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All contributions and correspondence should be addressed to:
The Managing Editor
Defence Force Journal
Building C, Room 4-25
Russell Offices
CANBERRA ACT 2600
(062) 65 2682 or 65 2999

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Army Reserve join the Exercise
The Management of Australia’s Defence
A Critique of the Report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade

By Gary Brown, Department of the Parliamentary Library

Introduction

POLITICIANS, it is frequently asserted by those not closely associated with Government or Parliament, are overpaid, underworked and frequently ignorant about matters on which they are nevertheless prepared to speak. It is not the purpose of this article specifically to refute such opinions, but those who hold them could be rewarded by a scrutiny of the work of the Defence subcommittee of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade over the last decade or more. During this period, despite changes in its membership and in the Government, this committee has produced a series of reports significant in the defence and national security field which demonstrate conclusively that MPs take seriously their role in a Westminster democracy of scrutinising and commenting on the performance of the Executive Government. The Committee’s reports on defence industry (1977), defence procurement (1979), threats to Australia’s security (1981), the aircraft carrier question (1982) and Australian Defence Force (ADF) capabilities (1984) each made a substantial contribution to the defence debate in Australia. Governments have, from time to time, picked up recommendations from these reports and implemented them (with or without acknowledgement) to the benefit of Australian defence administration. Moreover, by bringing senior Defence Department and ADF personnel to the witness table to explain written submissions to the committee, it has been possible to place on the public record a mass of material invaluable to serious students in the field and of considerable benefit to individuals and organisations with an interest in defence and national security.

The “Defence Management” Report

The Committee’s most recent contribution to the defence debate is its report The Management of Australia’s Defence, released at the end of the 1987 sittings of Parliament. This report is a critical survey and analysis, with recommendations, of the higher defence machinery on both the uniformed and civilian sides. Its earlier chapters will form an indispensable reference for those seeking a useful summary of the organisation’s development since World War II and in particular since the Tange reorganisation of 1973-6. What follows will attempt briefly to summarise the committee’s principal recommendations, but readers are advised to examine the report itself to obtain a complete picture.

The report deals in depth with three main issues. These are:

(a) the level of political control of the higher defence machinery, whether it is adequate to the task;

(b) the distribution of power and responsibility inside the ADF, particularly the relative responsibilities of the single Services and their Chiefs, on the one hand, and the Chief of the Defence Force (CDF), on the other; and

(c) the distribution of power and responsibility between the civilian and uniformed elements of the defence organisation, headed by the Secretary of the Defence Department and the CDF, respectively.

On the first issue, the committee has come to conclusions similar to those reached by inquiries as far back as the 1958 Moreshead Report, namely that the size and complexity of a unified Department of Defence (DoD) is such as to overtax unacceptably even the most able Minister, and that additional Ministerial assistance should be provided. The Fraser Government’s inquiry into Commonwealth Government administration generally — the Reid Report of 1983 — concluded, and not only for defence administration but across the spectrum of Government, that there was a need for the provision of Ministerial assistance to Ministers in charge of large and complex Departments and recommended a referendum with bipartisan support to remove apparent constitutional im-
pediments to the appointment of Assistant Ministers. While the succeeding Hawke Government did not act on this proposal, it eventually found ways to achieve the same end in the defence area and has appointed a Minister subordinate to the Defence Minister with specific responsibility for Defence Science and Personnel. This represents a significant improvement on previous arrangements whereby the defence function was split between two Ministers (in the era of the former Department of Defence Support) or the Minister had one or two “Ministers Assisting” who had Departments of their own to run as well. Nevertheless, the committee suggests that one or more additional junior Ministers in the defence area may be needed and, given the size and complexity of the Department, is more likely to be right than wrong in this proposal.

A principal imperative for the committee’s attitude was its conclusion that there is insufficient political input into the defence machinery at the top, with the concomitant implication that the Department has been running without adequate political control. The committee has made recommendations designed to remedy this situation, most notably its proposal that the Defence Force Development Committee (DFDC) be chaired by a Minister.

The committee’s approach to the second issue represents for the most part a logical extension of its approach in earlier reports and, indeed, of the approach of successive Governments since the Tange reorganisation. It has attempted to give the ADF a unified and integrated machinery for the development of capabilities, guidance and equipment proposals and to enhance further the ADF’s ability to argue its case in DoD decision making processes. In particular, the committee has attempted to strengthen the position of CDF vis-a-vis the Service Chiefs.

Indeed, one of the most notable developments in Australian higher defence management since the Tange reorganisation has been the precipitous decline in importance of the single Service Chiefs and a corresponding rise in that of CDF. This process is well illustrated by the changes in title of CDF over the period: originally, this position was designated Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee; from 1976, Chief of the Defence Force Staff and since 1984, Chief of the Defence Force. The position is now so powerful in comparison to those of the single Service Chiefs that the committee could logically propose a radical reassessment of the roles of the Service Chiefs and the Chiefs of Staff Committee, such that Joint Force Commanders would be senior to Service Chiefs and the Chiefs of Staff Committee should lose its functions of providing collective professional advice to the Minister, endorsing military plans for approval by CDF and recommending to CDF the allocation of forces and supporting assets to designated Joint Force Commanders.

The committee has, in short, supported the trend towards ADF integration (though not necessarily to unification as carried through in Canada some twenty years ago) and has made recommendations affecting the Service Chiefs consonant with this approach.

Indeed, it is possible to take the committee’s approach one stage further and ask whether or not in future CDF should continue to be chosen from the Service Chiefs. Given that the Joint Force Commanders will, if the committee’s recommendations are accepted, be operational ADF commanders senior to the Chiefs — they being confined essentially to support and administration tasks — there would seem to be a logical case for widening the field of potential CDFs to include these commanders and perhaps even to consider exclusion of the Service Chiefs from this field in future.

The third issue, however, is the one on which the committee spent much of its time and effort and one in which its recommendations are most likely to be controversial. To be sure, the distribution of power in the defence organisation between uniformed and civilian elements has been, at least since the Tange reorganisation, one of the most controversial and heat-generating questions in this field.

Essentially, the committee has concluded that the present arrangements tend to favour the civilian hierarchy. The changes that were made in 1976 have provided the Secretary with increased formal and informal powers, some of which have been obtained at the expense of the military. The Committee believes that it is time to review the basic organisation structure of the defence establishment and the distribution of power within it.

The committee made no bones about its belief that the existing “balance of power” inside DoD needs to be altered in favour of the military. Its view is that the fundamental role of the defence establishment should be to develop and
maintain a defence force which is capable of achieving the Government's objectives within the broad policy and resource constraints that it sets. It [the committee] considers that the primary responsibility for carrying out this task should rest with the CDF who would be advised by appropriate civilian and military staff.  

To this end, the committee made several far-reaching recommendations, including:

(a) a proposal to amend Ministerial Directives to give CDF a role in civilian staff management and development similar to that now enjoyed by the Secretary with respect to uniformed DoD personnel;

(b) transfer of the Force Development and Analysis (FDA) division and those other elements of Defence Central concerned with the preparation of Defence Guidance and the Defence Program to ADF Headquarters (HQADF) under the control of CDF;

(c) abolition of the Force Structure Committee (FSC) and the Defence Operational Requirements Committee (DORC) and their replacement with a Defence Guidance and Capabilities Committee chaired by the Vice Chief of the Defence Force (VCDF) empowered to render advice on force structure, major equipment proposals and the Five Year Defence Program (FYDP) to the important Defence Force Development Committee (DFDC);

(d) abolition of the Military Staff Branch and those elements of the Strategic Guidance and Policy Branch of the present Strategic and International Policy (SIP) division of DoD concerned with defence planning and wartime defence administration, and transfer of these functions to HQADF; and

(e) making CDF responsible, subject only to enhanced Ministerial policy guidance and control, for preparation of a consolidated list of operational requirements and major equipment proposals for inclusion in the FYDP.  

Clearly, the implementation of these recommendations would shift drastically the balance of power in the higher defence organisation, giving CDF and HQADF substantially greater responsibilities in the areas of defence guidance development, scrutiny of major equipment proposals and preparation of the critical budgeting paper, the FYDP. Whereas at present FDA is responsible for the scrutiny of new major equipment proposals, in which role it has attracted the brunt of odium levelled at "civilians" by uniformed personnel, under the committee's proposals this task would move to HQADF under CDF.  

Recognising that its proposals shift responsibility in this fashion, the committee made recommendations designed to equip the ADF component in DoD better to carry out the additional tasks. Some of these have been noted above, in the context of greater ADF integration. Additionally, the committee proposed specific measures to enhance the resources available to CDF and HQADF in their proposed roles; for example, the transfer from single Service control to HQADF of appropriate operational requirements and policy planning staffs.  

Has the Committee Got it Right? Key Issues

Political Input and Control

In highlighting what it saw as a deficiency in the level of political input and control of the higher defence organisation, the committee is certainly on the right track. The remarks of former Defence Minister Morrison, quoted in the report, show well enough the difficulties even an intelligent and capable Minister can encounter when dealing with a well-established and powerful bureaucracy. The committee's suggestions that a review be undertaken with the objectives of providing additional Ministerial and specialist staff support, and that the Minister or an Assistant Minister take over the Chair of the crucial DFDC, are both practical and desirable. While the public is always sensitive to suggestions of more Ministers on high salaries, it also demands efficient administration and control, and in this case it has been demonstrated by a succession of studies from Moreshead to the Defence Review (or Utz) Committee (1982) and the present committee report, that proper control over an integrated Defence Department demands more than one Minister (one plus two fulltime junior Ministers is probably the minimum). It would be a false economy indeed to begrudge the salary costs of an additional junior Minister and the proposed specialist staff when the alternative is to perpetuate a partial failure of political control at the top of the defence organisation — a failure
which has not been the fault of Ministers or staff but an inevitable consequence of overwork and under-staffing at this level.

Such a failure has potential for dire consequences. A partial vacuum at this level would inevitably be filled (some might argue that it has been filled) by top level public servants and/or ADF personnel “usurping” a policy control function properly the task of political leaders. Policy making (as distinct from the rendering of policy advice and options) by such individuals would indeed validate the criticism reported by the committee, that we have not civilian control at the top but control by bureaucrats. The service personnel who made this criticism were of course referring to public servants, though it would be equally unacceptable were uniformed people to fill the vacuum. Thus it is important that action be taken to enhance the control of policy by Government from the top, as proposed by the committee.

ADF Integration

The committee’s observations and proposals with respect to enhancing the “Defence Force” (as opposed to single-Service) approach inside the higher defence organisations are also valid. The Utz committee’s report had as a consistent theme the need to encourage a “Defence Force” perspective, and the present committee’s recommendations in this respect are laudable. In particular, its observation that such an approach can permeate the ADF only through training and education programs, such as those now in place at the Defence Force Academy, is very much to the point. Equally important is its suggestion that Australia needs a level of higher education for more senior ADF members, above that now provided by the Joint Services Staff College (which caters for Lieutenant Colonel equivalents), perhaps by establishing a National War College. Single-service loyalties will not die easily. For as long as Australia has had armed forces, each service has sought to foster its own sense of corporate identity and tradition. This process has obvious benefits in an operational context where one’s life, or military success or failure, may turn on the trust one can place in one’s service comrades. But this esprit de corps has unfortunately spread beyond the operational context to purely administrative, procedural and policy questions. An Army officer who questioned the value of tanks, an Air Force member who doubted the wisdom of acquiring the F/A-18 or a Navy officer arguing against an aircraft carrier would be looked at askance by his or her colleagues and could well suffer social or even career penalties for such “disloyalty” to the service. Nevertheless, the fact remains that Australia can no longer afford a concept of “loyalty” which has undermined the effectiveness of decision making generally and, importantly, the ability of the ADF as a whole to argue effectively coherent and consistent cases for important policy or equipment initiatives in the face of a civilian bureaucracy which is, by comparison, unified in its approach. This point was emphasised by the Utz committee in its final report:

In our view, the CDFS should be able to use his position in terms of developing cohesive Defence Force views on defence policy, force structure, administration, procurement and on such other matters as arise, and in terms of executing decisions affecting the Defence Force. The comprehensive co-ordination of Service views, needs and requirements by the Force does not appear to be sufficiently advanced and, it seems, falls in some measure to the [civilian element of the] Department. To the extent that the task does fall to the Department, it appears to be an obvious source of some of the dissensions within the Defence Organisation of which we have become aware. Here lies the real key to the vexed question of power distribution between uniformed and civilian elements in DoD, on which the Parliamentary committee has made such far-reaching proposals. If the committee’s conclusion that present arrangements appear to favour civilians over the uniformed element is accurate, the principal causative factor of the imbalance lies not so much in lines on an organisation chart, or provisions of Ministerial Directives, as in the historical inability of the uniformed element to, in the vernacular, get its act together. This consideration alone would constitute almost sufficient justification for the committee’s proposals with respect to ADF integration and the strengthening of CDF’s powers vis-a-vis the Service Chiefs, though there are of course many other sound reasons for them. It does, however, call into question the validity of the committee’s third set of proposals, those designed to correct the claimed imbalance in power between uniformed and civilian staff in the Defence Department.
Civilian/Military Power Distribution
The committee, like the Utz review before it, received a great deal of evidence from present and former ADF members to the effect that the uniformed element in DoD was in a position unjustifiably weak or inferior relative to that of its civilian counterpart. It accepted that this was so and observed that the important process of defence guidance formulation and selection of capabilities for inclusion in the FYDP "does not have the complete confidence of the military and that this lack of confidence is a major contributing factor to the strained relations between military and civilians within Russell Hill".

Force Development and Budgeting
Because the Force Development and Analysis Division (FDA) of the Department plays an important role in these processes, it has long been a principal target of the uniformed staff’s resentment, and is recommended for substantial change in the committee’s report.

Two pertinent questions need consideration in this context: why does FDA not have the complete confidence of the military and, should it be expected to have their confidence?

The answer to the first question is that FDA does not enjoy the confidence of the military because it frequently precipitates the overturn or substantial modification of the military's bids for major equipments. FDA does so because it is tasked, in effect, with a "devil's advocate" role — it is required to query, scrutinise and, if need be, modify or even recommend rejection of equipment proposals developed by the Services if they fail to pass the tests of strategic relevance, operation effectiveness and financial feasibility.

Whatever can be said about the way FDA has discharged this role, clearly the higher defence organisation needs to carry it out. It is axiomatic in the Defence Department (as throughout large bureaucracies everywhere) that elements within it will attempt always to maximise their share of available resources. In the case of the ADF and the Services, this translates (frequently, though not always) to a desire to obtain the biggest, best, most expensive equipment available in the largest numbers which can be obtained. Specifications can be "gold plated", strategic justifications over-stated, or financial implications minimised in documentation originating with the bidding Service. The process usually results in total bids substantially in excess of resources indicated by financial guidance, and bears some resemblance to the "ambit claims" phenomenon in industrial relations. Sometimes, though, it is an unconscious process deriving directly from the relatively narrow perspectives and lack of costing expertise of those developing the proposal, but, conscious or otherwise, it requires a substantial counter-balance if the FYDP is not to be blown-out with equipment programs and the ADF saddled with equipments or projects glamorous but inessential to Australia’s national security requirements and with high opportunity costs. Thus (in answer to the second question posed above) it is not to be expected that the organisation which supplies the necessary balance, FDA, will be popular with or enjoy the confidence of those whose proposals it must critically scrutinise. Something would be wrong if it did.

Even under existing arrangements there is evidence that FDA has not always been able to carry out its task as effectively as might be desired. To give a single example, the dramatic rundown in the Navy’s mine countermeasures (MCM) capability occurred because Navy itself determined that it had higher priorities than MCM (which is, after all, not nearly as attractive as say, a new frigate or an aircraft carrier) and there was no power in DoD’s decision making processes capable of placing a higher priority on MCM than Navy itself had assigned. It was only when the decline reached disastrous proportions — Admiral Synnot as CDFS told the Joint committee in 1981 that we would be able to keep open only one port — that action was taken and even seven years later, the MCM project is only now getting into full stride. In fact, Navy (in almost as many words) told the Auditor-General in 1983 that the MCM project simply did not have the priority necessary to its timely completion. Nevertheless, the Defence Management report has as one of its principal targets the transfer of control of FDA from the Secretary (i.e. civilian) to CDF (i.e. military). If carried through, this would — at least in the short term — enhance the confidence of the military in this area of DoD decision making. But what could the longer term consequences be?

There are two possibilities. One, the most likely, is emasculation of FDA and effective elimination of the "devil’s advocate" in the equipment selection and FYDP development process. New major equipment proposals would
no longer be subject to close and critical scrutiny, justifications would not need to be as thorough — in short, sponsoring Services would stand a much better chance of getting their proposals approved and into the FYDP without careful scrutiny of their intrinsic merit, their strategic relevance, operational effectiveness and financial viability. As this process worked its way through the FYDP, there would be a series of funding crises leading to ad hoc project curtailments or cancellations on the one hand, or demands for catch-up capital funding from Government, on the other. An ad hoc approach to force structure planning would necessarily develop, and the objective of making ADF structure entirely consistent with strategic and other considerations — a principal goal of the Dibb Review, the 1987 White Paper and the Defence Management report — would recede further.

There is another possibility, albeit less likely. This is that FDA under CDF’s control would continue to do effectively what it has done for many years under the control of the Secretary and act as a check-and-balance on those whose task it is to develop equipment bids for inclusion in the FYDP. This, doubtless, is what the committee hoped would occur when it made its recommendations in this area. But the overall consequences of such a development might not be as positive as the committee desires.

The reason for FDA’s unpopularity is really not that it is staffed primarily by civilians and is under civilian control. That is the secondary factor. The principal cause of FDA’s poor image is that its task is to be a devil’s advocate and, if it continues to be one under CDF in HQADF, the effect will be simply to transfer the odium along with the organisation. In such a case, it would be CDF and HQADF which would assume the role of target for criticisms when they find their equipment proposals blocked, modified or deferred. Such a development could have quite serious consequences for the committee’s goal of encouraging the development of ADF integration. Essential to that goal is the growth of CDF and HQADF into the perceived unifying leadership and advocate for the Defence Force. Such growth will be well nigh impossible, however, should HQADF become the target of criticism and distrust from disgruntled officers who cannot get their projects past FDA-under-CDF. There could be a fragmenting, divisive, effect on the developing cohesion of the ADF directly counter to the desired trend.

Military Performance of Civilian Roles

Certain of the committee’s observations and proposals in this area suffer from other problems as well. For example, the committee recommended a study be undertaken into ways of releasing military personnel presently in non-operational posts for duty in operational and direct logistic support posts. It did so primarily because it desired to have ADF personnel working wherever possible in operational or direct support roles and not carrying out tasks which can be done as effectively, and at lower cost, by civilians. At the same time, however, it has proposed measures designed to increase substantially the power and influence of military personnel in the decision making process. It may well be that these are incompatible objectives.

The committee was well aware that at present the level of training and experience of ADF officers is often inadequate to equip them for postings to Defence Central. This was one reason for its recommendation that a National War College be established or, at least, that more senior officers be sent on courses to equivalent institutions overseas. It also proposed what would amount to “on the job” training through the establishment of a joint service career structure culminating in postings to HQADF. These proposals do not sit well with those designed to return military personnel to operational and direct support tasks.

The committee was correct in pointing out that one reason for the apparent superiority of civilians over uniformed personnel in the present DoD structure is that the former tend to remain longer in the DoD complex at Russell Hill, whereas ADF members are posted there for relatively brief periods. Frequently, by the time an ADF member has mastered the formal and informal intricacies of a Defence Central job, a significant portion of the posting time has elapsed and the person concerned is soon replaced by another ADF member who has to begin the learning process all over again. This must militate against ADF personnel being as effective in their DoD postings as civilians. The only viable solution to this difficulty would need to include two features. The first would be a means whereby ADF personnel marked for important postings in Defence Cen-
tral (including HQADF) receive adequate training for what are essentially bureaucratic positions. The second would necessarily involve the creation of conditions in which ADF officers who master Defence Central requirements are not lost to the system by long postings out of Canberra. There can be no substitute for training and experience, combined, in equipping the uniformed element in DoD to deal successfully with the demands of bureaucratic decision making. Because the ADF depends ultimately on such decision making for its funding, equipment and overall policy guidance, it seems necessary to devote adequate effort to this activity if the Defence Forces are to make an effective contribution to the process. This conclusion, it will be seen, runs at least partly counter to the committee’s desire to remove ADF personnel from tasks which can be performed by civilians and, indeed, to the desire to enhance the ADF’s influence in key decision making processes. What is really required is development inside the ADF of a career stream for people who will, for the bulk of their careers, occupy posts of ever-increasing rank classification within the Russell Hill complex.

However, such a proposal is unlikely to attract wide support from the military themselves. Many officers appear to dislike postings to Canberra, viewing them as diversions from the real business of a Defence Force officer. This aversion to Defence Central postings is without question one of the most counterproductive tendencies evident in the ADF: it contributes significantly to the inability of the military to make its voice heard in Russell Hill’s complex round of administrative and financial decision making and thus feeds the military’s grievances against civilians seen as usurping powers or functions which should, in the military’s view, belong to it.

There is a vicious circle at work to vitiate the effectiveness of the ADF’s voice in Russell Hill. That voice is, as the Utz committee concluded, muted because the Services tend to retain the loyalty of individuals posted to Russell and a unified ADF view is difficult to achieve. It is rendered even less effective because the duration of most Service postings to Defence Central is much shorter than those of civilians. While the Parliamentary committee (like Utz) has recognised the critical importance of getting a “Defence Force” rather than single Service perspective established throughout the Services, the fact still remains that relatively little will be achieved until such time as individual ADF members overcome their lack of enthusiasm for Defence Central postings and accept the need for a military career stream which keeps able personnel in Russell Hill for most of their careers. Nor are the prospects of achieving a coherent “Defence Force” voice enhanced by the possibility that CDF and HQADF would inherit the dislike now directed at FDA, should that Division be transferred from the Secretary to CDF.

The committee also addressed the question of whether its proposed changes might undermine the principle of civilian control of the military, which has lain at the heart of Westminster systems of government at least since 1688. To a large extent, though, this question is a red herring: only the most devoted conspiracy theorist would assert seriously that there is a risk of the military threatening to seize political power in Australia. A question more to the point is whether the committee’s proposals for a transfer of power from the civilian element in DoD to the military represent a practical solution to genuine problems.

Evidence from the committee’s report suggests strongly that they do not. Despite the overall thrust of its proposals, the committee made a number of significant qualifications to key recommendations which tend to undercut the rationale for them. In particular, it has suggested that key programming and analytical appointments be reserved for civilians and, moreover, that financial control of defence be vested in the Secretary of the Defence Department. The latter proposal is, to be sure, essential but at the end of the day it refutes much of the committee’s reasoning and helps defeat the intent of many other recommendations. There seems little point in making recommendations designed to give CDF and HQADF greater power over preparation of the FYDP (as the committee has done) if in the final analysis their work can still be overturned by civilians placed in key positions by edict, or by the Secretary himself. This inconsistency of approach reflects, perhaps, a conceptual difficulty in which the committee found itself when it determined to attempt a substantial power transfer to the military without simultaneously removing all checks or controls on the ADF’s ability to set its own capabilities and financial programming goals inside a global defence budget figure fixed by Government. The apparent contradiction is
evidence of the difficulties which can follow from too ready an acceptance of the view that the military in Australia lacks power in the decision making process which it ought to have and that this lack can be remedied substantially by alterations to organisational arrangements. To the extent that the military does lack influence which should belong to it, the root cause can be found more in deficiencies of training and preparation of officers for Russell Hill posts, in short postings and in divisions inside the ADF flowing from single-Service loyalties and perspectives. It is these, rather than the organisation chart, which require attention if a proper civilian/military balance inside the Defence Department is to be achieved.

Conclusions

Virtually no informed commentator or participant in Australia's higher defence organisation, military or civilian, would argue seriously that the Tange reorganisation, which created the bulk of the present Defence Department, was incorrect in principle. The committee's Defence Management report specifically rejected any such suggestion. In other words, it is common ground that an arrangement which maintains separate Departments and Ministers for central policy, each Service and "supply"-type activities is unsound. Whatever is wrong with the present organisation, its fundamental conceptual basis stands unchallenged after almost fifteen years.

The committee's report nevertheless picked up two substantial areas where further change and improvement seems desirable: the provision of better political guidance and participation at the very top, and the development of an integrated ADF structure through further weakening of single-Service power in the organisation. Neither of these themes is new — the Utz committee had much to say on the need for a "Defence Force" approach, and the Reid review made valuable observations on the problems of Ministerial control in large and complex Departments — but the present committee's report has made proposals with respect to both which deserve serious consideration and meaningful responses from Government.

The third area of the committee's report, however, stands on less firm conceptual and practical foundations. In accepting that the military has perhaps less influence in important areas of defence decision making than it ought, the committee is by no means wholly wrong. To the extent that there is a conceptual error, it lies in the acceptance of claims by the military that this state of affairs has as its primary cause organisational deficiencies which have crept into the system in the course of implementing the Tange report and over succeeding years. The committee's observation that civilians have gained influence since 1976, at least some of which was "at the expense of the military", carries with it an implication that in the pre-Tange period the military was better placed than in later days. If the military has indeed declined in influence since the Tange report, however, the principal organisational reason for this phenomenon is most likely to be the abolition of the single-Service Departments and Ministers, which deprived each of the Services of its own Departmental structure and the political clout which a Minister can wield in Government decision making.

But in reality the reasons for the perceived decline in military influence are only marginally organisational. They have much more to do with the fact that the civilian elements of the former Service Departments and the old Defence Department (plus, more recently, those located in the abolished Defence Support Department) melded smoothly into the post 1976 unified Department whereas the military, though organisationally combined to a certain extent, retained a separate structure through the individual Service Offices in DoD and, above all, continued to cling to single-Service loyalties at the expense of a Defence Force approach. It is, in other words, continued disunity and competition between the Services which lies at the heart of the military's perceived decline in influence since 1976 and not changes to organisation charts. An ADF split three ways stands little chance of carrying the requisite weight in the Russell Hill bureaucracy.

When this deficiency is linked to the dislike of many officers for Defence Central postings and the excessively brief tours of individuals at Russell Hill, a near-complete explanation of the military's apparent decline is in sight. More to the point, this explanation shows that a solution to the problem will not be found by attempting to practise a form of positive discrimination in favour of the uniformed element at Russell Hill. The solution lies in slower and ultimately more effective measures advocated by Utz and the present committee report for development of a
strong ADF approach to decision making, through active discouragement of single-Service loyalties and perspectives in the higher defence organisation and through creation of a career structure in the Defence organisation for uniformed personnel. This course will not deliver results overnight, but it offers better long-term prospects of success than any amount of tinkering with the organisation. Indeed, to adopt the committee's recommendations in this area and embark on a program of positive discrimination would be to hand significant power and responsibility to a military not yet ready to receive it. The consequences of such a policy are difficult to predict in detail, but are likely to lead to deterioration in the standards of defence decision making and of advice and options rendered to Government.

To some extent, DoD itself is responsible for the tenor of the committee's proposals on the civilian/military relationship and especially those which bear on FDA. The Utz review covered much of this ground in its final report and made specific proposals designed to clarify FDA's role and to minimise the potential for ADF perceptions of the Division as in some way usurping functions properly in the military's sphere. One recommendation, to change the name of FDA to "Analysis and Evaluation Division" (to remove the implication that it solely controlled Force Development and emphasise its analytical role) was rejected outright by DoD. Another, that FDA be relieved of its secretarial support role for the Force Structure Committee and the task transferred to the organisation already servicing the DFDC, was placed on the backburner by the Department. In making no real attempt to rectify legitimate organisational problems or to more tightly define FDA's role, the Department virtually invited further criticisms on a broader basis, and this is what the Defence Management report has done.

It has to be recognised that unless a form of organisational apartheid is to be practised, any conceivable higher defence organisation must embrace both civilian and uniformed personnel. Nor is it to be thought that two groups so disparate in their outlooks and perspectives could ever work together completely free of friction or tension. The solution is to harness these tensions where possible and turn them to constructive use: "creative tension" is the approach proposed for this approach, and it is towards such a condition that Australia's higher defence organisation should be steered. Other approaches might appear to offer quicker results, or to redress apparent or perceived grievances, but in the long run they will probably do no more than transfer difficulties from one sphere to another.

In addressing these issues and stimulating debate and discussion, the committee's Defence Management report has continued the well-developed tradition of bringing to public notice important issues affecting Australia's defence and national security. Although in one aspect it appears that the report may have embarked on an unprofitable course, this detracts neither from the value of its other proposals nor indeed from the inestimable worth of an ongoing Parliamentary scrutiny of Australian defence.

NOTES
1. Throughout this article, the abbreviation "MP" refers to Senators and Members of the House of Representatives.
4. I have argued elsewhere that the creation of a Minister and Department of Defence Support was a mistake. See "The Case for a Single Defence Department", Pacific Defence Reporter, October 1984, pp. 9-13. The "Minister Assisting" arrangement was always unsatisfactory if only because such a Minister had a Department of his or her own to run and could give only limited time to defence matters. The new arrangements, though legitimately criticised for creating administrative and political confusion in non-defence areas (as with the contradictory answers given in the House and Senate by senior Minister Senator Evans and his junior Mr Peter Duncan over the Coastwatch contract), work well enough in defence.
7. Ibid., paras 4.32 and 4.44.
8. Ibid., para 4.44.
9. These recommendations have been extracted from the relevant parts of the Defence Management Report.
10. Ibid., para 6.52.
11. Ibid., para 5.31.
12. Ibid., para 8.58.
13. Observations very much to the point on this subject were made by G. L. Cheeseman in his article "Interest Groups and Australian Defence Decision-Making", Defence Force Journal, July/August 1982, pp. 23-32. Cheeseman, at that time a Defence Department officer, later joined the staff of the Joint Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee as a Defence Advisor. He is now at the Peace Research Centre at ANU. The manoeuvring of the three Services during the period when Navy was seeking approval of its now-defunct aircraft carrier


18. Ibid., para 5.56.

19. Ibid., para 4.32.

20. Ibid., para 4.46 (b) and (c).

21. Ibid., para 4.32.


The author is a Senior Research Specialist with the Defence Research Group, Commonwealth Parliamentary Library, Canberra, and a graduate of the Joint Services Staff College. The views expressed are his own and should not be attributed to any other person or organisation.

**CADRE BULLETIN**

Readers may find the following articles of interest. The journals in which they appear are available at the libraries on most Defence establishments.

**The Hidden Danger: Risks of Nuclear Terrorism.** Leventhal, Paul L.: Hoenig, Milton M. *Terrorism*; 1/87: 1-21. Nuclear power plants and research reactors are vulnerable to acts of sabotage and to terrorist attacks. With expanding civil commerce in weapon-useable forms of plutonium and uranium, and with the vast numbers of tactical nuclear weapons stored in areas of intense terrorist activity, it is also plausible that terrorists could build or steal a weapon or carry out a credible hoax. Potential risks and corrective measures are discussed here, based on the report of the International Task Force on Prevention of Nuclear Terrorism, on policy and technical studies prepared for the Task Force, and on related research conducted by the sponsoring organization, the Nuclear Control Institute. Some of the proposed measures have the added benefit of providing further protection against the consequences of natural disasters and human error, as well as sabotage.

**U.S. Facilities in the Philippines.** Bosworth, Stephen W. *Asia-Pacific Defense Forum; Winter 86/87*: 2-11. This article looks at the history of American base facilities in the Philippines and how they contribute both to regional security and the Philippine economy. A brief history of Clark Air Base and Subic Naval Station is followed by an analysis of their operational roles. Its effect on the Philippines is examined in terms of its contribution to Philippine military modernization as well as its economic impact on the local economy.

**Maritime Cooperation in the Pacific: The United States and Its Partners.** Nishihiara, Masashi *Naval War College Review; Summer 87*: 37-41. This article is primarily focussed on Japan's maritime defence policy and the social, political, economic and historical factors governing its present and future direction. Issues discussed include: Japanese perceptions of security threats; maritime co-operation with the United States; and growing bi-national co-operation.

**Selected Papers from: International Terrorism: Threats and Responses.** Alexander, Yonah: Suchlicki, Jaime *Terrorism*; 1/87: 51-81. Papers from a conference on international terrorism held at University of Miami, Florida, 4 Dec 1986. Topics presented include: domestic vulnerabilities of the US; international threats - discussing terrorist acts as carried out by a government, a group, or a faction; the Soviet factor in international terrorism and the discrepancies between Soviet propaganda and politics of the issue; the PLO support to the Sandinistas in Central America; a definition of terrorism and how to fight it - by a "complete assemblage" of disciplines and methods; how to deal with the consequences of terrorism and the fact that the US is a prime world target; coping legally with terrorism - terrorism defined as any act of violence.

**European Helicopter Industry.** Timmerman, Kenneth R. *Defense Electronics; Jul 87*: 63+(5p). Two related articles: "Europe's troubled helicopter industry" (Based by high R&D costs and depressed markets; some European manufacturers may be out of the competition but the Italian Agusta group remains confident that its Mangusta A129 will remain in the market). The second article is "Building Europe's helicopter industry: an interview with Michel Thomas" (Director General of Aerospatiale's Helicopter Division puts his views on Sikorsky's entry into the European market and the cooperative venture with the Germans - the HAC/HAP/PAH2 programme). Contains an inset article on the Eurocopter compromise.
Harnessing Military Expertise in Defence Decision Analyses — A Realisable Goal

By Dr Malcolm S. Bilton and Mr Keith Lawson

To those involved in the analysis of Defence problems it comes as no surprise to find that often management decisions require comparison of ‘apples and oranges’. What often does cause surprise is the way in which the comparison is made. We become used to commonplace justifications which make appeals to the ‘average outcome’ or which are founded on the shaky ground of expedience. It is easy to gain the impression that some of the public justifications for decisions tend to gloss over the degree of vagueness incorporated in the arguments.

Defence Management decisions usually involve many different factors and criteria, some of which might actually be in conflict. For example, what is the effect of overall force readiness when Air Force flying hours are traded off for Navy Steaming time? These situations are not solvable using classical concepts of optimisation. Rather, the decision maker must choose from a set of feasible alternative decisions which, in the light of the information available, are not readily distinguishable. The decision maker is in the position of choosing from two or more ‘good’ decisions rather than having a single ‘correct’ alternative.

And now, with Freedom of Information legislation, and a general drive within the community for everyone to lift their game, the decision makers are expected to make ever more complex decisions under conditions of increasing uncertainty. There is ever-increasing scope to provide techniques which the decision maker can use to structure problems in a flexible manner, and provide a repeatable and explainable decision synthesis. Such techniques have appeared in the private sector, some built into integrated hardware/software machines (these are usually called ‘analysis workstations’ because they were originally designed for stock-market portfolio analysts’ needs).

We take the view that it is possible to build a ‘generalised decision model’ which the decision makers can use to map out their (often intuitive) ideas about a problem, often in the quiet of their own office, so the techniques need to be implemented on a small computer. Our most important premise is that the decision makers’ intuitions about a problem (in our business these are often renamed ‘military judgements’) can be harnessed and refined.

In this article we discuss a set of techniques which are being developed as part of ongoing investigations into the construction of a generalised decision model. The work is in its Phase II development under the project name Management Decision Support System (MDSS). Unlike more traditional methods of operational research, the MDSS does not try to find ‘correct’ or ‘optimum’ solutions to problems. What it does attempt to do is:

a. provide a reasonable method of assessment and synthesis of information, and then

b. provide an explicit statement of the degree to which decision alternatives are of equal worth.

The overall aim of our article is to introduce the ideas behind the MDSS approach to decision making.

Extensive research of the decision analysis literature leads us to the conclusion that there are several processes that go on when making a decision to do something and which are independent of the decision type.

Using fairly common terms, the processes are:

a. identify the problem as a problem for the decision maker to deal with. What is the problem and does it belong to me?

b. analyse the problem, determine what the basic questions are — what do I want to do?

c. define (implicitly or explicitly) what your objectives are, the major goals that should be met when the decision is implemented — what do I really want to change and achieve?

d. generate alternative ways of achieving the major goals — how can I do these things and are they really possible?
Figure 1. Overview of MDSS.
The MDSS is concerned almost entirely with steps b to e. MDSS attempts to find a way to build a model which will link the alternatives with the goals taking into account the opinions of the decision maker. MDSS assists the decision maker to reasonably, repeatably and explicitly evaluate the worth or risk of various alternatives against stated goals.

A Few Basic Ideas

In the introduction we have deliberately used subjective phrases which are common to Defence decision making discussions. Deliberate acceptance of subjectivity is the most important idea which needs to be emphasised. The pitfall to avoid is treating highly subjective information, sometimes no more than expert guesses, as concrete data.

Most readers will be aware of the complex debate that accompanies any mention of, for example, the effectiveness of command, control and communications (C3) systems. No amount of mathematical argument is likely to remove the subjective nature of this debate. The first idea which underlies the MDSS is to accept subjectivity as a ‘fact of life’ in Defence decision making. This means that we must use a methodological framework which is tolerant of imprecision and partial truths.

The second idea on which the MDSS is based is that of reasonable and repeatable assessment, all steps in the assessment must follow logically one to another.

Taking the idea of ‘reasonable assessment’ and ‘subjectivity’ together we see that it is necessary for the MDSS to be able to handle ‘vagueness’. By ‘vagueness’ we do not mean that the decision maker is vague about his concept because he doesn’t know much about it. Vagueness means that the applicability or measurement of the concept or its worth is limited to subjective rather than direct measurement.

To say that a concept is vague is to say that there is no definite answer to whether or not the concept applies. Additional information or additional experimentation may increase the detail or precision but it does not settle the matter, since the vagueness is due to the meaning of the concept in question. For example, ‘deterrence’ defies exact definition except in language which itself is just as vague:

‘Deterrence
The prevention from action by fear of the consequences. Deterrence is a state of mind brought about by the existence of a credible threat of unacceptable counter action’.

To provide reasonable assessment for Defence decisions which involve concepts such as deterrence requires some logical method of capturing and preserving the vague nature of the concepts used. This is one part of reasonable assessment.

Another part of reasonable assessment requires that decision makers use methods which are systematic and repeatable. The MDSS decision model should be usable for many different types of decisions. The methods should also be logical to the onlooker. The starting point for meeting this requirement is that ‘old hat’ idea of hierarchical organisation. Saaty provides a wide-ranging discussion of the application of hierarchical representations for complex problems which illustrates the universal nature of the approach.

In the Defence community, hierarchical organisation is well known. Concepts are arranged in hierarchical structures as a matter of course. For example, we readily speak of tasks fulfilling roles and roles resulting from the concept of operations. By using the concept of hierarchical organisation we place ourselves in a strong position to carry out reasonable assessment of our problems or, at the very least, clear specification of those problems.

All hierarchical organisations or systems have at their lower levels more detail than the upper levels. Concepts become more vague when ascending the hierarchy. For example, a ‘good diet’ would be at the top but the fact that we have cereals for breakfast five times out of seven is near the bottom of the system. As a general rule we can observe that vagueness is an inbuilt characteristic of complex hierarchical systems.

Note here that the objectives that we want to achieve are at the ‘top’ of the hierarchy, and might be very vague concepts (e.g., achieve a
Figure 2. Development of an Acceptable Hierarchy
balanced force structure), but the things that we actually measure when looking at the alternative ways of achieving the goals might be very specific (e.g., amount of training provided in ASW operations).

Using these ideas allows us to move away from areas of decision analysis based upon probability theory or which demand unattainable precision. We are no longer in the classical engineering domain. The area in which we find ourselves makes a fuzzy approach to hierarchical systems explicit and allows comparison of those 'apples and oranges'.

We model this 'vagueness' in the hierarchy by using a branch of mathematics called 'Fuzzy Algebra'. This gives us a set of rules which the MDSS can use to combine the perceived values or worth of concepts.

Our aim, then, is to provide an electronic assistance to decision makers so they can find a basis to compare alternatives in terms of their contribution to defined goals. We do this by providing a small computer package which assists the decision makers to 'model' their decisions. The aims of the project are not:

a. to computerise the decision, or
b. to supplant traditional systems analysis where a solution can be found in this way.

The MDSS is basically intended to help decision makers 'crystallise' their views in such a way that they can explain them to someone else very explicitly.

What MDSS does aim to do is:

a. get an explicit statement of the problem and the factors that effect outcomes,
b. structure the problem hierarchically and generate ideas about the importance and relationship of each of the factors, and
c. if appropriate, use the structured problem as a means to compare alternative ways of achieving the top level goals.

An Example of MDSS Use

There have been several attempts at producing interactive decision support systems. However, we don't believe that any of these are particularly appropriate to Defence problems since most are based upon inappropriate assumed underlying models.

An overview of the MDSS is shown in Figure 1. Each of the boxes represents a suite of computer programs and the arrows indicate the sequence followed by the decision maker.

It should be noted that the entire system need not be used to enable a decision to be made.

After using one or more modules, the problem is defined and the factors related so that the solution might seem obvious. On the other hand, for more complex problems a process of iteration and reassessment may be necessary. Thus, the MDSS may have to be used several times for decision makers to reach a conclusion that satisfies them.

To show what actually happens when using the MDSS, we will go through an example of defining objectives, getting the factors, and building a hierarchical representation.

Setting Topmost Objectives

Our example examines the problem of choosing a method for doing a particular analytical study. The analyst involved set the top-most objectives for the study as:

a. helpful to the decision maker (who uses the study), and
b. minimise the use of analytical studies resources.

Determination and Listing of Concepts

These two concepts form the top list of any hierarchy that could be developed for the problem of choosing a method to do the study. MDSS is used to form this list of two concepts.

Our analyst now sat down with the MDSS list forming module and brainstormed the problem keeping these objectives in mind. In this way he produced a second list of 17 factors or concepts which he thought were relevant to the problem.

At the 'bottom' of the hierarchy are the three alternative ways of doing the study; these form another list.

Grouping Related Concepts

Having got the factors the analyst used the factor mapping module of MDSS to look for relationships between the 17 factors in the 'middle' of the hierarchy. Using a hierarchy building process and the resulting map we were able to show the analyst the results of his pairwise associations. After a few iterations the analyst arrived at the hierarchy as shown in Figure 2. As you can see, there was quite some change in going from the first impression to the final and acceptable hierarchy.

Some detailed explanation is necessary to understand the changes shown in Figure 2. Firstly, the analyst redefined some of his concepts.
Figure 3. Final Hierarchy of Lists of Concepts.
Figure 4. The Worth of Alternative A in Terms of Technique Lead Time (TLT).
ondly, he grouped some concepts together into lists. Thirdly, he defined the relationships between lists again at each stage in the reassessment. MDSS assisted in this process by doing all the necessary paperwork and data storage. Figure 3 shows the final lists of concepts that form the structured problem; these form the building blocks of the MDSS data requirements.

**Determination of the Relationships Between Lists of Concepts**

Each of the lists shown in Figure 3 contain several concepts or factors. The analyst wanted to know how the factors for two linked lists relate. He used the mapping module of the MDSS to find this information by telling the system to use the lists for each link in turn. In this way our analyst arrived at the hierarchy shown in Figure 3 which he regarded as a reasonable structure for his problem. We want to emphasise again that ‘reasonable’ means that he was willing to own the problem and defend its solution based on this structure.

**Determination of the Relative Worth of Related Factors**

Once the analyst had mapped the links between the lists he was able to assess the relative importance of the relevant factors. MDSS assisted him in this by setting up the necessary pairwise comparisons and letting him use a word scale.

The analyst also used the MDSS to assess the relative values of the words used in his linguistic scale so that he could carry out calculations. He also used the MDSS to capture the subjective nature of these relative values and this is shown in Figure 4 as numbers having three parts. For example (0.663, 0.828, 1.000) tells us that the relative value of Alternative A compared to B and C is in the range of 0.66 to 1.00 and 0.828 is the most acceptable value. Note we do not talk about average values.

The analyst didn’t actually see these numbers. All the comparisons were done on a linguistic scale as follows:

- The importance of Alternative A when compared to Alternative B in terms of Technique Lead Time (TLT) is:
  - very low,
  - low,
  - medium,
  - high,
  - very high.

The MDSS had previously been used to profile the term ‘high’ on an importance scale from very low to very high. After comparing Alternatives A and B, A and C and B and C the ‘value’ for A is calculated.

At this stage the analyst has the structure of the problem and the assessment of the relative worth of each of the factors in the problem. For example, Figure 4 shows the relative worth of the factor ‘Technique Lead Time’ in the list ‘Timing’ which contributes to the factor ‘Help’ which is in the list ‘Overall Study Objectives’. The relative worth of Alternative A is a combination of all the intermediate relative values arrived at by using the pairwise comparison module of the MDSS.

**Determination of the Relative Worth of Alternatives**

Once the analyst had made all the necessary judgements concerning the factors in the problem he wanted to know the relative worth of three techniques he thought appropriate to the study. This involved using the MDSS to carry out pairwise comparisons of the Alternatives for each of the bottom-most factors in his hierarchy (Figure 5). It was then possible to use the MDSS to calculate the relative worth of the three Alternatives in terms of the Overall Study Objectives.

In this case subjectivity or vagueness was large but it was still possible to say that the analyst had a preference for two or the techniques over the third. He also could not readily distinguish between this preferred pair. This outcome is shown graphically in Figure 6 where the amount of overlap of the triangles give an intuitive idea of the similarity of the worth of the Alternatives in terms of the overall objectives.

This example illustrates one important factor in decision support techniques which must be taken into account: no matter what the decision support process or technique it must be able to handle the vagueness in the problem and not produce answers which are more exact than the information available really allows.

We should point out that MDSS is like any other computer package, some training is needed to use it. But, like the word processor, the MDSS is easy to use the more you use it. The package is complete with help facilities and the documentation is written for the decision maker not a computer programmer.
Acceptability of Worth Value

Figure 6. Diagrammatic Representation of the Relative Worth of Alternatives A, B and C.

Relative Worth of Alternative

Future Developments for MDSS

In our example we illustrate the simplest of problem structures. However, in many cases it is necessary for the decision maker to make trade-offs of one factor for another. This will be possible in later versions of the MDSS.

Defence problems are not ones which will be solved in a single pass and a few iterations may be needed to sort out levels in the hierarchy where the factors are not independent as was assumed in our example. Feedback loops are yet another factor in complex problems. All these will be considered in later versions of the MDSS which will guide a decision maker through the processes necessary to their problem solution.

Summary

We believe it is essential to capture and use the subjectivity inherent in most Defence decisions to give true regard to the military value of the dollars expended on operations and equipment. Justification of Defence decisions must be based on reasonable assessment which is both logical to the decision maker and the onlooker alike.

The MDSS provides the tools necessary to handle subjectivity and it will help decision makers obtain repeatable and arguably correct decision syntheses. The MDSS allows them to use their own language to assess the relative worth of alternatives using a model based on an appropriate underlying compositional model.

Decision makers and non-specialist analysts alike do not have the luxury of time to study the large volume of theory that lies behind decision analysis. Design and development of an interactive MDSS specifically for the Defence environment therefore is a major step in aiding decision makers to reach reasonable assessments for Defence problems.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


Air Defence Gunners firing the Red Eye Anti-Aircraft Missile.
PTT Fitness or Fiction

By Major Stephen J. Rudzki RAAMC

Introduction

The introduction of the PTT was meant to establish a standard; in an attempt to ensure that the Army as a whole achieves and maintains an acceptable uniform level of fitness. But there has not been any critical evaluation of 2 key elements of this philosophy. (1) Is the standard appropriate? (2) Does the test accurately assess the standard.

This article will critically review the PTT and address these 2 questions.

The PTT

The Physical Training Test is meant to provide the Army with a quick, simple and easily performed test of fitness. It was originally adapted from the US Marine Corps test. Fitness is comprised of a number of elements; endurance, speed, strength and flexibility. The PTT really only measures one of these parameters and then, not accurately.

The Current PTT

The 5km Run

This distance is of interest. Cooper(1), has used running field tests since the early 1960s. However, his two tests were the 12 min run or the 1.5 mile (2.3 km) run. Both of these tests have been exhaustively evaluated and validated.

The US Airforce, Army and Navy use either the 1.5 (2.3 km) or 2 mile (3.1 km) distance. Only the US Marines use the 5km distance, and there is no scientific rationale for using a longer distance. The use of a longer distance merely increases the likelihood of injury, without being any more predictive of fitness. The 5km is a classic example of a means, which has become an end in itself. It has no superiority as a test, over the 2.3 km, and has no scientifically validated data in contrast to the 2.3 km.

The Kapooka Experience

As part of a research programme, 2 brother Platoons underwent recruit training utilizing different methods of physical conditioning. One platoon utilized weight-load walking, the other the traditional running based programme. As part of the project VO2 Max was estimated at 3 stages of training. In Week 11 of the 12 week course, the 2 Platoons competed in a 5km time trial race. The walking group had 8 of the 1st 11 finishers.

Run finish time was plotted against VO2 Max which had been measured some days before, the result being displayed in Figs 1 and 2. There was no relationship at all between 5 km run time and VO2 Max. The average finish time for the event was 22:16 and 22:34 minutes for the run and walk groups respectively. This is despite the fact that the walkers had not run for 11 weeks and had a lower average VO2 Max than the walkers.

The reasons for this are not clear, however it is evidence that contradicts the value of the 5 km run as an accurate measure of aerobic fitness. It would seem that other factors play a role in 5 km run performance.

The Sit-Up

The sit-up measures abdominal muscle endurance and when done quickly, is a moderate anaerobic exercise. But what is the significance of doing sit-ups? There are no military situations where a soldier is called upon to perform sit-ups. The facts would appear to be that this a simple, easily quantified exercise, that lends itself to quick administration. But the implicit assumption that it is a predictor or even a determinant of military fitness has no scientific basis.

There is no evidence to correlate sit-up performance with improved military performance. If the test has no relationship or relevance to work performance, why have the test?

The Heaves

Heaves are meant to be a test of strength, in fact, they are not. The ability to perform heaves depends upon the ability to generate torque. Scientifically Torque is defined as:

\[ T = F \times d \]

Torque = Force x distance through which Force acts.
Professor P.O. Astrand, acknowledged as the world's leading exercise physiologist, devotes a section in his textbook of work physiology on the validity of chin-ups. Heaves have no relationship to any military activity. Rope and wall climbs involve the co-ordinated use of arms and legs. Lifting activities again use co-ordinated activities of a variety of muscles. Yet we utilize a test that isolates a section of muscle groups and claim that this is a measure of strength.

The purpose of a test is to test a standard. In the Army the standard should be work-performance based. Yet the current test items bear no resemblance at all to any work related activity.

The Physics of Heaves

Basic physics.
Length \( = L \propto \text{Height/Length} \)
Surface Area \( = L^2 \propto \text{Cross section Muscle force} \)
Volume \( = L^3 \propto \text{Mass/Weight} \)
If we take two individuals — one 150cm and the other 200cm
The ratio of \( L_1 \) to \( L_2 \) is 1:1.33
\( L_2^2 = 1: (1.33)^2 = 1.77 \)
\( L_3^3 = 1: (1.33)^3 = 2.35 \)
Torque \( \propto F.a \propto L^2L \propto L^3 \)
Pull Push \( \propto F.a \propto L^2 \propto L^3 \)

Thus the larger person has 1.77 times the cross-sectional area and 2.35 times the volume of the smaller person. Therefore, theoretically, the larger person should be stronger. But in doing chin-ups this advantage is negated. To lift your body weight(M), muscle force (F) must equal or exceed weight force.
Therefore \( F \cdot a \leq M \cdot A \)
where \( F = \text{Muscle Force} \)
\( a = \text{Acceleration} \)
\( M = \text{Body Weight} \)
\( A = g = 9.8 \text{m.sec}^{-2} \)

Therefore, to lift one's own body weight as in a heave is proportional to
\( F \cdot a \propto L^2 \cdot L \cdot 1 \)
\( M \cdot A \propto L^3 \cdot L \)

In the case of the smaller person with a ratio of 1 this = 1
1
in the other this is 1 = 0.75
1.33
Thus, the larger and stronger person is actually handicapped by his greater body weight when he has to lift his body. We penalize people who are actually strong with a test that does not test strength.

The Experience of Other Armies

The current thinking of the US Forces is enlightening when discussing the status of similar fitness tests. A symposium on Military Fitness was held in Eugene, Oregon in June 1984. All four US Services were represented and the proceedings summarized.

From these proceedings, a number of interesting snippets of information emerge. The US Marines are currently researching a new fitness...
test which they hope will be more occupation­ally predictive\(^4\).

The US Army physiological research unit conducted a trial with a platoon of 32 soldiers\(^5\). Each soldier was assessed using standard parameters VO2 Max, 2 mile run time, and strength measurements.

These troops were assessed before, during and after a 5 day field exercise. The comments were that the troops had no difficulty with “aerobic” activities, but needed more upper body muscle development and activities which improved load-carrying capacity. Basically, a group of soldiers who were “fit” by all the standard measures, did not perform well in the field. Thus, we have identified a new concept, and that is “Military Fitness”.

**Military Fitness**

I define “Military Fitness” as the ability to perform military tasks in adverse situations. That is, to function effectively and delay fatigue whilst undergoing arduous tasks. This is a simplistic definition, but one that suffices for discussion.

The context of the military environment involves simultaneous multiple task performance eg. walking, weight-carriage, visual scanning, and audio alertness, whilst patrolling.

The military also require endurance of a quality not achieved in standard athletic events. A 5000m runner will only be active for 20-26 minutes; an infantry soldier may have to be active for 12-20 hours. The biochemical and physiological differences between these two situations are quite dramatic. Yet we persist in believing that 5000m performance can be extrapolated to endurance performance.

**Specificity of Fitness**

A concept that is fundamental to the consideration of fitness, is the specificity of fitness. An olympic swimmer would probably fail the 5 km run, but would you call him unfit? Every type of activity involves different muscles, acting over varying periods contracting with different frequencies.

The concept of VO2 Max which I have discussed in an earlier article\(^9\), relates to cardiorespiratory fitness, i.e. the ability of the heart and lungs to deliver oxygen to the exercising muscle. In many ways, cardio-respiratory fitness is the final common pathway in all forms of fitness. But there are other adaptations which occur at the muscle, joint and bone levels.

Muscle fibres are of 2 basic types (this is somewhat simplified, but will suffice for discussion); slow and fast twitch fibres. Slow twitch fibres are found generally speaking in endurance athletes and fast twitch are found in sprint athletes. The proportion of the two fibres vary and alter depending on the type of activity undertaken. Each muscle in the body has its relative ratio of slow to fast-twitch fibres. This ratio in competitive athletes varies depending on their event. The ratio in the quadriceps muscles of swimmers would be very different to that of 100m sprinters.

Also, the bone and joint structures adapt. Bone is a dynamic organ. It can remodel itself along lines of stress and can adapt to differing stresses placed upon it, and this is a factor in the development of stress fractures in young recruits.

**Mental fitness**

This is an area often neglected in discussions of fitness. I view this as a “competitive spirit” and a “never say die approach”. Traditionally, the high profile of sport within units aided the development of aerobic fitness, but more importantly reinforced the concept of teamwork and mutual support.

The PTT has engineered the era of individual activity. The test and the points score are individual. It breeds an egocentric approach, the antithesis of the mentality we require in the Army.

At some schools, all children in class are required to compete in a “house” sport. This meant that children of mixed ability had to meld together and develop a team spirit. Thus, the strong and weak sportsmen had to combine and produce their collective best.

This collective approach is a fundamental mental attribute. Team sport in units is declining and when available, it is restricted to only a small percentage of the total numbers of the unit. This is wrong. Sport needs to be re-emphasized and much better organized. Too often it is viewed as a hindrance to military training, when in fact, it has traditionally been an integral part of military training.

It instills unit pride, develops teamwork, creates the will to win and the fighting spirit which all armies acknowledge as the attributes a soldier requires. It also has the added benefit of
being enjoyable! The opportunities provided by sport are only limited by the imagination of commanders.

The Alternative PTT — The Basic Fitness Test

The British have a basic fitness test and a combat fitness test, both similar to ours. What we require, is a very basic test which is easily administered and can be readily extrapolated to military fitness.

Such a test probably does not exist. Therefore, a compromise test is required. The following is my proposal for a new Basic fitness test.

Item 1 — 2.3 km run Personnel should be given the option of one — 10 km cycle of these 3 tests.

Why the option? One of the problems of enforcing a run as the “gold” standard is that it does not take into account human variability or anatomy. To put it simply, very few people are “born to run”. Many develop severe debilitating injury and are discarded or ostracized. Flexibility is a principle of war which many forget. The US Army already has the option of a swim or cycle test for its members who are on medical restriction.

The cycle test would be no more time consuming than the run test. The swim test would present some problems of time, but I do not believe they would be insurmountable. These tests merely measure cardio-respiratory fitness — not military fitness.

Item 2 Push-ups

As already described, the heave is a poor test of strength, and subject to anatomical variability. The push-up is not a test of strength, but a good test of upper body muscle endurance. Particularly if the range of push-up is 50-100. Upper body endurance is much more relevant to a military context than sit-ups.

Item 3 The 100m Run-down-crawl

The purpose of this item is to mimic the fire and movement drill of the infantry soldiers. It tests speed and co-ordination, and if done properly, tests anaerobic capacity.

The item would consist of a 100m strip of grass with 6 ropes strung across. The performance objective would be to sprint to the ropes, crawl underneath till free, then sprint to the next crawl etc. The test is listed diagrammatically in Fig 3. This is an attempt to simulate the run-down-crawl action of infantry minor tactics.

The timings for the test would be worked out on a population basis, that is, getting 500 people of differing ages, sex and ability to do the course and use their results to set performance standards.

This test relates directly to the performance of military skills and is the most valid of the 3 test items.

The Proposed Redraft of the Current PTT

Discussion of the PTT would not be complete without some examination of the thought process which led to its adoption. It would appear that when first introduced, the PTT was adopted directly from the Marine Corps test, with no apparent consideration being given to its relevance in the Australian situation. Over the years, the PTT has been modified in the area of women’s timings. Recently a draft for a revised PTT has been circulated for comment.

The draft proposes tightening up of the current testing procedures. To receive an A pass, you must obtain an A in heaves, sit-ups and the run.

Heave technique has been specified in that no body movement is to be allowed, that is, all heaves are to be “dead” heaves. The sit-ups have been modified dramatically. The feet will no longer be anchored; the palms of the hands are to be on the floor and sit-ups to be performed to a defined cadence. Lifting of the hands or feet from the floor will result in failure.

I cite these proposed changes not to preempt the draft, but to examine the disregard of fundamental biomechanical principles explicit in these proposals.
These proposed changes reflect the triumph of technique over performance. It is a fundamental principle of war that as long as the objective is achieved, the method of it's accomplishment is left to the discretion of the commander. Put simply, there are many ways to skin a cat.

The underlying premise of these changes is that an A pass is too easy to achieve; therefore categories have had technique restrictions introduced. The concept of “the harder the test, the better it must be” borders on infantile logic. A hard test with no purpose is a hard test. The philosophy implicit in these changes is to introduce an unbelievable degree of conformity in technique and to no doubt encourage further time to be spent to achieve successful completion of the test.

If implemented, these changes would mean more and more time would be devoted to a test that has no proven relationship to military fitness.

Discussion

The PTT is a good idea, gone horribly wrong. What was originally designed as a means to the end of fitness, has become an end in itself. More and more time is spent in training for a test which, as I and other researchers have shown, appears to lack correlation with the performance of military tasks.

The Americans, whose test we slavishly and uncritically adopted have already expressed concern about the appropriateness of their tests. I have already expressed my views on weight-load marching as a more valid way of obtaining military fitness.

We must make the conceptual leap from cardio-respiratory fitness, to military fitness. The two are not the same. To extrapolate from the PTT and say that those with A passes are better soldiers is invalid.

There is a pressing need to de-emphasize the PTT and to replace it with another test. My proposed BFT is simple and more task orientated than the PTT. By halving the distance of the run and giving the options of swimming or cycling to those who are unsuited to running, I believe we will reduce the high incidence of orthopaedic injury amongst our troops and achieve a true conservation of manpower.

The BET needs to regain its proper role as the premier test of fitness. The elements of the BET are all performance and occupation related. Specially trained recruits at Kapooka have achieved walking speeds of up to 9km/hour. This re-emphasises the fundamental issue of specificity. It is this specific military fitness which we must define and then test. Our Army needs soldiers who possess endurance, strength, speed and agility, unencumbered by injury.

The role of competitive sport in units, needs to be re-emphasized and re-organised to obtain mass rather than elite participation. My thoughts are highly unoriginal. Traditionally, our Army has route marched to achieve military fitness, and relied on sport to provide aerobic fitness and the competitive outlook.

The PTT and the training required for it are very individual. The Army demands a team approach and yet, our current training methods discourage this, because it is every man for himself in the PTT.

The BFT I have proposed, would have no gradings. It would be simply pass/fail. The development of elites should be discouraged, fitness should be its own reward.

Other areas such as nutrition and weight control, I have not touched upon but they are also important factors contributing to overall fitness. The Americans have a comprehensive programme of education, and a more scientific approach to weight. We do not measure body fat and therefore, we are unable to determine accurately how “fat” a person is. Muscle weighs more than fat, yet we use simplistic height/weight tables which do not take individual build into account.

Conclusion

The PTT is an inappropriate test of Military Fitness. Its test items have not been validated against performance and have no military relevance. The PTT has grown to be an entity in its own right, unrelated to true military fitness it has diverted our training emphasis.

My proposed BFT is just that, very basic. It is a test of aerobic capacity, muscular endurance and speed. These are general non-specific attributes, but suitable for a non-field force population.

The BET is the most appropriate test of Military Fitness, but the concept of military fitness is the most fundamental of all. A good cardio-respiratory level of function does not translate into a good level of military fitness and performance in the field.
We need to reject an imposed American model and adopt tests which meet our needs and our requirements.

References
4. Ibid. pg 16.
5. Ibid pg 58

Major Rudzki joined Adelaide University Regiment in 1976, and was commissioned LT RAAMC in May 1981. He graduated M.B.B.S. in 1982 and has served as RMO 2 Fd Svy Sqn, 3 RAR, 8/12 Mdm Regt, and 1RTB. Whilst on leave without pay, he worked with the British Army in the areas of sports medicine. He obtained the Postgraduate Diploma in Sports Science in 1986, and is a foundation member of the Australian College of Sports Physicians. He is currently SO2 MED HQ 2MD.

RAAF man being winched from helicopter to deck of HMAS Hobart during exercise
A Borneo Journey Exercise Bukit Batu Lawi

By Colonel J.R. Paget and Lieutenant Colonel J.S. Murray

Background

ON 25 March 1945 two B24 Liberators of flight 200 RAAF departed from Mindoro Island in the Philippines to parachute Z Force commandos into Bareo on the Plain of Bah in the highlands of Sarawak. The flight of two B24's was under the command of SQLDR H.G. Pockley who had earlier won a DSO and DFC for his service in Europe, flying RAF Coastal Command Sunderland flying boats. On board SQLDR Pockley's B24, A72-191, was Major Tom Harrison, a British Army officer on loan to Z Force. Harrison has extensive knowledge of Sarawak, especially of the inhabitants of the Bareo area, the Kelabit people.

A72-191 tracked south west to Bareo navigating by the familiar landmarks of Kinabalu, (13,431 feet) and the twin peaks of Bukit Batu Lawi which is located 18 kms to the north of the Kelabit village of Bareo.

Arriving over Bareo A72-191 and the accompanying Liberator parachuted the Z Force team consisting of Major Tom Harrison and seven others.

From the base he established at Bareo, Tom Harrison conducted a successful guerrilla warfare operation against the Japanese over part of the area now covered by Sarawak, Sabah, Brunei and Kalimantan. On completion of the parachute drops SQLDR Pockley piloted A72-191 away from Borneo. Available evidence suggests that Pockley intended to return to Morotai via Brunei Bay where Japanese naval targets were to be found. He did not make it back and the fate of A72-191 remains a mystery.

In 1946, Tom Harrison, then Curator of the Sarawak Museum in Kuching, returned to Bareo and, with the help of his wartime Kelabit friends, erected a simple wooden plaque to the memory of the crew of A72-191. The wording of the plaque read:

"... OF 200 FLIGHT.
THEY SUCCESSFULLY DROPPED US AT BAREO 25/3/45 BUT THEY NEVER GOT BACK TO MOROTAI. BY BATU LAWI WE STEERED ON THIS AND FOUR PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS. THE RAAF CALLED IT MOUNT 200.
I PLEDGED MY WORD TO CLIMB IT FOR THEM IN THEIR MEMORY. HERE IN LONELINESS I REMEMBER MY FRIENDS.
... NAGALEWAN RAJAH M... RI’

Tom Harrison continued to serve as Curator of the museum until 1972 when he died in a bus accident in Thailand. In 1985 Mr John Briggs, a resident of Brunei and friend of Tom Harrison, contacted Colonel John Paget, Defence Adviser at the Australian High Commission in Kuala Lumpur. Mr Briggs sought Australian assistance to replace Tom Harrison's
now rotten wooden plaque with a brass replica. By early 1987 the plaque, measuring 30 inches by 14 inches and weighing 34 lbs, was ready to be mounted on Bukit Batu Lawi.

Exercise Bakti Batu Lawi

The Australian Army Project Team, Malaysia, led by LTCOL John Murray, readily accepted the challenge of climbing Bukit Batu Lawi to find Tom Harrison’s original wooden plaque and to affix the brass replica to the rock face of the mountain. The exercise was given the name Bakti Batu Lawi — The Spirit of Batu Lawi. The general outline of the exercise was as follows:

Day 1
Deploy from Kota Kinabalu in Sabah to Bareo by RAAF Caribou and establish a base camp at Bareo.

Days 2 and 3
Climb Bukit Batu Lawi and receive a resupply by air drop into an LP/DP on the eastern slope of the mountain.

Day 4
Locate the old wooden plaque and affix the new plaque to the mountain.

Days 4 and 5
Return to Bareo.

Day 6
Return to Kota Kinabalu.

On 2 August 1987 a RAAF Caribou, captained by FLTLT Peter Muffitt, deployed the team from Kota Kinabalu to Bareo. The team consisted of climbing and base camp parties drawn from AAPTM, Air Base Butterworth and the Australian High Commission, Kuala Lumpur, as follows:

Climbing Party
LTCOL J.S. MURRAY CO AAPTM
MAJ G. BARWELL AAPTM
MAJ O. MORGAN AAPTM
MAJ J. McNEIL AAPTM
CAPT M. LUSCOMBE AAPTM
WO2 A. McGUCKIN AAPTM
MR B. McKENZIE AAPTM
MAJ P. BAILLIE MD, 4 RAAF HOSPITAL
CPL P. McCROHAN 3 RAR
COL J. PAGET DA MALAYSIA

Base Camp Party
MAJ P. FINCH AAPTM
WO1 G. LOCKYER AAPTM

The team was accompanied on its deployment to Bareo by the Australian High Commissioner to Malaysia, His Excellency Mr Cavan Hogue and the Second Secretary at the mission, Mr Conel Playfair.

At Bareo the party was met by the Penghulu, Ngimat Ayu, who hosted a welcoming lunch. In appreciation for the assistance the Penghulu had extended to the exercise’s participants the High Commissioner presented the Penghulu with a gift of Australian books.

At 0700 hours on 23 August the climbing party departed Bareo led by Rapat Bala, a Kelabit guide with 15 years’ Police Field Force experience. In addition, three Kelabit porters
were hired to carry the party's heavy equipment and the brass plaque. The route took the party to the north past Kelabit longhouses and newly planted rice fields into the jungle edge. From here the route to Batu Lawi followed a Kelabit hunting track which, at times, was barely visible. The difficulties experienced by Tom Harrison and his Z Force commandos were vividly brought home to the climbing team later as it struggled up the deeply dissected, jungle covered terrain, encumbered by heavy packs and an average age of 38 years. The difficult going was exacerbated by the unseasonally heavy rain which had flooded the numerous creeks, made the hunting track very slippery and spawned numerous and particularly persistent leaches.

Navigation was quite difficult as the map coverage of the area utilised a 250 foot contour interval.

On 24 August the party traversed the northern slopes of Gunung Batu Buli and descended into the valley of the Limbang River. During the descent the party passed 100-year old rock carvings, some of the few remaining of the once-famous Kelabit Megalithic culture. The rate of movement at this stage had slowed considerably to accommodate the sick member of the party. As the re-supply drop into the LP/DP on the eastern slope of Bukit Batu Lawi was scheduled for that afternoon it was decided to split the climbing party. A small group was to move ahead at best speed to receive the drop with the slow moving group following up at a more comfortable pace. During the afternoon communications had been established with the RAAF Caribou and the helibox drop confirmed for 1600 hours. Despite an impressive rate of movement it had become clear that the advance group would not be in position on time to receive the air drop. This then took place with the RAAF crew indicating by radio the location of each helibox. On completion of the drop the Caribou crew was requested to make arrangements with the RMAF for the evacuation by helicopter of the sick member. The overnight location of the advance party was some 2,000 metres short of the LP/DP. At 0900 hours on the following morning the advance party reached the LP/DP which had been prepared in July by the Kelabit people in conjunction with a religious event on Batu Lawi. The advance group then recovered five of the six he-
liboxes dropped, a testimony to the skill of FLTLT Muffit and his crew. At 1200 hours the slower moving group arrived at the LP/DP with the ill member now in a very weakened condition. Early on the following morning, 25 August 1987, the climbing party, less the ill member and a volunteer companion, departed the LP/DP with the brass plaque for the summit of Bukit Batu Lawi. The final climb took nearly two hours and, guided by John Briggs’ directions, Tom Harrison’s wooden plaque was quickly found. Conditions on the mountain were unpleasant, there being few footholds, heavy cloud and a chilling wind. With some difficulty holes were then hand-drilled into the rock and the brass plaque fixed to the face of Batu Lawi, bringing to fruition the idea John Briggs had expressed some two years ago. At 1230 hours, after the climbing party had returned from the summit, a RMAF Alouette helicopter from Labuan landed at the LP/DP to evacuate the ill member who was, by then, incapable of making the return trip to Bareo.

After a brief lunch the remainder of the climbing party departed the LP/DP, aiming to be back at Bareo by the evening of 27 August 1987. Progress was swift although the hunting track had now become so slippery in several places as to be exceedingly difficult and quite dangerous. During the afternoon the monotony of the return trip was broken by three blasts from Ripat Bala’s shotgun. The two 300lb. wild pigs, which he had shot at a range of 20 feet, were skilfully slaughtered, butchered and distributed amongst the Kelabits in 20 minutes. During that evening’s halt the Kelabits shared their bounty with the climbing team. For the Australians it was quite an experience to be banqueting at 6000 feet in tropical rain forest on fresh pork spareribs. The climbing party set out on the final leg to Bareo at 0730 hours on 27 August with a stop scheduled on the Limbang River. From the river progress was good although the rapid pace did occasion periodic tumbles by members of a now weary team. At 1700 hours the climbing team broke out of the jungle into the rice fields at the head of the Bareo Valley and by 1830 hours reached the base camp.

That evening the whole group was honoured with an invitation to dinner with Mr Peter Iboh, a prominent member of the Kelabit Bareo community. Mr Iboh’s wife, Lynda, is the daughter of the Penghulu of Bareo who was in office during the period of Tom Harrison’s guerrilla operations. After a magnificent meal Peter Iboh made a further offer of beds in his home to members of the team some of whom were, by this time, noticeably fading fast. At 0930 hours on 28 August the RAAF Caribou attempted to land at Bareo but was thwarted by low cloud. A second successful attempt was made at 1100 hours, the crew now including the Officer Commanding RAAF, Air Base Butterworth, Group Captain Brendan O’Loghlin. As a simple fa-
reewell ceremony on the Bareo airfield prior to departure. LTCOL Murray thanked the Penghulu on behalf of the team for the assistance and hospitality of the Kelabit people throughout the duration of the exercise. In reply, Penghulu Ngimat Ayu noted the long association of the Kelabit people with the Australians and expressed his hope that the team and other Australians would return to Bareo in the future to keep alive the friendships made.

Tom Harrison's poignant memorial to SQLDR Pockley and the crew of A72-191 is now secure on Bukit Batu Lawi. Its sanctity is ensured by the quiet isolation of Batu Lawi and the goodwill of the Kelabit people.

**Lieutenant Colonel J. S. Murray** graduated from RMC in 1970. After a variety of Regimental postings in SASR and 2/4 RAR he attended RMCS, Shrivenham in 1980 and Command and Staff College in 1983. He has been commanding the Australian Army Project Team in Malaysia since December 1986.

**Colonel J. R. Paget** graduated from RMC in 1966 and was allocated to RA Inf, serving with 7 RAR in South Vietnam and 2 PIR in Papua New Guinea. He attended the Malaysian Armed Forces Staff College in 1983. Since that time he has served, successively, as Assistant Defence Advisor, Australian High Commission, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Assault Pioneers — Coming Ashore.
In the history of Australia, the years 1939-1943 deserve special regard. These are the years when Australia faced the threat of Japanese invasion and, especially in 1942 and 1943, the years when Australia 'survived' as a nation. This article examines the reaction in Australia to this threat, with an emphasis upon the attitudes of the Australian people and the reactive initiatives of the Australian government.

Since colonization in Australia, the ratio of population to area has precluded any possibility of the continent being defended in the conventional concept. Fears of invasion by the French, Germans, Japanese and Chinese have obsessed Australians throughout history. During this century, the fear has been directed at the 'yellow peril to the north' and between 1904 and 1943, Australian fears emanated from the conceived aspirations of Japan. Prior to World War 2, this concern was exacerbated by the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-1905, the Jellicoe Report of 1919, the Manchurian crisis of 1931-1933, the Japanese assault of China in July 1937 and Prince Konoye's 'Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere' of 1938.

Australia joined Britain in a declaration of war against Germany on 3 September 1939. On 4 September, Japan's Prime Minister announced that Japan would concentrate upon 'a settlement of the China Affair' and 'intends not to be involved' in the war. In late 1939, however, both the Australian Chiefs of Staff and Opposition Leader Curtin opposed the dispatch of an Australian expeditionary force on the grounds that such a move disregarded the possibility that Japan might take hostile action. Nevertheless, the first contingent of the 2nd AIF embarked at Sydney on 9 January 1940, bound for the Middle East.

Throughout early 1940, Japan continued her policy of aggression and expansionism in East Asia, justifying such 'in view of her mission and responsibility as a stabilizing force' in that area and her concern for 'the destiny of these regions'. Australia feared that Japan would take advantage of the situation in Europe to further her 'Co-Prosperity' aspirations; Britain, however, was reliant upon the deployment of Australian forces to the Middle East and placated Australian fears by assurances of the infallibility of the 'Singapore strategy'. Within Australia by mid 1940, there was little public commitment to the war.

... there was no unity of opinion, no sense of need for national sacrifice. We had relinquished little... if anything, most of us were better off.

The Government slogan of 'business as usual' no doubt calmed Australian fears but it also created an apathy which proved difficult to change in later months.

The Burma Road was closed in July 1940 as a prelude to discussions with Japan on a settlement. Within Australia, however, the Government was beginning to question the wisdom of appeasement. Despite Churchill's assurances, the whole concept of the Singapore strategy was highly doubtful of fulfilment, as the dispatch of the British 'Main Fleet' was obviously unlikely in the event of conflict in two separate theatres. Menzies appears to have recognized this and by August 1940, his Government was 'Completely hostile to mere appeasement', provided that the alternative avoided war.

The Australian election of September 1940, producing a coalition dependent upon two Independents, was indicative of the public temperament.

The election of 1940 was a sad commentary upon the state of the nation. For large sections of our people, the war was becoming a bore.

Several commentators apportion blame for this apathy upon the Government. Rowell contends that the authorities failed to warn the people of the dangers and claims that the military was expressly forbidden to issue warnings that war with Japan seemed inevitable. This policy was presumably designed to restrict criticism of Japan at a time when a negotiated settlement
appeared possible. Hasluck contends that the policy was also due to 'an expectation that the Australian people might behave badly' in adversity.8

In July 1940, the Roosevelt administration had agreed to restrict the export of strategic material to Japan. While this measure had only minimal effect upon the Japanese economy, its imposition indicated an American willingness to participate, albeit very reluctantly, in the affairs of East Asia. The re-opening of the Burma Road following Japan’s signing of the Tri-partite Pact in September 1940, curtailed British hopes for appeasement. For the remainder of 1940, Australia joined Britain in moves designed to curb Japan — the call to America to base at least part of its Pacific Fleet at Singapore; attempts to keep China belligerent towards Japan so that China would continue to divert Japan from moving southwards, and support for economic measures against Japan, designed to prevent her accumulation of war materials.

The Australian Government had established the Advisory War Council in October 1940, with joint party representation. Curtin contended that this organization was formed at his insistence and that it was his alternative to the formation of a 'national' government, as favoured by Menzies.9 By early 1941 (and in the absence of Menzies overseas), Curtin’s views on the war dominated Council proceedings. He believed that Australia was in real danger from Japan and that Britain was not capable of guaranteeing her security. He argued for a more independent defence stance, based upon a mobile air force and assisted by other allies, especially the United States. Curtin pressed for the release of statements to alert the public to the dangers from Japan and for a test mobilization to assess Australia’s preparedness. The Advisory War Council rejected the proposal for a test mobilization on the grounds that it would 'not be worth the cost and disruption to production' and the press statement was regarded as an attempt to 'create panic in order to persuade striking workers to return to work'.10

In late 1940, Prime Minister Menzies had gone to London to ‘discuss the Japanese menace’ and to press for improvements to the defences of Singapore.11 He found that London understood the dangers from Japan but would not take decisive action in the absence of American support. The Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact of April 1941 further heightened Australian fears. By mid 1941, the Menzies Government recognized the inability of Britain to guarantee Australian security and intensified efforts to gain explicit American commitment.

. . . it is now evident that for too long, we readily accepted the (British) general assurances about the defence of this area.12

In July 1941, Japanese troops occupied Indo-China. In response, Britain and America applied economic sanctions by freezing Japanese assets and virtually ceasing all trade with Japan. Australia was fearful that these actions would further exacerbate relations with Japan, yet she also wanted Japan restrained from further aggression. Australia ultimately concurred with the sanctions but perceived that if Japan was provoked to war, Australia would be one of the first countries to suffer.

In August 1941, Menzies still held that war with Japan should not be accepted as inevitable. During Advisory War Council discussions, both he and Curtin favoured a ‘chalk line’ to limit the Japanese advance southwards and with American commitment to police this limit.13 The Atlantic Charter of August 1941 was heralded as a monumental declaration of Anglo-American unity but the joint warning to Japan was much milder than Australia had hoped for. The American decision in September for a coordinated defence of the Philippines, the Netherland Indies and Australia was welcomed by Australia but was also seen to imply that ‘the prospects of compromise with Japan were slight’.14

The Labor Government of Curtin assumed office in October 1941 following the defeat of Menzies in the party room and the subsequent defeat of Fadden in Parliament. The new Government regarded the defence of Australia as their vital concern. Curtin contends that the defence preparations of Australia in October were ‘totally inadequate’.15 The Minister for War Organization and Industry claimed in October that ‘I inherited literally, some blank sheets of paper’.16 Conversely, Menzies claims that his Government had laid ‘the military and material foundations of Australia’s remarkable war effort’.17 This claim is supported by Hasluck who contends that

. . . the work done during those first two years was a major factor in Australia’s survival under the Japanese threat.18
In terms of external affairs, the Curtin Government continued the policies of Menzies and in the early days, accepted the views of Churchill. The Government received a strategic assessment from Britain in mid October to the effect that 'there was little likelihood of a move southwards (by Japan) for at least three months'.

Curtin thus still hoped that a negotiated settlement could be achieved with Japan but saw Anglo-American cooperation as essential for the containment of Japan in the longer term. Curtin envisaged a series of alliances between Russia, China, America and the British Commonwealth to protect against the expansionism of Japan. Although the proposal met with no success, it indicated that Curtin was prepared to diverge from traditional ties and was less inhibited by Australia's small power 'dominion' status. Furthermore, he was adamant that Australia should have a voice in the decisions affecting her interests.

That is the real issue at stake in this war. What this country does must be done with its own consent. We shall not suffer dictation from without.

The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor precipitated the Australian declaration of war against Japan on 8 December 1941. In 1939, Australia had declared war because Britain was at war. The Australian declaration in 1941, however, was made as a separate declaration to the British and as such, reflected the increasingly independent Australian attitude. Pearl Harbour was viewed in Australia as crowning evidence of the validity of fears of 'the peril from the north' but, perhaps more importantly, with relief that at last America would be committed to the conflict.

On 10 December, Churchill and Roosevelt resolved that the priority of the Allied effort was in Europe and that American influence in the Pacific was to be defensive until the 'beat Hitler first' phase was completed. Australia was not advised of these decisions, presumably because it was realized that she would vehemently oppose such strategic priorities. Thus throughout December, Australia complained bitterly at the lack of support to her defence and Britain's un-sympathetic response no doubt contributed to the decline in their relationship. Churchill considered that Australian leaders exaggerated the dangers and confused strategic priorities and also contended that Australia had done little to enhance her defence capability.

... Australia had refused to contribute to the cost of the naval base at Singapore ... had disbanded (her) armed forces (and) had refused to invest in naval or air protection.

Against this background, Curtin's appeal to America on 27 December does not appear surprising. Australia recognized that Britain was both unwilling and unable to assist and that America was the only nation capable of providing immediate and substantial assistance. It has been contended that Curtin was 'cutting the umbilical cord with Britain and attaching (Australia) permanently to the United States'. Curtin, however, claims that this was never his intention.

... the United States would remain the 'keystone' of Australian defence planning only until the 'tide of battle' had swung against Japan. The war-time relationship between Australia and America is covered by one supreme purpose — the retaining of Australia as an integral part of the Commonwealth of Nations.

As the Japanese continued their seemingly unstoppable advance southwards, Australian fears of invasion grew daily. The loss of the British capital warships Repulse and Prince of Wales and the Japanese invasion of Malaya destroyed the myth of the invincibility of Singapore and little appeared to stand between the advancing forces and the Australian shores. The White Australian Policy had kept Australia as a 'white island in a sea of colour' but it now appeared that the fears of decades were to realize — 'those countless millions of inferior members of the human family' were about to contaminate Australia.

The mood of the Australian people vacillated between near panic and continued indifference. Churchill claimed that Australia had no will for a fight.

... one got the feeling that Australia was ready to give up without a struggle, ... that if it had been possible to leave the country, the people would have gone.

In early 1942, The Australian Government ordered the complete mobilization of both the workforce and industry. Whereas earlier war measures had been carefully assessed to establish
their influence on employment and the domestic economy, total war effort required an entirely different approach.

It was a plan for war, for national survival. Everybody will be asked to make some sacrifice. 27

Menzies is complimentary of Curtin's introduction of 'the conscription of labour' and contends that he could not have achieved the same degree of public acceptance. 28 The mobilization of industry was assisted by American 'Lend-Lease' aid from November 1941 and this enabled the Curtin Government to develop Australia's industrial base for the war effort.

Throughout January and February 1942, Curtin became persistent in his demands for Australian participation in allied war planning and decision-making. Australia sought a permanent seat on the British War Cabinet and the establishment of an unified Pacific command and a Pacific War Council. Both Roosevelt and Churchill, however, were adamant that overall responsibility should remain with them and were prepared only to establish 'advisory bodies' to enable input by the remaining allied nations. Furthermore, America saw Britain as the legitimate representative of Commonwealth interests and refrained from seeking or accepting Australian counsel. It was not until mid 1942 that America began to appreciate and accept the separate identity and political autonomy of Australia and New Zealand.

In February 1942, Curtin instructed Churchill to return the 6th and 7th Divisions from the Middle East to Australia forthwith and the remaining AIF elements at an early opportunity. Curtin, no doubt influenced by the fall of Singapore on 15 February, argued that if Britain could not guarantee the security of Australia, then Australia must look to her own defence. This attitude provoked criticism from both Churchill and Roosevelt who contended that Allied forces must be deployed in accordance with global strategies and not subordinated to regional interests. Curtin remained adamant, however, and resisted Churchill's later attempts to divert the divisions to Burma, making in the process 'the biggest and most important decision I have had to since Japan entered the war'. 29

In March 1942, General Douglas MacArthur arrived in Australia from Corregidor, for the purpose of organizing an American offensive against Japan. MacArthur was accorded something of the deference of a saviour and a hero, both because of his military exploits but more importantly, because of the nation he represented. 30 The Australian Government saw Australia as a base for the development of the war against Japan and accordingly, it considered that the appointment of MacArthur signified American commitment to that strategy. There is little doubt that America considered Australia the only viable base from which to launch the counter offensive although Manchester contends that MacArthur was sent primarily to assure the people that they would not be abandoned. 31

In mid-April 1942, MacArthur was designated Commander in Chief of the South West Pacific Area. His first priority was to the defence of Australia itself. MacArthur was obsessed with the need for taking the offensive and was extremely critical of the defensive attitudes of Curtin's military advisers. 32 He argued that passive defence and the concept of the 'Brisbane Line' would lead to defeat and he threatened to resign unless such strategies were scrapped. 33 Curtin quickly acquiesced. Neither MacArthur nor Curtin appear to have been aware of the 'beat Hitler first' policy until May and their combined efforts to upgrade strategic priorities and resume the offensive caused considerable annoyance to both Britain and America.

Throughout early 1942, the Curtin Government intensified 'civilian conscription'. All civilians were required to carry an identity card and a ration card, the production of beer and spirits was reduced by a third, the rationing of tea, clothing and sugar was progressively introduced and daylight savings instituted to conserve essential fuel stocks and electricity. The Civil Construction Corps, comprising volunteers and called-up workers, was created in April to undertake defence-oriented works. In May, the Government introduced 'Uniform Income Taxation' to help finance the war effort. Crowley contends that 'the political and constitutional significance of this decision was greater than any other made throughout the war'. 34 MacArthur was full of praise for Australia's efforts.
No nation in the world is making a more supreme war effort than Australia.35

The Battles of the Coral Sea and Midway in May and June 1942 were strategic victories for American forces and Midway later came to be recognized as the turning point in the Pacific war. The American successes lifted the 'black blanket of despair' from the Australian people and Curtin's major problem thereafter became the maintenance of austerity and discipline to support the Australian war effort.

After Midway, the allied effort in the South West Pacific was directed to the expulsion of the Japanese forces from Papua New Guinea and the Melanesian islands and Australian forces figured prominently in the campaign at Milne Bay, the first allied land victory of the theatre. By August 1942, Australian forces had re-captured Kokoda and were forcing the Japanese back to the northern coast near Popondetta. MacArthur was becoming increasingly disgruntled with Australian efforts to dislodge the Japanese from Buna and Gona and his criticisms were in marked contrast to his platitudes of early 1942.

... these Australians won't fight ... they live off but not up to the name of Anzac.36

After further American-Australian rivalry and antagonism, Buna and Gona were finally cleared in late December 1942. These battles marked the end of Japanese hopes to dominate the Owen Stanley Range and access to Port Moresby and strategically, removed the threat of invasion from Australia.

In summary then, what were the effects upon Australia of the threat of Japanese invasion? As indicated by the statistics at Appendix 1, allocations to the war effort increased markedly in terms of manpower, materiel and finance. The 'conscription' of industry and Lend-Lease aid resulted in the rapid acceleration of the industrialization of Australia and established the basis for an extremely viable post-war secondary industry. The domestic initiatives of uniform taxation and social security became permanent features of the Australian lifestyle and whilst not directly attributable to the threat, were introduced under the guise of war-time economies.

In terms of external affairs, the threat by Japan resulted in the temporary transfer of 'dependence' from Britain to America, closer regional collaboration, the development of a more independent foreign policy and a desire to participate in the maintenance of world stability. The trauma of war also appears to have created a greater public awareness of Australia's place in the world and in world affairs generally, and thus tended to reduce Australian insularity and prejudice.

With the benefit of hindsight, it is easy to be cynical of the Australian reaction to the threat of invasion.37 Nevertheless, it is obvious from contemporary accounts, particularly in the period December 1941 to June 1942, that the threat appeared genuine and that fears of invasion were justified. One of the criticisms of Curtin is that his Government exaggerated the dangers from Japan in order to manipulate public opinion to accept the implementation of Labor 'socialist' policies. Curtin denies that this occurred. He recognised that certain permanent features would develop out of war-time controls that would assist a Labor Government but was adamant that he 'would not use the opportunity of war to introduce socialist ideas'.38

Throughout the period 1939-1943 though, the recurring theme is not the fear of Japan but the apathy of the Australian people. Some commentators blame the Government for a lack of direction but the underlying reason appears to have been that for many Australians, the memories of World War, 1 and the depression created an abhorrence of war and a distrust of government and they simply withdrew into the confines of their environ. Curtin was especially critical of such people.

His deep love of Australia clashed with the belief that there was a big section with whom Australia did not come first.39

This statement epitomizes the beliefs of Curtin. Whereas MacArthur's fundamental interest was to defeat Japan, Curtin's was to protect Australia. Although Curtin incurred the wrath of many, he resolutely put the interests of Australia ahead of all else, including the traditional relationship with Britain and the aspirations of his Party.

In conclusion then, it is contended that Curtin and his Government deserve considerable credit for their reactions to the threat of invasion by Japan for, by their 'nationalism', they safeguarded the ultimate aspirations of Australia — her survival as a nation and her survival as a democracy.
COMPARISON OF MANPOWER AND MATERIEL RESOURCES ALLOCATED TO THE AUSTRALIAN WAR EFFORT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SERIAL</th>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>DEC 1941</th>
<th>JUL 1943</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>% OF ADULT MALE POPULATION ENLISTED IN ARMED FORCES</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>NUMBER OF MEN ENLISTED IN ARMED FORCES</td>
<td>431,000</td>
<td>820,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>NUMBER OF WOMEN ENLISTED IN ARMED FORCES</td>
<td>3,600</td>
<td>40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>NUMBER OF ADULTS ENGAGED IN MANUFACTURE/PRODUCTION OF DEFENCE MATERIEL</td>
<td>71,200</td>
<td>144,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>NUMBER OF FACTORIES ENGAGED IN PRODUCTION OF MUNITIONS</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>CAPITAL INVESTED IN PRODUCTION OF MUNITIONS</td>
<td>£60m</td>
<td>£142m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>TOTAL ADULTS ENGAGED IN WAR EFFORT</td>
<td>554,000</td>
<td>1,172,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>ESTIMATED COST OF WAR</td>
<td>FY 41/42</td>
<td>FY 42/43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£320m</td>
<td>£562m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


NOTES:

3. The ‘Singapore strategy’ related to the fortressing and upgrading of the Singapore naval base and the dispatch of the British ‘Main Fleet’ to Far Eastern Waters in the event of Japanese aggression. The Singapore base was expected to resist invasion until the arrival of the Fleet.
17. Ibid, p. 537.
18. Curtin quoted in Ross, op. cit., p. 221.
29. Ibid. The ‘Brisbane Line’ was a controversial concept for the defence of Australia involving the abandonment of the northern half of the continent and with defences concentrated on the populated and industrialized cities of the south-east.
32. Ibid, p. 289.
33. Ibid, p. 290. The ‘Brisbane Line’ was a controversial concept for the defence of Australia involving the abandonment of the northern half of the continent and with defences concentrated on the populated and industrialized cities of the south-east.
37. S.E. Morison, History of United States Naval Operations in World War 2, Volume III, (Little, Brown and Co., Boston, 1951), pp. 80-81. The Japanese ‘Hakko Ichiu’ (goal of the nation) was confirmed by the Japanese Supreme War Council on 6 September 1941 and included the conquest of Thailand, the Philippines, Borneo, British Malaya including Singapore, Sumatra, Java and China, but did not include Australia.
Book Review


Reviewed by Colonel John Buckley, (RL)

HIS Royal Highness, the Duke of Edinburgh, has written the foreword to this outstanding publication which is a credit to the authors, the publisher and the Returned Services League.

Extracts from the foreword include:

"It is a remarkable story of single-minded dedication to two objectives. To perpetuate the memory of those who lost their lives on active service and to ensure the welfare of the wounded and aged "mates" and the support of dependants and orphans."

"The RSL has helped to shape modern Australia and I commend this book to all Australians who are interested in their history and in the development of their national identity."

His Royal Highness is President of the British Commonwealth Ex-Services League and he had been most interested in the magnificent achievements and dedication of the Australian Returned Services League.

This book tells the story of what the League has done for veterans and their dependants; whilst always remembering those who made the supreme sacrifice. This is no idle comment from the writer. I admire the unique service of the RSL to Australia — no other organisation has approached its contribution in so many diverse and varied ways. It is a great Australian institution and its destiny has been guided by so many outstanding and gifted leaders at both State and Federal levels.

I am proud and humble to be a member of such an elite body of men and women, who above all else, are determined to serve Australia and particularly its handicapped veterans, war widows and dependants.

Everything about this book is quality — its authenticity, its narrative, its excellent photographs, even the paper used. It examines the influence of the League on Government policies, defence, immigration, repatriation, employment, social security — to mention only a few. Anything detrimental to the well being and safety of Australia gets an immediate reaction.

The 300,000 members can be proud of Lest We Forget. It is a book which every member should have and it will have great appeal for non members. The book is one of the most treasured stories on my well stocked bookshelves. Make sure you get a copy before it is too late. Need I say more — except to repeat my congratulations to the authors, the publisher and the officers of the League, who have combined to produce such a masterpiece.


Reviewed by Don Jender, Department of Defence

THE content of this book is well summarised by its subtitle "A Social Profile of Members and Leaders, 1919-1945". The book presents a sociological study of the membership of the Nazi Party in the years from its formation to the end of World War II, based on extensive statistical analysis of historical records. I found it interesting because it dealt with two questions about the Nazi Party which are of considerable importance: who joined the Party, and why. In the course of considering who joined the Party at various times in its history, the author also discusses why members of various social groups found membership attractive. This latter issue is the one which perhaps most perplexes those who look back on the ruin which the Party was to bring upon Germany.

The introduction in the book is essential reading, as it explains the methodology used by the author, and incidentally comments on a number of other interesting aspects of the study of the history of the Nazi Party. The book is based
on the view that German society in the early twentieth century can be divided into three groups: a lower class, a lower middle class, and the elite. Each of these can be divided into occupational subgroups, three for the lower class, six for the lower middle class, and five for the elite. For instance, the lower class contains unskilled workers, craft workers, and other skilled workers. Much of the book consists of statistical analysis and sociological comment based on these categories.

I found most of Part I (Chapters 1 to 5) heavy reading, probably because of the statistical flavour of the analysis. The views and behaviour of farmers, workers, doctors, and others would be of most interest to sociologists dealing with Nazi history. For the general reader, momentum picks up at Chapter 6, which considers the age structure and role of women in the Party from 1919 to 1945. These two issues are significant because of the pronounced male, youth-oriented image of the Party which emerges from films of a propaganda or documentary character.

Part II (Chapters 7 to 10) focuses on the Party leadership, and I found this material of considerable interest. The discussion deals with better-known personalities and larger issues. It also introduced aspects of Nazi history I had not previously encountered, such as the organisation of the Party at lower levels, the competence of officials at these levels, and the problems they encountered as the war progressed. It is now well known that corruption, incompetence and irrationality were present in varying degrees at the highest levels of the Party, and this discussion shows that these characteristics were present at lower levels as well.

The book has a concluding chapter which I found disappointing, principally because of its brevity (five pages). As the author puts it, the conclusion consists of "some last reflections" on the subject. I had hoped that book with some 230 pages of text and a further thirty-six pages of tables and graphs would contain a more extensive, coherent summary of the conclusions and implications of the investigation.

In summary, the book will be of most valuable to those with a detailed interest in the history of the Nazi Party from 1919 to 1945, particularly from the point of view of its social composition. A liking for sociological analysis with a statistical emphasis would make the reading easier. There are parts of the book which are suitable for readers who are generally interested in the rise of the Nazi Party. These readers should make a quick initial examination of the book to locate the parts which cover their interests.

NOTHING OVER US: The story of The 2/6th Australian Infantry Battalion by David Hay. Australian War Memorial, 1984. $?

Reviewed by Brigadier F. W. Speed. (RL)

THIS battalion was one of the first in the Second Australian Imperial Force specially raised to engage in the conflict to be known as World War 2. The 2nd AIF had a checkered conception born of the Government’s feeling of obligation to the British Empire, but tempered by its neglect of the existing defence force then facing a growing threat from Japan. The core of each of the first twelve battalions was drawn from the Militia, the commanders of which were reluctant to release good quality officers and other ranks from the slowly expanding militia units and the miniscule permanent force.

The nucleus of the 2/6 Aust Inf Bn was typical. The commanding officer, a veteran of World War 1, had been CO of the 23rd Infantry Battalion based in Geelong, Victoria, and the second in command had been an Indian Army officer who had come to Australia in the twenties, to settle on the land. The other officers, by arrangement, were selected from four of the militia battalions: all were too young to have had war service. Space amongst the junior officers was left for some to be appointed from the ranks, after having attended an officer qualifying school. The RSM was from the permanent force, the other warrant officers and some of the NCOs were from the militia.

As far as possible the story is told by former members of the battalion providing written or oral recollections of events in which they took part. Others sent letters or diaries written during the war, or photographs and newspaper cuttings. The reliability of the material was tested against the unit war diaries and routine orders, and in some cases at least seemed more likely to be true in detail than the official record. The author had joined the battalion as a private
soldier from the then Department of External Affairs, had been commissioned, and had risen via the appointments of adjutant and brigade intelligence officer, to command a company in the Aitape-Wewak campaign in New Guinea: he thus had an intimate knowledge of the unit’s progress.

The narrative is intensely personal in character. Given or nicknames precede surnames. Ranks are stated sparingly, to the extent that the reader unfamiliar with the unit’s roll has difficulty in remembering who is who. Nevertheless, the author has achieved a connected, very readable history that will appeal strongly to former members of all ranks, and to historians, professional and amateur, in search of detail.

The 2/6 Aust Inf Bn was typical, also, in the matter of discipline. Running through the story is an interesting chronicle of the difficulties occurring in this infantry unit newly raised at the outset of a war. Before the first officers and NCOs had time to settle down, drafts of recruits with only very elementary training were added; and the deficiencies in NCOs had to be made good by picking out from the initial drafts those who seemed to have enough military knowledge to get by. As training proceeded, unit discipline developed well, but behaviour beyond camp bounds was less than satisfactory. Periods of leave in Australia, in transit to the Middle East, in Palestine and Egypt were studded with incidents. Later, discipline in operations was good to excellent, but deteriorated somewhat in ‘the unnecessary war’ of 1944-45.

It is worthy of notice that this 2nd AIF problem re-emerged in the immediate post-armistice force with its early commitment to the occupation force in Japan. General Sidney Rowell, amongst others, determined on the setting up of an infantry battalion organization, soon to be titled the Royal Australian Regiment, the unit discipline of which, including extra-regimental conduct, would survive in peace and war. This was forged in the Australian units of the multi-national occupation force, and tempered in the Korean war. It held in the Malayan Emergency, the Borneo affair, and the parallel periods of duty in Australia. It was re-tempered in Vietnam, successfully indoctrinating the national servicemen drafted in. It has proved its quality in the vicissitudes of the seventies and eighties.

Re-examination of the disciplinary problems of the two AIFs, as illustrated by this history of the 2/6th Battalion, might help to sustain the good reputation of the ADF should it ever have to expand in an emergency.


Reviewed by: J. P. Buckley, O.B.E.

This excellent autobiography describes the life and achievements of a very distinguished Malaysian soldier. It is one of the most interesting and well presented military stories I have read for some time.

From the village in Johor, the 18 year old Ibrahim was selected to attend the famous Dehra Dun Military College in India. He graduated with a King’s Commission into the British Indian Army in March 1942.

He was posted to the 19th Hyderabad Regiment where his first company commander was Major S. M. Shrinagesh (later fourth Chief of Staff, India). Shortly after he was appointed to a company commanded by Major K. S. Thimaya (later fifth Chief of Staff, India). Ibrahim was most fortunate to serve under these two outstanding officers, who were destined to reach the top Army appointment in India.

In a short time he was selected for S.O.E. training as a secret agent, to be employed behind the enemy lines in Malaya. In fact, Ibrahim was the leader of the first team. The sentence “Have you met Mariam?” was to be the key to the identification of Ibrahim’s Force 136.

The first attempt to land Force 136 on the coast of Malaya from a submarine had to be aborted — the party returned to Ceylon. For various reasons a Catalina flying boat was used on the second attempt. This meant a journey of about 15 hours flying time, but again problems occurred, and the party returned to Trincomallee after being in the air for about 30 hours.

On 31 October 1944, the Force again set off by Catalina and were put ashore at the Perhentian island off the coast of northern Kelantan. As soon as possible they crossed to the
mainland at Besut, but were soon captured by the Japanese Kempeitai.

Then followed the almost interminable interrogation and torture which the Japanese could do so effectively. It seems incredible, but Ibrahim and his small team were able to finally convince the Kempeitai they would collaborate in collecting information from the British, in return feeding false data back to Ceylon through the W/T channel. However, it was vital that the Home Station should be aware that messages were being sent under duress, i.e., Force 136 were captives — this was achieved.

The Japanese were well aware of the advantages of being able to receive secret information through the S.O.E. network. Sgt. Shindo was placed in charge of the W/T operators. The first call to Home Station was made in November 1944. After some early problems, unknown to the Japanese, Home Base got the message that Ibrahim was a captive.

This double game was a constant danger for Ibrahim — a man of great courage, skill and ingenuity. The Japanese were hoodwinked into believing that the planned British landing would take place several hundred miles away, the Japanese deployed their forces accordingly.

Sgt. Shindo and his associates treated force 136 personnel with some degree of consideration, which was to have unusual consequences thirty years later.

Ibrahim’s mission was successful. After the war he settled down to a brilliant career in the Malaysian Army during which time he graduated from the British Imperial Defence College. Finally in 1970 he became Chief of the Malaysian Armed Forces Staff.

In 1975 General Ibrahim was invited to visit Japan as a guest of the Japanese Defence Forces. Whilst there he decided to try to contact Sgt. Shindo. After some difficulties contact was made. Later, General Ibrahim was to be invited back to Japan twice to attend the weddings of Shindo’s daughters. Mr and Mrs Shindo also made a visit to Malaysia to stay as a guest of the Armed Forces, Chief of Staff.

As late as March 1983, Shindo still found it difficult to believe that Ibrahim had been able to deceive them thirty years earlier.


I strongly recommend this book, it’s a most exciting story about an outstanding officer.

LITERATURE IN THE EDUCATION OF THE MILITARY PROFESSIONAL, edited by Lieutenant Colonel Donald Ahern, USAF, and Commander Robert Shenk, USNR.

This book is divided into two sections; part 1 deals with literature and the military in education, and part 2 discusses literature and the military in general. Both sections are equally interesting and informative.

Imagination is possibly the defining characteristic of the great military leader. It is the leavening from which springs what T.E. Lawrence identified on his desert battlefields as “The unteachable, irrational tenth.” “... that all important 10% of combat mastery in which lay the test of generals.”

This ability develops from the nurturing of imagination. It is an important aspect of child development, neglected to a great extent by secondary and tertiary education in general, and specifically in the military where factual technocrat discipline orientation reduces the interest in, and exposure to, high quality literature.

It is through long exposure to literature and thus the long story of man and human nature in fact and fiction, that enhances the imagination, experience and understanding of past, present and future and places situations, plans and the person in perspective in life. The knowledge and understanding gained from literature provides a storehouse to draw upon in times of need, an ability to use the “good” and “bad” of the past in a creative new blend for use in a current, not before encountered situation. It is this ability that raises a man, a leader, above the technocrats with their limited and channelled thought process. There is nothing new except in technology.

A base of literature in the education of the military is reflected by all of the contributors to this book, but more importantly, almost all contributors have had actual experience of war to confirm their belief.

Many of the contributors cast aspersions on modern education, specifically upon its worth in the preparation of leaders of any kind and whether todays students are getting the message that without personal integrity, intellectual skills are worthless, there is more than just technology.
BOOK REVIEW

I found this book very interesting and in general quite light reading. The varying styles and lengths of article are such that it can be read from cover to cover at a single sitting, or can be read as single articles without loss of meaning or impact. Each article is thought provoking and tends to reinforce the others.

Examples are cited where competitions in poetry have been run in the field, almost at the height of battle, and the entries were extensive and of publishable quality. Many novels of great literary merit have grown out of the austerity of a soldier at war, memories of literature have kept sanity, body and soul together in the torment of foxhole or POW camp.

It is my opinion that this book has great implications and merit and should receive wide dissemination within the RAAOC Centre and all training establishments. I recommend this book to all officers and senior NCO's.

THE BATTLE OF LONG TAN: THE LEGEND OF ANZAC UPHELD. Author: Lex McAulay. Published by Hutchinson of Australia.

Reviewed by Lt. Col. Alistair Pope, RL

THE Vietnam War was bad news. I do not mean the news was bad, but the world media's treatment of the war was always biased against the American "Goliath" and in favour of the Viet Cong "David". Unfortunately the Australian media for no good reason contributed to this shoddy treatment of the truth and extended it to the Australian soldier to the point where heroism went unnoticed and often unrewarded — while errors, inefficiency and bad luck were treated as the norm, which they certainly were not.

Lex McAulay's book goes a little way to redressing the balance, and I am sure, as time passes and passions fade, more attention will be paid to a book such as this, than to the fictions which passed for news in 1966 — or the spate of fictional anti-war pot-boilers which dominated the screen and print two decades ago.

Giving Academy Awards to bad films such as the incoherent "Deer Hunter" was more to salve the American conscience about their lost war than for the film's dubious story line, the acting or the photography! Even now (and for the last ten years) fictional stories of atrocities allegedly committed by Australian soldiers abound (e.g., Army newspaper No. 684 of February 5, 1987) and remain exactly that: stories. Yet when the "heroic" Viet Cong carried out fearful murders "often as gruesomely as possible before an audience of the assembled villagers" (p. 10) this was passed over lightly by the media, for after all they were fighting for "liberty".

But the wheel in turning. Several long-time Viet Cong have now fled Vietnam to begin new lives far from the country they helped cripple and have now written of the error of their ways. Too late they see that the society they helped create is oppressive, degrading and without liberty or hope. I often wonder if those who took part in the moratorium marches when watching films such as the "Killing Fields" look with horror and ask themselves "Did I help create that?" Vietnam and Cambodia between them lost over one million dead in 30 years of war, yet in their own holocaust they have had perhaps four million people murdered in the last ten years of peace.

With the intensity of feeling surrounding the war in Vietnam it is safe to say that this book could not have been written (or was at least unlikely to be published) until no more than five years ago. I am glad it has now been written because it shows that eventually the truth will come out and that heroism will be recognised, however belatedly.

In one sense I found the title incongruous because the soldiers who fought in the battle of Long Tan need no comparison with the Anzac legend. In their own brand of warfare they carved their own niche of heroism, which deserves recognition in a book such as this.

Lex McAulay has done a fine job of recording the veterans' feelings, reactions and perceptions of the battle. He has also used the interesting technique of surmising what the Viet Cong was doing and thinking, how they too struggled to find the winning line of attack which would break through and annihilate the Australians deperately defending their battered perimeter. The book has good pace; even before the battle begins Lex sets the scene of life at Nui Dat in an understandable way which lets the reader become part of the team. By
mentioning names, dates, places and by the use of anecdotes we become familiar with the players in this real-life drama. Once the reader is gripped by the battle it is a hard book to put down.

On the debit side I found two minor faults. One is the frequent use of grid references, but no gridded map of the whole area is provided. Small ones of grid square size do appear on page 49 and 97, but these are inadequate.

The second fault results from my own sensitivity to criticism of National Service Officers (having been one myself). For instance, Brian Hall remembers 2nd Lieutenant Gordon Sharp as a "young officer who didn't know anything . . . (he even) didn't know how to pack his gear!" Yet in battle (and after good training with his battalion, Brian recognises the ability of his commander when he states on page 52 that "we all worked very well together. That control came from Sharp, down through the Section Commanders, and after he was killed the control was still there in Bob Buick, who took over the platoon". Perhaps it is a recognition that the cinematic image of the bumbling brand new officer developing through training to become a competent commander in battle is not too far from reality. Perhaps we must all learn that we must earn the respect that no rank can grant.

The book is a vivid description of a battle for survival in which eighteen Australians died. I make no excuse for my admiration of those who fought at Long Tan; they are heroes and deserve to be recognised as such. However, I am curious to ask how many of those who survived, now suffer psychological problems resulting from the experience? Judging from the words of the combatants themselves they appear to be a well adjusted lot, bound by the comradeship of danger, their unit and their unique place in Australian history. Perhaps it is not battle but boredom which brings mental problems or the bitterness of returning to Australia and seeing the truth distorted and your sacrifices maligned. Such was the price the Australian soldier had to pay.

Lex McAulay's book should be required reading for all soldiers and Australians, not just ex-moratorium marchers interested in the truth.
Defence Force Journal

Contributions of any length will be considered but, as a guide, 3000 words is the ideal length. Articles should be typed double spaced, on one side of the paper, and submitted in duplicate.

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The Managing Editor
Defence Force Journal
Building C, Room 4-25
Russell Offices
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