ‘First to Fight’.¹

For the Marines, the maritime nature of the globe creates at once a grave responsibility and an elegant opportunity. It makes a powerful statement of a truth the Corps must never, never forget—that their future, as has their past, lies with the Navy.²

Why, in June 2007, would General James T. Conway, 34th Commandant of the Marine Corps, direct every member of the United States Marine Corps (USMC), whether officer, non-commissioned officer or Marine, to read First to Fight: an inside view of the US Marine Corps? After all, the book is now 25 years old, having been written in the post-Vietnam era and at the height of the Cold War. Moreover, since 1984, the characteristics of war, the enemy and the USMC have changed a number of times, so how is First to Fight relevant?

To understand these questions, a reader should understand both the author and the USMC. The author was the quintessential Marine, having served in the USMC in all major American conflicts from 1941 until 1968. Lieutenant General Victor H. Krulak, who passed away in 2008, was a 1934 US Naval Academy graduate, who served with 4th Marines in China in 1937-39, commanded the 2nd Parachute Battalion of the 1st Marine Amphibious Corps in World War 2, served as Chief of Staff 1st Marine Division in Korea, served as Special Assistant for Counter Insurgency Activities to the Joint Chiefs of Staff in 1962-64 and was Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force Pacific in 1964-68, which included 54 trips to the Vietnam theatre.³

The USMC, as an integral part of the US Navy and as an historically junior service in both size and funds to the US Army, is an organisation which relies on a dominant narrative for organisational survival—‘perennially the smallest kid on the block in a hostile neighbourhood’. As General Krulak noted, ‘the Corps is in a sense like a primitive tribe where each generation has its medicine men—keepers of the tribal mythology, protectors of the tribal customs and guardians of the tribal standards’. In directing the mandatory reading of First to Fight, it is perhaps fair to assume that General Conway, heading a Marine Corps at war for almost a decade, has sought to keep the USMC firmly focused on the twin elements of General Krulak’s significant service and the lessons that First to Fight’s straightforward narrative and ‘tribal mythology’ provide for all Marines.
Interestingly, General Krulak requested Clare Booth Luce write the foreword for *First to Fight*. She was, in an accomplished life, editor of *Vanity Fair*, playwright, journalist and diplomat, as well as a formidable member of the US House of Representatives and a significant supporter of the US military. Various, Clare Booth Luce alleged President Franklin D. Roosevelt brought the US into World War 2 unprepared, consistently spoke on behalf of American troops and addressed issues concerning their eventual return to civilian life, warned against a growing threat of communism and was instrumental in the creation of the Atomic Energy Commission. It seems General Krulak appreciated the strength Clare Booth Luce bought in her own service to the US and decided to juxtapose her service with the service of the dogged and determined USMC through *First to Fight*.

*First to Fight* is divided into six parts, each introduced by a single-line quote. Such pithy quotes are not easy to find and their effective employment is testament to General Krulak’s intellectual abilities. To fully appreciate the power of the dominant narrative in *First to Fight*, it is worth reading the quotes as a single block:

- **Part I - The Thinkers**
  ‘Defend me from my friends. I can defend myself from my enemies’
  The Marechal de Villars to Louis XIV

- **Part II - The Innovators**
  ‘War is a grave concern to the State; it must be thoroughly studied’
  *The Art of War*, Sun Tzu, 500 B.C.

- **Part III - The Improvisers**
  ‘The world reserves its great rewards for one thing – initiative’
  Elbert Hubbard
  ‘The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone; it is to the vigilant, the active, the brave’
  Patrick Henry

- **Part IV - The Penny Pinchers**
  ‘Waste not, want not’
  Poor Richard’s Almanac

- **Part V - The Brothers**
  ‘For he who fights with me his day will be my brother’
  Henry V, Act 4, Scene III

- **Part VI - The Fighters**
  ‘Come on, you sons of bitches, do you want to live forever?’
  Gunnery Sergeant Dan Daly, USMC

- **Conclusion**
  ‘For the Marine Corps there is no peace’
  Sergeant USMC (later Secretary of the Navy) Edwin N. Denby.
First to Fight’s narrative of amphibious experimentation, development, success and failure, based frequently on General Krulak’s own experiences, is essential reading for all ADF personnel and particularly those likely to be closely involved with Joint Project 2048 (based on the acquisition in 2014-15 of two amphibious ships). As noted by General Krulak, ‘only a few, a very few, visionaries were willing to attack the formidable conceptual, tactical and material problems associated with the modern amphibious assault landing’.

First to Fight describes a myriad of USMC amphibious projects and ideas, including amphibious tanks and tractors, amphibian cargo trailers, the exercise of command authority during the sensitive transition period ashore, the precise utilisation of naval gunfire, close air support to ground forces, the tactical employment of helicopters, the evacuation of casualties, expeditionary airfields and all-weather bombing. These projects and ideas, when combined, created an amphibious system which, in many cases, remain critical components of 21st century USMC warfighting. In progressing Joint Project 2048 and associated ideas, the ADF can learn from the significant body of work and hard lessons previously experienced by the Marine Corps.

For a joint planner in the ADF, General Krulak also provides a salient lesson in having the moral courage to back one’s own professional military judgment and then make events comply with that judgment. For General Krulak, one test of his own moral courage was on 30 June 1950, as the newly-appointed Fleet Marine Force Pacific Operations Officer, when he was asked, via cryptic message, by the Chief of Naval Operations:

‘How soon can you sail for combat operations in the Far East [Korea]:
(a) A reinforced battalion; (b) A reinforced regiment?’

To these questions, General Krulak replied:

‘(a) 48 hours; (b) Five days, including a Marine aircraft group’

The truth was that General Krulak did not know if Fleet Marine Force Pacific, or indeed the entire Marine Corps, could achieve the deployments he promised. What he did know was that the Marine Corps, which was constantly scrutinised for relevance by elements of the US Government, must produce force elements when needed. In General Krulak’s own words, ‘if we can’t, we’re dead’.

The ADF faces a similar challenge and our joint planners must keep in mind General Krulak’s moral courage to back their own instincts and make a professionally-informed call when our force elements are requested by Government. To do anything less weakens the faith of our Government in the ADF, takes away the initiative for ADF commanders to employ mission command and crash through readiness notices, and potentially leads the ADF into the realm of General Krulak’s ‘if we can’t, we’re dead’ scenario.

Other useful and pertinent chapters in First to Fight include Chapter 11 ‘The Precious Few’ on Marine recruit training, and Chapter 12 ‘A New Kind of War’ and Chapter 13 ‘A Conflict of Strategies’ on USMC counter-insurgency operations in Vietnam.
General Krulak’s conclusion to *First to Fight* summed three challenges facing the USMC, still relevant today, namely the threat to USMC standards of excellence, the need for USMC austerity and the ‘dead hand’ of bureaucracy. For many people serving in the ADF and the USMC, these concluding thoughts from General Krulak remain true in the 21st century.

Not only was General Victor Krulak a significant thinker and innovator but his son, Charles Krulak, rose to become the 31st Commandant of the Marine Corps from 1995 to 1999. Many readers would know that in 1999, General Charles Krulak bought into the lexicon of warfighters throughout the world the intellectual concept of ‘The Strategic Corporal: Leadership in the Three Block War’. And in 1998, General Charles Krulak presciently predicted that ‘the threat of the early 21st century will not be the son of Desert Storm, it will be the stepchild of Chechnya’.

The question remains for the ADF, what is our equivalent of reading *First to Fight*? What is our dominant narrative? And should we seek, as described by General Victor Krulak, a ‘tribal mythology’ for all ADF warfighters?

*Colonel Chris Field is Director, Future Land Warfare and Strategy, Army Headquarters, Canberra.*

**NOTES**

1. *First to Fight*, p. 176.
Of Men v Machines: who knows what lurks in the hearts of man?

Lieutenant Colonel Nick Floyd, Australian Army

To assemble armies and put them into dangerous situations is the business of generals. Adaptations to different grounds, advantages of contraction and expansion, patterns of human feelings and conditions—these must all be accounted for.

Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*¹

Technological advancement has always tested societal paradigms. Even so, the pace and pervasiveness of technological innovation in the 21st century seem to challenge the very basis of human interaction. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the contemporary battlespace and, particularly, in the remote application of lethality.² A number of international writers have been exploring the diverse reverberations from these developments. Notably, author and analyst Peter Singer’s recent book launch of *Wired for War*³ at the Lowy Institute and the subsequent media interest has provoked a deserving focus on recent innovations in robotics and allied high-technology fields.

Indeed, for audiences that do not follow such developments regularly, the gap between science fiction and reality certainly seems closer now than ever. Nevertheless, a quick recapitulation of history will reveal there have been many instances where the musings of contemporary thinkers have been derided one day as the delusions of fantasists while feted the next as the work of visionaries. This short article considers two of the more human-centric aspects this phenomenon generates. In particular, it considers the onus of lethal action on commander and actor alike, and the temporal as well as physical dimensions of those lethal acts that can be collectivised as ‘war’.

‘Predator’ uninhabited combat aerial vehicle (UCAV)⁴
The onus of lethal action

In his book Wired for War, Singer dangles the apparently novel revelation of the psychological effects of dissociative action in conflict between the ‘killer’ and the ‘killed’. In this syndrome exists the ‘shift-work warrior’ phenomenon, where the driver of a ‘Predator’ uninhabited combat aerial vehicle—physically located somewhere in continental US—engineers and presides over the destruction of his enemy from a position of impunity, then walks away, alone apart from the moral confusion and possible guilt that may accompany such action.

The notion is then expanded by Singer to consider an uncontrolled broadening of this syndrome by attempting to provoke leading self-questions: Are we to think that we have suddenly, and only now, arrived at the edge of a societal anarchic precipice? Are we to be the unwitting instruments of an era of a modern sociopathic Armageddon? I would contend the answer to questions such as these is ‘no, not really’, as dissociation in the act of killing has been a long time coming and, fortunately for the military profession and the societies that give rise to them, many thinkers have been grappling with this very dilemma in both recent and long-past history.

Combat carries an inherent psychological dilemma for the majority of morally-bound mortals and mortal combat is the action where it is most acute. Each combatant will naturally seek an unbeatable advantage but when identified and employed, its very use can evoke such questions as: Is that the result that was supposed to happen or did I trick fate? Will I always enjoy such an advantage? Is the cause for which I killed my opponent justified? In a somehow-discerned ‘evenly-matched’ combat, the justification of self-preservation usually overrides other self-questioning.5 However, this certitude diminishes as physical separation between killer and killed grows, leaving increasing room for self-doubt and, potentially, loss of psychological integrity.

What is important to keep in perspective here is that this phenomenon of increasing separation has been growing from combat’s very outset: fist versus pointed stick, spear v arrow, arquebus v musket, bolt-action rifle v machine-gun, direct v indirect fire artillery, strafing Sopwith Camels v Friedrichshafen bomber aircraft, the hand-thrown bomb v land-mine and the strategic bomber v intercontinental ballistic missile. The answer to the question of what is new in this sense is ‘nothing’. Each of these developments (quite rightly) re-raised the same question of the moral questionability of an increasingly-dissociative style of killing.

In parallel to this technological evolution has been the co-opting of other humans for the purposes of killing. Whether it be the knights errant dispatching Thomas Beckett, the original Hashashin assassins, the ambush patrol dispatched from a battalion’s main position or the sniper team employed by a task group, in each instance the commander knows and will live with the number of remotely-controlled deaths that he or she has personally engineered. Leaving aside the consciences of the subordinate agents, the compounding weight of responsibility of so much disembodied killing is—and has been—a key focal point for our psychological, pastoral and, indeed, legal expert support personnel, for as long as the modern army has been in existence.
The ‘where’ or ‘when’ of war

The dimensionality of conflict is exercised in other ways by the rapid onset of technology. Singer’s other item of interest in his compelling presentation to the Lowy Institute is the notion of how robotics will demand an extrapolation past the simple ‘how’ and ‘what’ of war to make us deal with the ‘who’ and ‘where’ of war. This raises two reactions. Firstly, Singer’s inference that warfare is somehow, suddenly and only now, insidious and pervasive is not supportable.

The ubiquity of warfare is as old as the concept that Liddell Hart termed ‘the indirect approach’. Examples vouching its veracity leap from history—from the Spartan general Brasidas’ surprise raid and siege of Amphipolis in the Peloponnesian War to the bombings of Coventry and Dresden in World War 2 and every Viking, corsair and buccaneering raid on settlements in between. It may be ventured that the degree of dispassion and amorality may differ between then and what Singer describes as the ‘robotic future of war’. But, even so, it is clear this represents a trend on a continuum and not some cataclysmic ‘Black Swan’ event.

Secondly, it is at least equally important to consider the ‘when’ of war. And in this domain, it is very likely that robotics and remote weapons must and will defer to the non-rational judgment of humankind for at least the foreseeable future. Nowhere is this more stark than in the complex battlespace—that which we see today in imagery from across the world but which has, in fact, always existed. The justifiability of the death of another is described along a continuum, rather than a simple ‘life-or-death’ binary outcome, throughout conflict’s history. In more recent times, this has been codified in conventions, such as The Hague and Geneva, but we fool ourselves when we fail to note that comparable codification occurred in earlier Sumerian, chivalric and Mesoamerican societies.

Furthermore, justifiability is an intrinsic and subjective notion and determined independently in the eye of discrete beholders. Exacerbating this uncertainty is its ephemeral nature. During conflicts where the conditions that determine the justifiability of killing are complex, un-fixed and hard to determine, there will be occasions where it may be appropriate to lethally engage a person at one instant and not so in the next.

This uncertainty throws up two great quandaries for combatants, one subjective and one objective. The subjective and very human quandary lies in the moral foundation of each combatant: can they justify to themselves the death of another? The objective and purely dispassionate quandary is posed by the ineffectiveness and inefficiency of unjustifiable killing. Not only is such action wasteful, it is conclusively proven to prolong conflict and exacerbate hostile conditions, thanks to the galvanising, Hydra-like reactions of vengeance and retribution of the remaining bereft co-inhabitants of that contested space.

A soldier affirms their status as combatant by wearing a uniform or other identifying article. But who knows whether an ordinarily-dressed person is a simple villager, a terrified or destitute co-optee of an adversary cause, a frustrated farmer willing to resort to violence to protect what is left of their harvest, proud young men for whom non-involvement in the conflict at hand means dishonour or a hardened and inveterate ideologue?
A remote sensor-equipped drone may locate, categorise and even biometrically identify an individual. And ‘fusion’ with other intelligence feeds (such as signals, electronic and human) can corroborate identity with behavioural profiles and reveal superficial motives, while digital ‘reach-back’ may even cross-reference databases to confirm an individual’s previous violent acts. But the profound ‘why’ of a person’s action recurrently remains an unknown until they are detained and subjected to due process to derive their fundamental motivation.

Even then—and perhaps more importantly—there is still no certain, algorithmic predictability of future lethal actions. Does the non-soldier or previous combatant still represent a lethal threat and is he or she potentially a justifiable target under established laws of armed conflict? The dilemma of determining if this circumstance fits under an act of war or criminal act depends on the rules of engagement that have been drawn up and applied. In such a humanly-determined environment, a purely robotic solution to effect an arrest and removal as a threat is still clearly some way off in the future.

Understanding the environment and its motivating impact on all battlespace actors remains critical throughout the conduct of campaigns and it is vital such empathy extends to all groups or individuals—adversary or otherwise—that influence that operating environment. This encompasses not merely an individual’s motivational drivers but also societal norms and political/group allegiances and other behavioural drivers that influence the decision-making and actions of actors. Commanders and operators at all levels must gain this understanding to optimise their ‘decision superiority’.

Conclusion

In all this, the robotic pretender proposed by the world that those such as Singer suggest is on our doorstep has yet to engage the real heart of the matter, insofar that where the ‘when’ of war is acknowledged as inconstant, there must exist factors that switch it on and off. Discovering and harnessing these is the ultimate path to cessation of conflict and this path leads through empathy, communication and understanding of the motivation of those who may become mortal combatants.

These very human skills and interactions form the basis of many armies’ language and cultural studies programs, the Australian Army among them. Such capacities are vital in decision-making and accounting for the ‘why’ of war, both in direct contact with all battlespace inhabitants but equally in any synthesis of sensor feeds, prior to remote targeting with robotic or unmanned systems.

In this way, the truly awesome developments in robotic and remote control technology that Singer describes are in fact ironically mirrored by a contemporary resurgence in acknowledging these very human attributes of conflict and war. Robotics is duly recognised as important but high technology is not everything. And that which lurks in the hearts of man is so far yet to be understood by anything but man itself.
Lessons

• The challenges posed by the rapid onset of technology challenge not only our military planners but also their pastoral, legal and psychological staffs.

• While the rapid onset of technology is not a new phenomenon, the decisiveness of its impact on the strategic narrative is growing and its wider societal effects must be accounted for in campaign planning.

• While the capability for technological ‘reach-back’ today provides unparalleled facility to confirm the identity of a potential target, such ‘target mensuration’ does not necessarily encompass the justification to engage lethally or prejudicially.

• Regardless of clarity and precision of rules of engagement, target engagement—whether lethal or otherwise—remains ultimately subject to human judgment.

• The psychological and strategic impact of such decisions warrants substantial investment in soldiers’ human skills.

• Key support to soldiers and commanders in their decision-making about engagement must be provided though cultural understanding and language skills.

Lieutenant Colonel Nick Floyd is the Chief of Army’s Visiting Fellow at the Lowy Institute for International Policy. Previously, he has served on the Australian Army Headquarters staff in Canberra, in the Directorate of Strategy and International Engagement. In 2005-06, he was Coalition Plans Officer in Headquarters Multi-National Corps-Iraq, and as partner to the Chief Planner in the Iraqi Ground Forces Command. On his return to Canberra, he was appointed Deputy Director Strategy-Army until the end of 2008.
NOTES


4. Photo from http://www.richard-seaman.com/Aircraft/AirShows/Nellis2006/Highlights/Predator2006.jpg

5. These elements of the debate are not new and are well addressed in several publications by authors such as Dave Grossman, in particular his monograph *On Killing: the psychological cost of learning to kill in war and society*, Boston: Little, Brown and Co, 1995.

6. The ‘Hydra’, from Greek mythology, was a serpent-like beast with nine heads. Upon cutting off each of its heads, Hercules found that two grew back, an expression of the hopelessness of violent solutions without forethought.

7. ‘Empathy’ here is taken as the power of identifying oneself mentally with (and so fully comprehending) a person or object of contemplation. Note that influence can be exerted from beyond the operating itself.
Killer Robots: legality and ethicality of autonomous weapons

Armin Krishnan
Ashgate: Farnham, UK, 2009

Reviewed by Dr Patrick Hew, DSTO

The ethics of so-called ‘killer robots’ is a rapidly-evolving research area, prompted by the explosive growth in unmanned systems as fielded in US- and NATO-led operations post-2001. These operations are also stimulating the ADF’s acquisition of unmanned systems, so it would be unwise to dismiss the ‘killer robots’ question out of hand. Indeed, Krishnan’s book is a timely overview of issues that the ADF may need to confront, as it looks to leverage robotics and automation into its force structure.

The first three chapters review the history, motivation for and technologies behind autonomous weapon systems. Krishnan surveys the contemporary legal and ethical considerations in two chapters and then concludes with a call for arms control. An autonomous weapon is defined as ‘a computerised weapon that does not require any human input for carrying out its core mission. Normally this would include the capability of a weapon to independently identify targets and to trigger itself’. Throughout, Krishnan acknowledges the different starting points as to what constitutes ‘autonomy’ or ‘robot’; in particular, the technical definition of autonomy referring to unsupervised operation (to some degree) versus the philosophical and popular senses of a robot being able to determine its own actions.

Krishnan uses historical and present-day systems to demonstrate what has been achieved and systems described in fiction to illustrate what might happen. He devotes two pages to systems developed prior to World War 2, four pages to systems in the World War 2 epoch and some 2½ chapters to Cold War and contemporary developments. The majority of the contemporary systems are of US or NATO origin, with some mention of Israeli and Korean systems. Krishnan highlights the potential effects of combining robotics with other emergent technologies, notably directed energy weapons and nanotechnology.

The legality of autonomous weapon systems is assessed with respect to existing international law, centreing on the law of armed conflict (jus in bello). Krishnan reviews the principles of military necessity, proportionality, discrimination and humaneness in relation to autonomous weapon systems. He then covers the arguments made that such systems are inherently indiscriminate, that they enable targeted killing and that chains of command may be unclear. He finishes with a number of solutions that have been proposed in the literature. This chapter requires careful reading, for if Krishnan finds that a given act is legal, he may segway into arguing that an action is nonetheless immoral and hence should outlawed.
The chapter on ethical considerations thus holds a broad range of issues on whether automated weapon systems ought to be used, even if they can. Krishnan gives a balanced coverage to arguments for and against. Two issues connect to the earlier chapter on legality, specifically the potential for moral disengagement and the morals of automated killing. Two others move from questions of ethics into propositions on effectiveness, namely the societal costs of warfare and the impact on military professionalism. Some attention is also given to the consequences of asserting that robots have rights.

Krishnan concludes by proposing a range of measures for regulating emergent and future systems. He does so in a context of controlling risk to the international community of states, from consequences that could arise under a range of potential future scenarios. Key propositions are that proliferation of autonomous weapon systems ought to be slowed, that they should be defensive in posture, limited in their firepower and fitted with neutralising mechanisms, and that military application of super-intelligence and mini/micro/nano technologies should be restricted.

Krishnan’s writing style supports speed reading: chapters are broken into subtopics under an overview, with conclusions for each subtopic and for the chapter as a whole. Experienced researchers will no doubt find that some existing work has not been referred to. This, however, is to be expected in a book that draws upon so many disciplines and where online blogs are outpacing the academic-reviewed print journals.

Overall, Krishnan’s book will be of interest to policymakers and concept developers looking for ideas and education on the ‘killer robots’ question. It will equally serve academic researchers as a text book for entering the field and as a departure point for their own work. The book would be a useful addition to libraries in applied philosophy, military systems engineering and security policy.

**China Goes to Sea: maritime transformation in comparative historical perspective**

Andrew S. Erickson, Lyle J. Goldstein and Carnes Lord (eds.)
China Maritime Studies Institute and Naval Institute Press:
Annapolis, 2009
ISBN: 978-1-5911-4242-3

Reviewed by Captain Gordon Andrew, RAN

No country cast its shadow over the Defence White Paper 2009 more than China. Whether it was the media-reported stoush between the doves of the Defence Intelligence Organisation and the hawks of the White Paper team over whether China’s rapid growth in capability represented a threat to Australian security or the nature of the relationship of the then-Defence Minister with a Chinese businesswomen or diplomatic and media double-guessing of Beijing’s reaction to being cast as the ‘villain’ of the White Paper, China’s influence on the White Paper and the subsequent debate was inescapable.
There is good reason for this interest in and concern about China. Since the rise of Deng Xiaoping in 1980 and the economic reforms he introduced, China’s booming economy has funded a quite remarkable maritime transformation. China has invested heavily in assuming the role of a major maritime power capable of exercising sea control and sea denial well into the Pacific and of mounting expeditionary operations even further afield. Understanding this transformation and placing it into an historical context is the subject of this book and it should be required reading for anyone interested in either China or, more broadly, maritime strategy.

The book is structured in four parts. The first part is a review of continental powers in pre-modern times that have attempted—both successfully and unsuccessfully—to transform themselves into maritime power. The histories of Persia, Sparta, Rome and the Ottoman Empire are rarely written from a maritime perspective and these essays provide a fascinating insight into how wealthy continental powers turned their gaze seaward and developed forces capable firstly of securing trade networks that fuelled their vast empires and secondly of conducting expeditionary operations in order to expand and control their empires. Part II takes a similar approach for the modern era: France, Russia (both Imperial and Soviet) and Germany prior to World War 2 are discussed although, notably, all eventually failed in their attempts to become maritime powers.

That China has a long maritime history is not overlooked and Part III examines three episodes in this history. Essays on Chinese maritime power during the Ming Dynasty (which included the voyages of the massive armadas of the eunuch Zheng He, inaccurately and speculatively popularised by Gavin Menzies in 1421: The Year China Discovered the New World), the failed attempt to develop a maritime capability during the Qing Dynasty and the years of systematic neglect of maritime forces by the Communist Government of Mao Zedong are included.

The final part of the book synthesises the three preceding parts and by comparison analyses China’s current maritime transformation. The Chinese strengths of a booming economy, a growing awareness of the importance of the maritime domain to China’s future wealth, and a sound industrial base with a rapidly-growing technological capability are set against the problems of ongoing unrest in China’s outlying areas, demographic and energy constraints on future growth and the persistent concern with continental strategy exhibited by the current Chinese leadership.

Whether China is able to achieve what few nations in the past have done and transform itself from a continentalist past to a maritime future is an issue that will continue to be addressed for years to come. Questions about the purpose of the rapid growth in maritime capability—that is arguably now exceeding what would be required to prevail in a conflict over Taiwan—will continue to concern strategic planners of countries that border both the Pacific and Indian Oceans. This book is an extremely valuable contribution to that debate.
Bardia: myth, reality and the heirs of Anzac

Craig Stockings
University of NSW Press: Sydney, 2009

Reviewed by Lex McAulay

The foundation stone of the reputation of the 2nd AIF is the battle for Bardia in January 1941. Craig Stockings has taken it, cleaned it of the moss and grime of the years and restored it to its rightful place in the memorial to those men.

Because of wartime pressures and attitudes, and the desire for good news about Australian achievements—at a time when British Commonwealth successes were few—as soon as the battle was over, myth and distortion began to be piled on it, obscuring the truth. This mythology remained in the minds of the general public, centred on the fallacy and perpetrated by the media, that the Australian is ‘a born soldier’—made easy to accept by the spectacle of thousands of Italian prisoners being accompanied into captivity by a single casual Aussie.

Stockings makes clear the facts were reported accurately within the Commonwealth forces involved in the preparation, conduct and aftermath of the battle. It was in the Australian public relations field that the mythology was created of a few bayonet-wielding heirs of Anzac who alone routed a horde of cowards, with their bags already packed for the journey to the rear.

An aspect of the campaign not touched on in the book—and this is not a criticism—is the general attitude of contempt in the British Commonwealth for Mussolini’s fascist Italy. The posturing, uniformed fascist leaders were satirised in magazines and films. Italy had contributed to the failure of the League of Nations, especially with the Italian invasion of Abyssinia and participation in the Spanish Civil War. Mussolini’s son, Benito, had boasted of the effect of aerial bombs on Abyssinian horsemen and the Italians had used gas on unprotected tribes. Then, in 1940, the Greeks had trounced the Italian invaders; the Italian navy had not lived up to its pre-war image and the air force had been less than aggressive. So the Italians were spoken of as ‘dagoes’ and ‘ice-cream merchants’ rather than a serious enemy, such as the Germans. The photos of thousands of surrendered Italians did nothing to improve their image in Australia and elsewhere.

An aspect of the Mediterranean campaigns that has been barely touched is a contemporary analysis of Italian society and its armed forces. Stockings addresses this, although it presents something of a contradiction to the underlying theme of the book by implying the Italians were not the incompetent cowards portrayed in the Australian media. Indeed, there were a number of good Italian units—particularly the artillery—and Brigadier Savige’s 17th Brigade suffered considerable casualties inflicted by determined Italian units in defensive positions in the southern sector at Bardia.
Nevertheless, Stockings concludes the officer class was generally incompetent and selected on the basis of social class and connections, many regimental officers shunned troop command for rear echelons, logistics and administrative troops were not expected to fight, the industrial base could not support a war, weapons and equipment were obsolete or badly designed and training was not conducted, as it would stifle the natural initiative and courage of the soldier!

The book is in three parts. The first presents the wider background to the battle, with the imperial desires of Mussolini, the British Commonwealth’s situation in the Mediterranean before the war, Hitler’s attitude to involvement in the region, why Australians were despatched to the theatre and the formation of the 2nd AIF, as well as the selection of its commanders, the recruitment of the original battalions and the ‘character’ of the 6th Division. The second part describes the action, sometimes at platoon level, with an analysis of what went right and what did not. The third part explains why the battle unfolded as it did, with an analysis of the forces involved, from weapons and equipment to command and leadership.

Stockings shows that the 6th Division was welcomed by the British field command and accepted into its training program at all levels, then fully supported in its first action with air and naval contributions, and provided with a very substantial artillery program. Rather than clearing the enemy with bayonets, the infantry battalions needed British armoured co-operation to deal with the Italian defences that did resist. By presenting the amount of support provided at Bardia, this book does not reduce the reputation of the 6th Division but enhances it by its portrayal of a well-trained formation, able to operate in conjunction with experienced professional Commonwealth forces in a deliberate attack on a fortified position, regardless of the condition of the defenders.

Hopefully, any remaining veterans of Bardia and their families will treasure this book as a record of what took place there in January 1941.

The Illustrious Dead: the terrifying story of how typhus killed Napoleon’s greatest army

Stephan Talty
Scribe: Carlton North, 2009
ISBN: 978-1-9213-7294-0

Reviewed by Major Jamie Cotton, Australian Army

The Illustrious Dead by Stephen Talty is a fascinating book for military historians, including those with an interest in medical and forensic review of military history. In it, Talty describes the evidence leading to a theory of the destructive effect of lice-borne diseases, particularly typhus, on Napoleon’s campaign against Russia of 1812.

Talty explains that Napoleon’s motivation to invade Russia was to bring the Russian Tsar Alexander to heel, after Alexander continued to trade with the British against Napoleon’s
directions to cease. The force Napoleon led into Russia, his ‘Grand Armee’ of 440,000 frontline troops, was not to conquer Russia but to destroy the Russian Army in a set-piece battle and force Alexander to sue for a peace. Talty describes, however, that a decisive engagement was continually denied Napoleon because the faster the Russians withdrew, the further Napoleon was dragged into the depths of Russia.

Talty goes on to detail how tens of thousands of Napoleon’s soldiers, many of them very young French and allied soldiers, died of exhaustion, thirst or starvation in the summer heats of Russia (‘worse than anything we’d known in Egypt’). Undeterred, Napoleon marched on to the evacuated and almost deserted Moscow, which was burnt down by its Russian governor the day after Napoleon’s arrival. Napoleon stayed for eight weeks waiting for Alexander—who was in St Petersburg—to make peace. Alexander, however, was in no mood for negotiation. So Napoleon eventually set off to lead his army back to France, just as winter was approaching.

Throughout this historical narrative, Talty describes the conditions and factors that caused the Grand Armee to become so vulnerable to disease, contending that lice-borne disease, particularly typhus, was the key reason for the continued and significant loss of Napoleon’s soldiers. By the beginning of November, just before the retreat from Moscow, Napoleon had only 75,000 troops left—365,000 had died in just under five months and many of them to some form of disease.

This was a significant disaster but was it typhus that brought him undone as Talty suggests? Talty bases his assessment on a review of the theories (of causes affecting the loss of Napoleon’s troops), comparing them with contemporary descriptions of the dying. As explained by Talty, the lead surgeon of the Grand Armee put the causes of death as exposure, constant rain and hard drinking. However, Talty counters that although heavy and widespread alcohol consumption was recorded, the symptoms described were more consistent with late-stage typhus.

Talty similarly discounts diary entries of soldiers dying as a result of exposure and points to the more likely scenario of lack of food and exhaustion reducing immune systems and ‘opening the door’ to disease. Indeed, the analysis of dental pulp of 35 soldiers from the mass graves discovered at Vilnius in 2002, published in the Journal of Infectious Diseases, ‘shows that louse-borne infectious diseases affected nearly one-third of Napoleon’s soldiers … and indicates that these diseases might have been a major factor in French deaths during the retreat from Russia’.

However, to suggest as Talty does that typhus was the main agent in the destruction of Napoleon’s grand plan is a bold step. It was probably more likely that a combination of exhaustion, disease, the debilitating effects of extreme alcohol consumption and weakened constitutions killed many soldiers in the Grand Armee, in addition, of course, to the not inconsiderable number that died from direct enemy action and exposure to the weather, particularly during the terrible winter retreat from Moscow.

*The Illustrious Dead* is a fascinating read and well recommended to anyone with an interest in Napoleon, European history or the impact of disease on military endeavour.
The Defence of Duffer’s Drift

E.D. Swinton
Paladin Press: Boulder Colorado, 2008 (reprint)
ISBN: 978-1-58160-634-8

Reviewed by Dr Hank Prunckun

In an age where wars are being increasingly fought using the tactics of ‘fourth-generation warfare’, the question arises ‘what role is there for a small unit of soldiers with rifles’?

First-generation warfare was characterised by the age of Napoleon, where forces armed with guns operated in close-order formations to defeat cavalry and infantry who were armed for the most part with swords and bayonets. Second-generation warfare was the age of firepower, deployed in such a way that enabled an army to win through attrition. Third-generation warfare saw the advent of decentralised attacks based on manoeuvrability and strategy.

Fourth-generation warfare has evolved into a much more irregular form of conflict. It uses methods that differ substantially from previous forms of warfare and is characterised by forces (often other than military) that attack the infrastructure that allows an opponent to plan and execute their strategies. This is in contrast to methods that focus on locating and destroying enemy combatants.

When one thinks of defending critical infrastructure from such attacks, the solution that presents itself is in fact a small unit of soldiers with rifles. A hundred years ago, for example, an attack on a critical waterway in South Africa may have come from a column of Boer cavalry. Today, the attack may be on a strategic installation in Kabul from a Taliban vehicle-borne bomb. So how does the leader of a small unit defend the Kabul position? What issues do they need to consider?

The Defence of Duffer’s Drift was written as a primer for teaching small unit tactics to junior officers who may find themselves in such situations. Although published in 1907, this reprint is as relevant today as it was then. Granted, military technology has evolved considerably, as has communications and strategy. But arguably, the fundamentals of defending a piece of turf have not.

Captain E.D. Swinton (later Major General Sir Ernest Swinton, the inventor of the tank) used the medium of fiction as a way of presenting this serious subject matter. The story-teller, with the humorous name of Lieutenant Backsight Forethought, steps the reader though a series of six independent battles he fights against 500 Boer irregular troops for a critical river crossing known as Duffer’s Drift. As each of these battles unfolds in the young Lieutenant’s dreams, he has the opportunity to relive it again and again, learning from the lessons of his unit’s previous defeat until he has mastered 22 tactical lessons of small unit command and is able to lead his reinforced platoon of 50 soldiers to victory.
Although fourth-generation warfare may see a scenario where a single irregular fighter (most likely in the form of a terrorist) launches an attack against a piece of critical infrastructure, it still bears parallel to the attack by 500 troops that Swinton described. That is, the single radical uses terrorism to ‘kill one and frighten a thousand’. This tactic makes up for his lack of 499 supporting troops and addresses the mismatch that exists in resources between him and his opponent. Indeed, by placing the emphasis of his attack on bypassing the defending military force, the terrorist tries to gain the same advantage that he would with 500, thereby establishing the basis of asymmetrical warfare.

*The Defence of Duffer’s Drift* is not only an outstanding text for training new officers in the classics of small unit tactics but is also a refreshing study on how to employ these time-tested considerations in modern combat. Paladin Press has done a superb job in preserving Swinton’s original manuscript in this 2008 reprint and has enhanced his text by adding a new foreword and some historical notes on the back cover. *The Defence of Duffer’s Drift* is a short course in how to hold ground and kill or capture enemy combatants. Whether the conflict involves fourth-generation warfare or not and whether it is against a force of 500 or a single terrorist, Swinton’s 22 lessons in small unit tactics provide very useful food for thought.

**The War Chronicles: from flintlocks to machine guns**

Joseph Cummins  
*Allen & Unwin: Crows Nest, 2009*  
ISBN: 978-1-7423-7031-6

Reviewed by Colonel Darren Kerr, Australian Army

This book is a companion piece to an earlier work by Joseph Cummins titled *The War Chronicles: From Chariots to Flintlocks: New Perspectives on the Two Thousand Years of Bloodshed that Shaped the Modern World*. Both works can best be described as ‘history-lite’. These are not works for the serious student of history but rather for school students, military cadets or those with a general interest in military history. They are both written very much for a generation raised on ‘sound bite’ journalism and cable TV history channels which encapsulate complex historical events in a 30-minute show.

*The War Chronicles: From Flintlocks to Machine Guns* is subtitled ‘A Global Reference for all of the Major Modern Conflicts’ and, rather than the two thousand years covered by its predecessor, this volume covers the major conflicts of the past two hundred years—from the French Revolutionary Wars (1792-1802) to the Iran-Iraq War (1980-88). The ongoing conflict in Afghanistan and the still-unresolved Iraq situation are discussed only in passing. Perhaps a third volume of *The War Chronicles* will include these conflicts in the not-too-distant future.

*The War Chronicles* tackles 21 major conflicts in bite-sized chunks. To use the author’s own words:
*The War Chronicles* is structured so that you can approach each war from a variety of angles and examine it at different levels of detail. Throughout, the chapters are illustrated with carefully researched images that expand upon the text and further illuminate the conflict for the modern reader.

Breaking this down it means that each chapter follows the same structure. There is a short overview of the war, a chronological account of the major events of the conflict, discussion of turning point battles and detail on major commanders involved. There are also short articles on peculiar aspects of that particular war—innovative tactics or weapons, myths and controversies, or unusual events. All of this adds up to an easily readable and often enjoyable book that will give a taste of each conflict without providing any real insight into the deeper causes or course of a conflict.

Apart from its lightweight history, there are some shortcomings. There are very few geographic or battlefield maps and those included are poor quality, doing little to illustrate the text or enhance a reader’s understanding. Without trying to sound pedantic, the author’s claim that the book is ‘illustrated with carefully researched images’ may be true. But looking at the pictures in the book would suggest there are few, if any, images that could not be found through a quick Google search. Finally, and possibly of most concern for the serious student of history, is the sparse bibliography.

There is nothing wrong with those that have been included, such as the brilliant *The Washing of the Spears: The Rise and Fall of the Zulu Nation* by Donald Morris—it is just that there are so few of them. For example, there is only one book referenced for the chapters on the War of Greek Independence and the Mexican revolution, while the work referenced for the chapter on the Soviet-Afghan War only covers the initial period of the war from 1979-82 and is the questionable history *Afghanistan: The Soviet Invasion and the Afghan Response*, by M. Hassan Kakar.

Cummin’s appears to make a living turning out history for the ‘short-attention span’ reader. Apart from his two *The War Chronicles* volumes, he is the author of such works as *History’s Greatest Hits and Anything for a Vote: Dirty Tricks, Cheap Shots, and October Surprises in US Presidential Campaigns*. He has also edited two anthologies *Cannibals: Shocking True Stories of the Last Taboo on Land and at Sea* and *The Greatest Search and Rescue Stories Ever Told*. Much as a reader will know what to expect from a Stephen King novel, I think that anyone approaching Joseph Cummins as a historian will have a pretty good idea of what to expect.

So what’s my bottom-line on *The War Chronicles: From Flintlocks to Machine Guns*? Understand what you are buying before laying down your hard-earned cash. Ideal for browsing, this is history for school students, war gamers and those with a general interest in military history who want to graze lightly through many conflicts rather than dine sumptuously with a Keegan or Beevor. It is lightweight but easily readable. The book is very much like a collated and bound edition of *Military History Quarterly* or similar magazines. Therefore, read for pleasure and not as an academic exercise.
With Healing Hands: the untold story of the Australian civilian surgical teams in Vietnam

Gary McKay and Elizabeth Stewart
Allen & Unwin: Crows Nest, 2009
ISBN: 978-17417-5074-4

Reviewed by Stewart Selwood

With Healing Hands is a descriptive account of a little-known ‘hearts and minds’ campaign that was conducted during the Vietnam War from 1964 until 1972. It was a civilian-based mission which focused on bringing medical aid and training to civilian hospitals in South Vietnam. It was staffed by some of the most experienced hospital staff Australia could offer and their personal experiences provide an interesting insight into the role Australia played not only in the Vietnam War itself but also in the aid programs that were attempting to support the South Vietnamese administration.

The book depicts the many human sides to this aid program, ranging from elation at the ‘adventure’ to come, the shock at seeing a third-world type medical facility and the feeling of isolation that many Vietnam veterans have described on return home. The account clearly displays that although these were civilians participating in a civic aid program, they would often be required to show the same resilience exemplified by our soldiers on overseas service. The authors demonstrate the resourcefulness of the surgical teams as well as the courage they forgd to get the job done.

Unlike many histories about this era, the account tries to avoid the political and social ramifications of the war and simply focuses on the humanitarian efforts made by the Australian teams. The authors have managed to capture the sense of adventure and feelings of compassion that enabled the surgical enterprise to take form. The two authors, McKay and Stewart, rely heavily on their personal knowledge and experience in setting the picture for the era and environment the Australian teams were working in. The authors also benefit from numerous first-hand accounts from those who staffed these aid missions.

This is not to say, of course, that the authors have refrained from judgment calls. McKay and Stewart are on numerous occasions very blunt in their criticism on the Australian Foreign Affairs Department (then known as the Australian Department of External Affairs) and its inability to provide the training and infrastructure to make the aid program more than just a token gesture. They also are critical at the post-war treatment of those who took part in the surgical teams and it is these two main arguments that create most of the themes throughout the account.

Whilst focusing on the attributes that made elements of the program moderately successful, it is quite clear that this particular aid program, one of Australia’s first in the Asia-Pacific region, was largely a failure. The account does show that this was in no part due to the Australian
men and women who joined the surgical teams. Rather, it points the blame to the lack of understanding of aid programs and the subsequent lack of organisation within government.

As such, the account of the Australian surgical teams in Vietnam should be viewed in terms of the role that Australia was seeking to play on the international scene, especially in East Asia. *With Healing Hands* clearly displays what would be the early beginning in a long line of aid programs run by the Australian government, with particular focus on the challenges involved in organising such programs, particularly in a conflict situation. It also highlights issues relating to the entitlements and support for government aid workers in conflict areas.

The authors have created an account which is able to be read by those with an interest in military or medical matters, as well as by readers who would simply enjoy the historical and personal side to the tale. It is a well-researched publication that is backed up by numerous personal accounts of those involved. The book clearly displays how far Australia has come in its international aid programs but also shows there is still more that should be done to acknowledge and support those who participated in this particular endeavour.

**Liberty in the Age of Terror: a defence of civil liberties and enlightenment values**

A.C. Grayling
Bloomsbury: London (UK), 2009
ISBN: 978-1-4088-0242-7

Reviewed by Lieutenant Commander Richard Adams, RAN

Grayling raises important questions about the nature of liberty in contemporary society and provokes his readership to consider what we aspire to defend today. Recalling an assertion of Tom Paine in the frontispiece, Grayling illuminates the central theme of his analysis, namely ‘…how necessary it is at all times to watch against the attempted encroachment of power and to prevent this running to excess’.

Taking aim from the liberal intellectual high-ground, Grayling delivers a persuasive appreciation of neo-conservative policies directed toward the magnification of the state apparatus. For example, observing the ubiquity of legislation enabling the imprisonment of suspects without charge and for extended periods, Grayling notes that since the signing of Magna Carta in 1215, no-one in the UK could be detained for more than 48 hours without the permission of a magistrate or the preferment of charges.

Though Grayling’s assertion that ‘the inconvenience of the authorities equals the freedom of the people’ seems somewhat flippant and unmeasured, this is not to detract from an otherwise careful and compelling argument that terrorism can, and should, be combated within existing regimes of law. Chipping away at civil liberty is misguided and achieves little but the accomplishment of the terrorists’ work.
Grayling explains his argument that the open-minded ideals of western democracies are not defended by dismantling civil liberties, though these liberties may need to be restrained during the defence. The stakes are not insignificant. Grayling illuminates very well the mistake of reducing the liberties of society in the belief that this is a level-headed response to terrorism. Doubtless, it is a response and one which in the immediate term might be necessary and justifiable. But, argues Grayling, the ‘over-inclusive, ill-defined, broad-brush justification indicates that [the] aims and the reasons for [restriction of liberty] are ad hoc and not clearly thought out’. The unreasoned and ill-conceived erosion of civil liberty can undo ‘in a single, ill-considered act of legislation what centuries of hard endeavour [has] won in the way of individual rights’.

Inescapable amongst the arguments Grayling mounts against unnecessary restriction of civil liberty is the point that liberties are not divisible. Either the whole of society is free or none of society is free. The fundamental civil liberty, argues Grayling, is free speech—notwithstanding the entailment that the exercise of free speech will, on occasion, be regrettable if it is not downright stupid or perhaps even dangerous. In times of great threat, these principles come under great strain. Grayling asks us to remember that these ‘principles are precisely for the hard times: sticking by them is what makes society truly just and worthy of respect’.

Grayling will confront the Zeitgeist, which panders to identity politics and the inflamed sensitivities of ‘special’ or ‘minority’ groups. Grayling points to the propensity of minority groups to depict themselves as victims, to demand and to be granted protection against words, pictures and cartoons. The illiberal fundamentalist strains of Islam are singled out for particular criticism in this regard. He argues that the hysterical and disproportionate fundamentalist response to Danish newspaper cartoons suggests a profound lack of maturity and self-confidence; the Islamist ‘taking offence’ is nothing but a tool of censorship, which our liberal society must resist, rather than imposing unwarranted bans or restrictions on free expression in the press.

Notwithstanding that there can be good reasons why information or texts or pictures do not receive wide public circulation, efforts to silence people with whom one disagrees are repressive and unacceptable. Grayling makes this point well. A free, grown up and open society should be able to resist the attempts by over-sensitive minorities to bully others into silence. A mature society will recognise the importance of civil liberty and the crucial importance of free-speech.

Grayling offers a nuanced and accessible analysis of civil liberty, a grandiose axiom which is taken so often for granted. His central message is that tolerance cannot and must not tolerate intolerance; the tolerant fail to understand intolerance at their peril.
This is not a positive review as I found Charles ‘Bud’ Tingwell’s War Stories disappointing. It was difficult to avoid the impression that this large expensive book took interviews with the respected actor Bud Tingwell and used that information as the icing on the cake of a broad-brush, nothing-new treatment of Australia’s war experience from 1939-45, to include small biographies of all World War 2 Australian winners of the Victoria Cross and a selection of other military heroes of that war. The title implies that Bud Tingwell selected or approved the content of the book in addition to his own memoirs but this is not clearly stated in the text.

Bud Tingwell flew 75 sorties as pilot of a Spitfire or Mosquito with 680 Squadron RAF. The sorties are listed with comments presumably taken from his log-book. However, there is no effort to put his operational contribution into perspective by use of other information about squadron activities during his time with the unit or comparable information about other RAAF reconnaissance pilots or crews. Of the 360 pages, only one-sixth have any text of Tingwell’s memoirs—and sometimes that is a single paragraph or part of a page, the rest being photographic images. Throughout the book, only 42 of the 158 photos are of Tingwell or relevant to his personal story, while the other photos portray more general events in World War 2.

Apart from Tingwell’s life before, during and after his RAAF service as a photo-reconnaissance pilot in the Mediterranean and Southwest Pacific, it is difficult to see what gap in public knowledge was intended to be filled by this book, with its page-after-page of general information and large photos, plus images of awards for bravery. It is a big, ‘coffee-table’ style book, with large images, wide line-spacing and small amounts of information. The glossary is six pages but has only 35 widely-spaced entries, informing the reader what is a battleship, a platoon and so on—scarcely relevant to the Bud Tingwell story.

If you want to pay $49.95 for about 60 pages of Bud Tingwell’s life story and 120 pages of ‘thumbnail’ sketches of our World War 2 Victoria Cross winners and other worthy servicemen and -women, then here it is. Otherwise, this is a weighty tome with a very general resume of Australia’s part in World War 2. The ‘70th Anniversary Special’ statement on the cover is not justified by the content.
GUIDANCE FOR AUTHORS

The *Australian Defence Force Journal* seeks articles on a wide range of defence and security matters, such as strategic studies, security and international relations. Normally, articles will only be considered for publication if they are current and have not been published elsewhere. In addition, the *Journal* does not pay for articles but a $500 prize is awarded by the Board of Management for the article judged to be the best in each issue.

The Layout

Articles need to be submitted electronically and typed in MS Word format without the use of templates or paragraph numbers (essay style). Headings throughout are acceptable (and contributors should view previous issues for style). Length should be between 3500 and 5000 words. Please 'spell check' the document with Australian English before sending. Additional guidelines are available from the website.

Articles should contain endnotes, bibliography and brief biographical details of the author.

Endnotes

- for **articles** are required in the style:

- for **monographs** are required in the style:

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- for **articles** are required in the style:

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Tables, maps and photographs are acceptable but must be of high enough quality to reproduce in high resolution. Photographs must be at least 300 ppi in TIF format and obviously pertinent to the article.

The Review Process

Once an article is submitted, it is reviewed by an independent referee with some knowledge of the subject. Comments from the reviewer are passed via the Editor to the author. Once updated, the article is presented to the Australian Defence Force Journal Board of Management and, if accepted, will be published in the next *Journal*. Be advised, it may take quite a while from submission to print.

Authors with suitable articles are invited to contact the Editor via email at:

  publications@defence.adc.edu.au

Authors accept the Editor may make minor editorial adjustments without reference back to the author; however, the theme or intent of the article will not be changed.
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Dr Matthew Gray, Australian National University

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