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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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Printed by Ruskin Press, Collingwood
Soldiers wearing disruptive pattern uniforms armed with STEYR AUG A1 Assault rifles.
Australia’s Perilous Year

Dear Sir,

Your special edition of the Defence Force Journal titled Australia’s Perilous Year, was a credit to the author and your staff. Mr Buckley’s recollection of events when Australia was threatened by the Japanese made absorbing reading and hopefully today’s Defence Force personnel appreciate the deeds and hardship servicemen endured some 46 years ago.

One can only hope that the present and future governments will heed Mr Buckley’s warning in regards to defence self reliance. Australian’s who believe that the United States or our allies will assist in the advent of war, live in a fools paradise.

More-over, Australia could never expect to win a future war if a Menzies style government allowed our peace time military resources and munitions recede to a comparable level prior to WW2.

Once again, a great article and well done.

KEN BELGROVE
Flight Sergeant

Australia’s Perilous Year

Dear Sir,

John Buckley’s article in DFJ September/October 1988 addresses an important subject and it is disappointing that it was not well done. The article’s viewpoint is narrow, emphasising the army side of defence, and it repeats discredited myths on Australian defence policies.

The article misunderstands the defence policy of pre-war federal governments which are accused of ‘sheltering’ and ‘doing precious little,’ (p.4). Buckley seems not to have grasped the fundamental fact that Australia’s defence was based on the strategic protection of the British navy. He sees Singapore itself as providing protection for Australia and he writes of it as a ‘bastion’, by which I assume he means fortress (p.4). He seems to believe that the fleet was to defend Singapore, failing to understand that Singapore was only a base to support the fleet and that it was the fleet that was to provide the shield (p.16, 17).

The Singapore strategy failed, but this doesn’t make villains of its authors as Buckley maintains. The strategy failed because the British fleet was not strong enough to fight alone. Australian governments may have been too keen to rely on assurances from the governments of the United Kingdom, but in all the subsequent debates on the strategy no-one has suggested a feasible alternative to the accepted policy.

It is quite wrong of Buckley to ignore the defence development programme that began in 1937 and resulted in the RAN being ready for war in 1939 with substantial forces including three new cruisers.

Australian defence policy between the wars aimed to provide against raids and not against invasion which was considered to be unlikely. This policy put an emphasis on naval preparedness. In equating defence with army capability Buckley has largely ignored the navy.

Buckley is at pains to present Curtin with favour but he spoils his case with unsubstantiated claims. Most people would agree that Curtin was a great prime minister but Buckley gives no evidence for his statement that Curtin was eager to move Australia towards a close defence association with the USA in the mid 1930s (p.6, 16). One also wonders on what evidence Buckley can say that the majority of servicemen voted for Curtin in the election of 1940. It is of course good to read that after Curtin became prime minister he was ‘no longer neurotic or hesitant’ (p.12), and we can understand that with his army background Colonel Buckley was pleased to write that Curtin’s party colleagues did not continue ‘to behave publicly and emotionally in an irresponsible and undisciplined manner’, although I imagine the applause from the ALP head office would be muted. But surely it is asking us to suspend disbelief when Buckley writes that it was Curtin who ‘initiated, forged and nurtured the close relationship with the United States in war’ (p.30). What of Menzies and Casey?

Buckley’s article is written from a local Australian point of view and it fails to take account of global war issues. It sees Churchill’s and Roosevelt’s concentration on major issues
as ‘bullying tactics’ against Curtin (p.13). Buckley does not discuss whether or not Curtin’s emphasis on Australian sovereignty went beyond unco-operativeness and was seen by our allies as obstructionism (p.14).

When Buckley writes that in 1942 there was ‘virtually nothing to stop any marauding invader’ (p.22), he forgets to mention the naval effort at the Coral Sea and Midway battles that stopped the enemy from any possibility of invading.

No detail is given on how Australia would have been advantaged by a change from the allied strategy of ‘Beat Hitler First’. For my part I continue to see this strategy, agreed by Churchill and Roosevelt, as the best for Australia in the circumstances. The strategy was to fight a holding war in the Pacific and concentrate on the battle against Germany. I cannot see how any other line could have been taken, given the limited state of allied war assets at the time.

Buckley correctly and understandably praises General Sturdee, his father-in-law, but he is over-zealous in his criticism of others. He libels successive Chiefs of Naval Staff as supporting UK policy regardless of Australian interests (p.4). An examination of the records show that, on the contrary, these admirals faithfully addressed Australian problems. He is unjust to Lord Casey as falling ‘under the spell of Churchill’ (p.27) and moving to be minister of state in the middle east. W.J. Hudson’s Casey pp.130-136 answers this.

This unsatisfactory and one-sided article is not redeemed by the attempt to give it substance through enlisting the interest of the Prime Minister, Mr Hawke. I believe that the political hyperbole in the foreword is out of place in a professional journal. Finally, I am surprised that the article was given its prominent publication, taking up a whole issue of the journal.

ROBERT HYSLOP
Australian National University

Never had I read such drivel and insult to one’s intelligence. For example, where is his evidence that the disunity which multiculturalism is encouraging could make Australia very difficult to defend. Has he personally interviewed every migrant on this subject?

I too was a migrant in 1950 from wartorn Poland. My parents often discussed the plight of that country but after settling in (it took them only two years hard work to save a deposit on a house), we quickly aligned and adjusted ourselves to the new country. During the Vietnam period we were willing to serve to defend this great nation. It quickly became our home and adopted mother country. My parents who were very fond and proud of their heritage were torn apart by the new situation but they always told me that this was God’s country and we should be prepared to fight with our bare hands to defend it.

Sure there are ethnic groups with pent up feelings and frustrations. But these are a minority. I recently attended the funeral of a great Australian of Italian birth whose coffin was covered with an Australian flag (not an Italian one). This was done in respect to his tremendous devotion to the plight of the ordinary Australian citizen. There are many examples of this.

I urge Professor Blainey to speak and mingle with ordinary so called ‘ethnic groups’. He will find like I did, great Australian pride and patriotism for this country. We should give ‘ethnics’ the opportunity to serve equally with the so called normal Australian. But what do we find now. How many ‘ethnics’ are in the Defence Forces? Why are they not encouraged to serve? Are we so afraid that we can’t trust our own citizens?

Professor Blainey should try and stop living in the past. Times have changed so rapidly that they have surpassed him. Its like listening to dear old grandmother and saying — “yes dear, that was so long ago. Now go to sleep dear and rest”.

Finally, the paper is not well argued. It makes frequent unsubstantiated assertions and is wrong in some of its deductions. The paper is replete with tired old emotive phrases and colloquialisms that detract from the objectivity of the document and even borders on utter stupidity.

W. PRADELA

Causes of War and Peace

Dear Sir,

I recently had the pleasure of picking up the August 1988 issue of the Defence Force Journal and was stunned to read Professor Blainey’s paper on ‘The Causes of War and Peace’.
The Decline of the Military Profession in Australia?

By Dr Hugh Smith, Senior Lecturer, Department of Politics and Director, Australian Defence Studies Centre, University College, Australian Defence Force Academy.

Introduction

This article is primarily speculative. It is designed more to stimulate thought than to make authoritative pronouncements. Its theme is the future of the military profession in Australia although parallels can be found with other countries. Its starting-point is the prospect of an extended peace which — apart from minor activities such as UN peacekeeping or police action in the Pacific — may stretch for many decades. How will Australia's military profession fare when there is no combat role for which to prepare?

Before considering the future of the military profession, one might ask whether it is actually a profession at all. Its central activity is fighting — and this immediately sets it apart from other professions such as medicine, law and engineering. Members of these and other professions employ their skills to promote the well-being of those with whom they deal. Soldiers also serve their community but do so by killing and wounding members of other communities. This gives rise to another oddity about the military profession in that most of its members hope they will never actually be called upon to employ their skills in a real war. In contrast to other professions, moreover, the military must subordinate its judgement to that of the government of the day — at least on the most important questions. It is the creature of the sovereign state and if the state does one day disappear — into a world federation or into a mushroom cloud — so too will the military profession.

Rather than go into the debate about how much of a profession the 'profession' of arms really is, however, I shall accept the three criteria set out by that staunch defender of the military profession, Samuel Huntington, in his work The Soldier and the State: first, the possession of specialized skill and knowledge; second, a distinct identity and sense of corporate-ness; and third, the right of self-regulation in exchange for performing a role of value to the community. In the first part of this article I suggest that in terms of these three criteria the Australian military profession is in decline. I shall then ask whether the profession has lost its traditional role in and for society. The final section speculates on possible future directions for the military profession.

Challenges to the Profession of Arms

Let us take Huntington's three criteria in turn:

(1) Specialized skills and knowledge

In the last century the military profession has become intensely specialized; its skills have become both numerous and fragmented. At one time military skills were relatively simple — civilians could be trained in rifle drill, move into command positions or learn how to fly a fighter aircraft with relative ease. Up to, say, 1945 it might also have been possible for one man to grasp the essential details of all arms of his particular service. But since the end of the Second World War the military art has undergone intense specialization and has come to require the full-time attention of the regular soldier. Now the complexities of military operations — technological, organizational and political — seem beyond any one person. Similarly, no doctor or lawyer would dare claim expertise in all branches of his profession. For the military this process has certain important consequences.

(a) Many skills in the Defence Force have become essentially similar to those in civilian life. The technology of war has in one sense become highly specialized — there is no civil use for anti-aircraft missiles, for example — but the complexity of modern weapons systems means that they require a wide range of skills in order to procure, operate, maintain and repair them. And each of these skills may have a counterpart in civilian occupations. The guidance system on a missile or a complex piece of communications equipment, for example, must be serviced by electronics technicians who can equally well work on television sets. The procurement of a fighter aircraft requires management skills that can be turned to other uses.
Current concern about retention in the Defence Force, of course, is focused precisely on those skills such as flying and engineering which are transferable to civilian life.

This sort of transferability is not unique to the military profession: lawyers may become judges or company secretaries, doctors may become medical researchers or hospital administrators. But it raises acute problems for the Defence Force:

(i) transfers are mostly one-way — out of the military; civilians cannot easily be incorporated in the forces on account of both lack of military training and of inadequate financial rewards.

(ii) for the most part the Defence Force must train its specialists at its own expense — doctors and lawyers are also trained largely at the expense of the Commonwealth but this does not become (even allowing for the 'graduate tax') a financial burden on the professions themselves.

(iii) the Defence Force must use its own personnel to train others — this depletes the ranks of those available for regular military tasks.

There are many other difficulties flowing from a high rate of attrition. The important point is that they relate to greater use of technology and growing specialization in armed forces throughout the world. These trends are not unique to Australia or to the military profession. What is unique is the particularly debilitating effect on military forces. Given the nature and cause of these pressures, moreover, the chances of a remission would be rated very low.

(b) More and more functions in the Defence Force are being taken over by civilians. I was initially surprised some years ago to see private security guards at RMC Duntroon but on reflection the greater surprise was that the Army had contracted out the education of its officer cadets to a civilian university through an agreement with UNSW in 1967. The Air Force and the Navy had done much the same thing in the 1960s and now the Defence Academy represents the culmination of this development. Of course, there were good reasons for these developments. Service personnel are too highly trained and too expensive for low-level guard duties on the one hand, and not academically trained enough to become university lecturers on the other. There are many other examples of 'contracting out' and they seem likely to grow at both higher and lower levels of expertise.

Even more importantly, civilians seem to be getting closer to the combat role. The US Navy has civilian technicians occupying important posts aboard warships — ‘tech reps’ as they are called. There seems to be no reason why the Australian Navy should not go down the same track. Of course, civilians have gone aboard warships for many years — as doctors, for example — but there is an important change when civilians become an essential part of military action. Similarly, one can expect to see civilians working aboard airborne early warning aircraft or in-flight refuelling tankers, in radar installations or missile sites and the like. Again, there are good financial and manpower reasons for these developments — but this simply underlines the irreversibility of the trend.

(c) Strategy and tactics, too, may cease to be the preserve of the military professional. Technology threatens to take even these out of the hands of the fighting soldier, sailor or airman. In many kinds of conflicts modern communications can turn politicians into commanders in the field — without the inconvenience of actually being in danger. In the Falklands war, for example, the decision to sink the Belgrano became a matter for cabinet decision. The international and domestic repercussions of any use of force encourage political leaders to become instant strategists, a tendency reinforced by the increasing power and accuracy of weapons systems.

It is difficult to imagine Australian politicians resisting the temptation to ‘take charge’ of any likely military operations on our soil or in our region. In the Vietnam War the Minister for the Army from 1966 to 1968, Malcolm Fraser, was in the words of the Secretary of his Department “trying to be a general” and actively challenged the Chief of the General Staff on military matters. There was also political pressure on commanders to keep down casualty levels. In the last twenty years, moreover, communications have developed so remarkably that the military professional on some future battlefield may find his political master not only on the other end of a radio link but watching his performance live on a television screen.

It seems that only the use of violence will remain a monopoly of the armed forces. Yet even here the instruments of authorized violence are reaching more and more hands: commercial
security services, police terrorist squads, perhaps in future an armed coastguard or, as some have suggested, a para-military police force. It is a process which has not gone as far in Australia as some other countries but the potential is there. And in an era of privatization almost anything is possible.

(2) A distinct identity and sense of corporate-ness

The overlapping of functions between military and civilian occupations itself reduces the sense of identity in the armed forces. Few tasks, it seems, can safely be considered the exclusive prerogative of the military. But this is not the only challenge to the sense of identity and corporate-ness of the military.

(a) There are deep functional divisions in the military itself. The Defence Force is populated not only by the warrior but also by the bureaucrat and the technocrat. Each of these has a different basis for his authority — the warrior in his powers of leadership and personal authority, the bureaucrat in his committee and his files, the technocrat in his workshop and his technical specifications. Each has a different style of making decisions — the warrior by command, the bureaucrat by consensus and the technocrat by computation. And each tends to consider his own area of prime importance. These divisions, moreover, seem likely to grow, not lessen, as technology and bureaucracy invade the battlefield more and more.

(b) another division to be found in the Defence Force is that between those who see it as an institution and those who see it as an occupation. In essence this is the difference between the military as a vocation, a calling to be a member of an all-embracing social institution; and the military as just another job. It is a division which can be found not only between different people's perceptions of the military but also in one and the same individual who might feel these seemingly contradictory pulls.

Evidence for the growth of the occupational approach to the military profession can be found in such things as: the Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal which sees the government contending with the Chief of the Defence Force over levels of pay — rather like the employers and the ACTU in the National Wage Case; and the creation of the Armed Forces Federation of Australia — not a large membership but gaining in acceptance and acting in some ways like any other interest group. The payment in 1988 of a $70,000 cash bonus to pilots who re-enlisted for a further 6 years was an example of pure occupational or labour-market philosophy. Perhaps there were no alternatives, but this is precisely the point.

Consider, too, a recent letter in the Army newspaper. A long-serving Sergeant complained that recruiting vehicles now bore the words Job Information Centre — he was wondering what had become of his ‘career’ in the armed forces. The reply by the Director Army Recruiting reaffirmed the Army’s need to follow a labour-market approach to attract short-term recruits. Without going into the perceived difference between a career and a job, DAR stated, “the fact is that the Army has both”. One question here is whether the ‘just another job’ philosophy will apply much more to other ranks than to the officer corps — and what the consequences of this division will be.

(3) Self-regulation

The Defence Force, of course, is subject to direct political control — in contrast to all other professions. It operates only at the behest of and in the name of the government. The phrase ‘armed services’ points up the essential similarity with the Public Service in this regard. It is interesting to speculate in passing why it is that even top-level public servants do not claim the status of a professional despite their possession of specialized skills and a sense of corporate-ness. Perhaps it is because they wish to avoid any suggestion that they exercise a measure of self-regulation or independent decision — they must retain the appearance of servants rather than masters.

As far as the Defence Force is concerned — given this subordination to political control — the important areas of self-regulation are the recruitment, training and education, promotion and dismissal of its members. The selection of equipment might once have been considered important to self-regulation but has rarely been a matter for the military alone. Budgets and defence strategy have always intruded into the business of choosing the ‘best’ weapons. In recent years, growing costs and greater technical complexity have combined with political considerations to further constrain military input and enhance civilian influence over the selection and procurement of weapons systems. Contin-
eeded control over recruitment, training and education, promotion and dismissal will, I suggest, be the crucial test of whatever aspirations the Defence Force has to remain a profession.

Some constraints, of course, already exist, particularly in the educational field. The establishment of the Australian Defence Force Academy faced strong, though not united, military opposition and needed intense political and bureaucratic pressure to carry it through. The role of the University of New South Wales at ADFA or of other civilian universities is likely to increase as more officers are encouraged or required to undertake university level studies and as postgraduate courses become necessary or desirable for officers aspiring to senior positions. The American pattern is relevant here with 50% or more of officers expected to obtain some kind of postgraduate qualification in the course of their career. Academic success or failure may thus come to make or break careers. This may be no bad thing — what else could an academic say? — but it will surely diminish the measure of self-regulation in the military profession. Some years ago, Paul Mench, an able scholar and soldier himself, warned of the dangers of the military getting into a lockstep with the academic community.

As to political involvement in military appointments, the Minister for Defence does have certain powers with respect to the promotion and posting of senior officers but their use appears relatively rare — certainly much rarer than in the years immediately after Federation. But continued independence in this regard will be an important indicator of the state of the military profession and may come under pressure given the potential developments canvassed in the final section of the paper.

The Role of the Military Profession

The health and vigour of any profession depend on three factors: (a) performing a 'socially responsible' function; (b) respect from the community; and (c) people wanting to join and to stay in. The clergy are in decline because people have stopped going to church. The doctors are in the ascendant because people want more and better medical care. The military profession is having trouble on all three counts.

One reason for this is that its primary function — as the profession itself keeps insisting — is combat. But combat is a contingent not a continuing task. It may never happen. Everything else — training, exercises, equipment acquisition, planning and so on — all appears to be second XI stuff. It does not appear real to the public — or, no doubt, to many of those taking part. Everyone is a 'chocolate soldier' now. This state of affairs is compounded by the fact that combat skills are still seen as the criterion by which to measure officers and determine promotions. As one writer put it: "Officers advance to the top, or near to it, of their profession on the basis of their possessing skills that are not needed".

Part of the problem, of course, is that we do not have a war in sight — nor even a decent threat. There is some movement towards defence of the North and the creation of a twofleet navy in the East and the West. But who is going to invade or seek a lodgement in country that is difficult for Australia's own forces to operate in? (Lodgement, incidentally, appears to be a technical word for moving into somewhere with no real purpose and nowhere else to go.) And the Navy and Air Force — assuming they receive adequate equipment — may succeed so well in controlling the sea-air gap that no-one even thinks of trying to cross it.

One merit of inadequate defence preparations, on the other hand, is that they enhance the perception of threats. Only a small proportion of the community at large believe in the likelihood of a serious threat to Australia. It is a rare writer or speaker — usually an ex-military man who is therefore regarded as a militarist — who takes threats at all seriously. If the role of the ADF is to be established in the public mind, people are needed who will speak publicly about the kind of threats and contingencies for which the Defence Force is preparing — if we can agree on any. Perhaps there is a role for defence information seminars of the kind that were begun with great fanfare a few years ago but soon abandoned.

In the meantime, the military does perform a great number of what Janowitz has called 'constabulary' tasks. These are functions such as deterrence, military assistance, UN peacekeeping, surveillance, exercises with allied nations and so on — all of which are based on the presupposition of continuing peaceful international relations. If the main task of the military has come to be prevention of war — rather than preparation for war — then the military has changed its nature. Janowitz's term
'constabulary force' captures this essence. The role of the constable is a policing one: he operates in a largely ordered society, promoting broadly agreed social objectives, and relies on minimal use of force. In these circumstances the perceived importance of the armed forces must decline.

The second measure of the health of a profession — respect from the community — is no doubt influenced by all these factors. A very large proportion of public opinion considers average members of the ADF to be either very capable or quite capable (86% in June 1987 with 11% unsure/it depends). This reflects the traditional Australian focus on the individual serviceman who has always been highly praised.

My impression is that respect for the armed Forces as a whole and for the functions they carry out is always lower — only 42% of the population in 1987 believed the ADF could effectively defend Australia against an outside threat. Popular stereotypes of the military soon emerge whenever blimpish blunders or bureaucratic bungling come to light or whenever military personnel are found bullying civilians or each other.

There is some evidence of the low status of the military in Australian society. Studies of professions and elites in Australia simply do not mention the military; the best you can find is a reference to senior officials of the RSL. The military profession, moreover, does not rank very highly among various occupation groups — certainly below the established professions — as is the case in other Western democracies. A survey of first year officer cadets in 1987 showed them ranking military officers in terms of social status below diplomats, doctors and company directors — though well above university lecturers, by the way. I would not be surprised to find in later years that their self-esteem diminishes as they progress in their profession.

That perceptive French commentator, Alex de Tocqueville, said of the United States in the 1830s: "When a nation loses its military spirit, the career of arms immediately ceases to be respected and military men drop down to the lowest rank among public officials. They are neither greatly esteemed nor well understood". This seems not far from the truth in Australia, perhaps with the addition that in this country for various historical reasons the military as a profession has never ranked highly to start with. What changed matters for the United States — as de Tocqueville foreshadowed — was a prolonged and bloody civil war.

What, finally, of the desire to join and the desire to stay in as a mark of the health of the profession? There does seem to be a disjunction in Australia at the present time. A higher than normal rate of resignations is accompanied by an increasing interest in joining the ADF — at least in terms of the number of inquiries and formal applications. Both of these have increased in each of the last three years according to the Annual Defence Reports (figures are not given for earlier years). Of course, this says nothing about the categories or skills of those applying and resigning. But it does appear to reflect the occupational approach: you try out a job and if you don't like it you leave. If my speculations are correct this disjunction will continue — with uncertain effects on the overall ethos and morale of the Defence Force.

This aspect of the health of the profession is tied in with the prosperity or otherwise of the economy — though not in a direct and unambiguous fashion. Attrition, for example, increased despite the economic stringencies of 1985-7; and it may well increase further as economic prosperity appears to be returning in 1988. It is also tied in with the prospects for peace and war. De Tocqueville again: "A long peace not only fills democratic armies with elderly officers but also gives all the officers habits of body and mind unfitting them for actual war. Those of most ambition and resources leave the army; the others, finally adapting their tastes and desires to their humdrum lot, come in the end to look on a military career from a civilian point of view". It is some consolation, perhaps, that this problem is nothing new.

I am tempted to argue not that we need a war but that the present high rate of attrition serves as a functional equivalent of war. Vacant slots have to be filled quickly, subordinates suddenly have to stand in for departed superiors, rapid movements around the country need to be made, promotion opportunities open up — all the phenomena of wartime without the blood. It is a challenge for a Defence Force lacking in external challenges. I have yet to hear any politician openly arguing along these lines but I would not be surprised to find such ideas lurking at the back of their minds.
Whither the Military Profession?

The present circumstances of the military profession outlined here all point, I would suggest, in the same direction — a greater involvement on the part of the military in politics and policy-making. Other responses — a return to traditional patterns — seem possible though unlikely.

(I) The political path

One of the criticisms of Australian governments over the years has been their unwillingness to take a great interest in defence or to inform the public about defence matters. This is generally regarded as ‘a bad thing’ for the Australian people and for the level of defence debate in this country. Such neglect is nothing new. It occurred in 1919-39 when one of the consequences was that officers in the citizen forces (and the occasional permanent officer) were prompted to speak out in public against government policy. Some citizen-soldiers were actually members of Parliament which further discomfited the government.

Something of the sort may be happening at the present time — except that it is a much more subtle and complex process of military involvement in political issues. I am not talking of a military coup, a powerful military lobby in Parliament or a military-industrial complex (even if we achieve the target of half a billion dollars a year in military exports) — but a series of small, gradual developments.

(a) Increasing openness in the making of defence decisions. All government decision-making has opened up a little in recent years. FOI has helped though we could do with more good investigative journalists in the defence sphere. It is now at least possible for outsiders to study decisions such as those about the aircraft carrier replacement or the acquisition of a battle tank. More particularly, decisions with domestic repercussions — a tank training area in the Bathurst-Orange region, which state gets to build the new submarines, concreting over the foreshores of Jervis Bay — will almost inevitably go public sooner or later. In these circumstances the Defence Force will become one interest group among many — resembling, for example, the Australian Conservation Foundation which claims to be protecting Australia.

Parliament itself is speeding this process along at a merry pace. In the last decade or so there have been several major inquiries into defence issues: defence industry, defence procurement, the Defence Academy, the aircraft carrier replacement, threats to Australia, ADF capabilities, conscientious objection to military service and the management of defence. We have seen Service Chiefs and Secretaries of Defence and their camp-followers — questioned by parliamentarians on the public record. Military officers as well as Defence officials have had to represent particular viewpoints and on occasions reveal to the public differences in those viewpoints. Parliamentary questions on defence issues have also multiplied: in the 1970s the average number of questions on defence each year was between 60 and 70, in the 1980s it has been running at over 200 each year. All this elicits more information and more material for public debate.

(b) One can expect to see closer relations between the military and parliament. Informal contacts between all levels of the military and MPs in government and opposition may develop as they have in the United States. There the separation of legislature and executive has encouraged this process to the point of what has been called ‘legalized insubordination’. In Australia we may be spared this extreme since the Government controls the legislature. This country has in fact tended to follow Britain where there is an informal rule that service personnel do not lobby MPs directly. In Britain, however, political leaders, senior civil servants and higher military echelons tend to be drawn from the same social class, perhaps the same public schools — they don’t need to do anything as vulgar as lobbying one another. Australia has broken with Westminster tradition in a number of respects and there seems no reason why it should not do the same on this matter.

Another link with Parliament is the greater interest shown in ‘military’ constituencies. At recent elections the Hawke Government has shown particular interest in seats with more than 500 military personnel. It will not be long before the Opposition catches on to this. The Armed Forces Federation is also well aware that service personnel have votes while service wives have manifested few inhibitions in lobbying the Minister for Defence Personnel. The ADF, in short, must either learn the political ropes or struggle on in the political arena with one hand tied behind its back.
Greater attention to defence public relations is another sign of potential political involvement. The staff colleges now include media awareness in their courses. Officers are increasingly heard on the radio, seen on TV or — rather less often — read in the newspapers. Once the press gets into the habit of talking to military personnel, it will become a difficult practice to stop. Close questioning from journalists may actually reveal more than enemy interrogation; and this will further whet the appetite of the media.

There has been a Director of Public Information since 1979 — a military appointment — and greater efforts are being put into presenting the Defence Force to the public. In part this is for necessary and proper purposes such as recruiting and informing the population at large but there is only a thin line between information and persuasion. In the US in the early 1970s a CBS television programme entitled The Selling of the Pentagon claimed that the military had gone too far in trying to get the public to ‘buy’ the role of the armed forces. A furore ensued not so much because the Pentagon was acting like any other pressure group — which was to be expected — but because it was doing so with taxpayers’ money. An expose of this kind is not impossible to imagine in Australia.

The constabulary function of the ADF mentioned earlier may also tend to draw it into political issues. On the one hand, there is the entanglement with the United States. Nuclear arms reduction is becoming fashionable in East-West relations and this may serve to stimulate rather than pacify the anti-nuclear movement in Australia. The ADF’s connection with the joint facilities, with B-52 staging flights, with warship visits and so on is thus likely to come under greater scrutiny and attract more public opposition than before.

On the other hand, the internal political role of the ADF — particularly aid to the civil power — has been dormant since Bowral in 1978 and the development of Plan Cabriole in 1979-82. It may be no coincidence that the good industrial relations record since 1983 has been accompanied by a loss of interest in such issues. But a change in industrial relations or the anti-union policies of a dry government could see the ADF being ‘volunteered’ military-style to sort out the problem — with a minimum of preparation and training. Political sensitivity and public awareness could then be at a great premium.

Finally, I would point to the increasing level of education among the officer corps at both undergraduate and postgraduate level. This is part of the process of keeping the Defence Force in step with the rest of the community and better equipped to do its job but there are significant implications. It is well established that higher levels of education in a given group are correlated with higher levels of interest in political questions and hence with greater political activity. The conclusion is clear. Increasing levels of education among the officer corps — including both undergraduate and postgraduate courses — will make officers more politically aware and better equipped to play a political role. This refers to education in any subject but it may be relevant to note that at the Defence Academy the largest class of the entire range open to cadets happens to be Politics I — and the numbers flow on to second and third year.

Traditional paths

A profession that is under threat may — like human beings — revert to traditional patterns of behaviour. The traditional remedy for the military profession is war but in today’s world this is likely to be worse than the disease. Two possible substitutes might be a return to conscription for national service or a radical conservatism in the military profession.

As to the former, it would not be altogether surprising to see a revival of schemes for universal national service in the next ten years, perhaps with the alternative of civilian service. There need be no sound military reasons for this; there may, indeed, be sound military reasons against it of the kind spelt out by the Minister for the Army in 1964, only months before the last National Service scheme was introduced. Particularly if there is nothing much else for the Defence Force to do, it may be asked to solve the problems of the nation’s youth — to make them responsible citizens or to stiffen their moral fibre (or whatever needs to be done with moral fibre). A majority of the population has supported some kind of compulsory military training more or less continuously since 1945 — and still does in mid-1988. Keeping idle hands busy could be another role expected of the services. In 1980 opinion polls showed that 4% of people saw the main...
role of the ADF as an employer providing jobs and training; by 1987 that figure had increased to 13%.

A return to basics might be another response. Just as some school systems want to get back to the three Rs, so the military profession might wish to get back to fighting. This would mean dropping all or most of the constabulary roles, staying out of policy-making, avoiding political issues and becoming a smaller, leaner, combat-oriented force. Greater use might be made of the Reserve forces to fill some of the gaps. For the ADF as a whole it would mean leaving the corridors of power and retreating from the civilian community — in short, returning to the barracks. Some might regard this as desirable both for the profession and for the security of the country — provided that strategy is not too important to be left to the politicians.

One consequence of the present rate of personnel attrition is relevant here. It may be that the ones who are leaving are the ‘civilianised’ officers — those who have skills and attitudes most at home in civilian life. This means that the ‘warrior’ type who remains has at least a fighting chance of survival. Budgetary pressures may also make for a reduction of personnel and one would assume — perhaps naively — that cuts would be made in the bureaucratic rather than the fighting areas. But many might wonder whether it is even possible to go back up what seems to be a one-way street towards involvement in the civilian world. The survival of the Defence Force in the bureaucratic and financial jungle may well depend on learning the ways of the ‘enemy’.

Since this article owes more to astrology than analysis, I have little in the way of conclusion. One consideration, however, is of importance. All the factors which I have talked about are interconnected. Each development interacts with and stimulates the others. The more the military profession looks like any other job, for example, the more it will seem appropriate to apply political pressure for improvements in working conditions. Greater political involvement on the part of the military will invite greater involvement in military affairs on the part of politicians and a consequent reduction in the degree of self-regulation. Again, higher levels of education will increase specialization and hence the civilization of military functions. And so on.

No real remedies for the profession seem to be in sight at the present time. It may be simply the case that none exist. We may therefore have to conclude with de Tocqueville that “when the officers of a democratic army have no taste for war or military ambition, nothing is left”. Except, I would add, politics.

NOTES
5. One can imagine, for example, that a private firm might one day offer to sell nuclear deterrence. Rent-a-Deterrent could operate nuclear missile submarines which would launch an attack in circumstances carefully specified in a contract with the client state. Contracts might run for 12 month periods with the cost varying according to the circumstances for which deterrence cover is desired and the size of the attack required. Such a scheme could well enhance the credibility of deterrence by putting matters on a commercial footing though it must be conceded that take-over bids might be a problem.
14. Public Attitudes to Defence, p. 117.
15. Ibid., p. 93.
New IADS Commander

Air Commodore Ken Tuckwell was promoted to Air Vice Marshal at the end of January and became Commander of the Integrated Air Defence System (IADS), headquartered at the Royal Malaysian Air Force Base at Butterworth, Malaysia, the Minister for Defence, Mr Kim Beazley, announced recently.

"Air Commodore Tuckwell has a distinguished career as both a pilot and an administrator and is ideally suited to this demanding post, particularly since he has served three tours in the region," Mr Beazley said.

Air Commodore Tuckwell will begin duties at Air Base Butterworth on February 17. He is currently the Director-General of Air Force Operations.

He has 5000 hours in 27 different aircraft types, has extensive experience flying fighters and was leader of two formation aerobatic teams during his tours as a flying instructor.

IADS is part of the Five Power Defence Arrangements between Malaysia, Singapore, Australia, the United Kingdom and New Zealand.

Born in 1935, Air Commodore Tuckwell was educated in Sydney and joined the RAAF College at Point Cook in Victoria in 1952. He graduated as a pilot in 1955 and has since logged nearly 5000 hours in 27 different types of aircraft, predominantly jet fighters but also transport aircraft and helicopters.

He has attended the RAAF and the Joint Services Staff Colleges and was awarded the Queen’s Commendation for Valuable Service in the Air in recognition of his well-above-average ability and exceptional devotion to duty.

After three tours of Butterworth and various staff appointments at Air Office including Director of Air Force Intelligence, Air Commodore Tuckwell returned to Canberra in 1981 to take up the appointment of Director-General of Air Force Operations and later of Assistant Deputy Chief of the Air Staff.

In 1983 he became Officer Commanding RAAF Pearce and Senior Air Force Officer Western Australia, and returned to Canberra in 1985 as Director Defence Security.
The Risky Shift Phenomenon

By John B. McMillan, Department of Defence.

Abstract

It would be a fair assertion to suggest that the Defence organisation is dominated by committee structures. The sixteen principal committees within the Department form a base on which the major decision making process depends. In addition to this structure a wide variety of other committees also exist for the purpose of decision making, policy formulation, problem solving and goal setting.

Groups of people who gather together within a committee structure bring wish them a divergence of ideas, values, attitudes and opinions. Variations within each of these characteristics create doubt in the minds of people in many situations as to which way a person should cast a vote, offer opinion or give advice. This doubt can become greater within any one single person after hearing the expressed opinions of others.

As this doubt grows a change of one's own opinion develops and eventually a change of mind can occur. The 'shift' in personal opinion of a number of members in a decision making group not only affects the final outcome but also the quality of that outcome. In a defence organisation, the final decision and the quality of that decision can have very significant consequences.

This article presents an overview into the research surrounding the phenomenon of risk taking and mind changing.

Background

The initial research into the “risky shift” was conducted by an American Sociologist James Stoner and was put forward in an unpublished dissertation in 1961. Kogan and Wallach (1964) used questionnaires involving 12 items requiring a risky or safe course of action. Depending on what a person selects the choice reflects the “deterrence of failure” for them in a particular decision area.

More recent research has also shown that groups can also be more conservative than the average individual and hence the term “group polarisation” has replaced the term “risky shift”. Berkowitz (1978) states that “risky shifts” are not characteristic of any age or occupational category. The phenomenon has been identified in professional groups, industrial supervisors, senior executives, management trainees, male and female undergraduates and school boys and girls. Although the bulk of research has used American subjects the phenomenon is not confined to that culture. Other nationalities English, Israeli, Canadian and German groups have also displayed the characteristics appropriate to the risky shift condition.

The feeling that groups take riskier decisions than individuals was not always held to be the case.

The phenomenon of risk taking was identified in 1956 by W. H. Whyte in his well known book The Organisation Man. In this book Whyte argued that the team approach in business enterprises inexorably leads to a reduction of boldness, of daring and risk taking. He proposed that, in such situations, if a choice must be made between more and less risky courses of action there will be a definite preference for the more conservative course. Along the same lines, Roger Brown in his book Social Psychology (1965) has observed that “The academic committees on which one has served do not leave one breathless with their daring”. This viewpoint of the mid 1950s would seem to be an exact reverse of the 1967 research by Stoner. The accumulating mass of psychological data pertaining to this question strongly supports the opposite view; that is, groups do in general take riskier decisions than individuals. A committee, according to Wrightsman et al (1973), is likely to recommend a course of action that is actually quite risky. In fact, the riskiness of the decision recommended by the group may be considerably greater than that which would have been recommended by the individual committee members if they had been working on the problem separately.

Experiments exploring the effects of group discussion on attitudes, jury decisions, ethical decisions, judgements, person perceptions, negotiations and risk taking are generally consistent with the “group polarisation” (group think) hypothesis, whose roots lie in the “risky
shift" phenomenon, groupthink characteristics are illustrated in Figure 1.

Highly cohesive isolated groups withdrawn from outside influence with dynamic leadership qualities groupthink can develop. Group members come to feel they are invulnerable and are completely right in their view. This can lead to greater pressure to conform thus resulting in very poor decisions.

Berkowitz suggests that the "risky shift" can be viewed as an irrational phenomenon. Additionally some evidence implies that people behave more irresponsibly in groups than as individuals. Darley and Latane (1968) demonstrated that in emergency situations subjects are less likely to offer help to people in need if they (the subjects) are in the presence of others as opposed to being alone. Zimbardo (1969) reported that when anonymity is enhanced in a group setting, subjects engage in more impulsive aggression than known subjects. This irrational behaviour is easily seen today in what the author will describe as "gang groups", or those groups whose deviant behaviour leads them, as a result of peer pressure, to perform acts of vandalism, sports thuggery or outright crimes of violence.

Familiarisation with decision making as being the source of risky shifts seems to be unjustified on one hand yet other research refutes this view. I would tend to strongly support the belief that in terms of familiarisation with a problem a "risky shift" will occur particularly with those within the group who may have shallow thinking, are deficient in logical thought processes, have insufficient depth of knowledge or experience and those who are not prepared to hold on to their view and have no strong convictions either one way of the other.

Berkowitz himself sums it up this way:

"While failures to produce risky-shifts with familiarisation procedures cast doubt upon familiarisation as a sufficient condition for increased risk-taking, they do not at the same time establish the risky-shift as solely a group effect. To a large extent, research on the risky-shift has been misguided by a simplistic belief that there exists a single unique antecedent condition which when discovered will explain the phenomenon completely Zajonc et al., (1970). In contrast, the existing literature suggests that numerous social conditions may enhance risk-taking. Likewise, other untested variables may increase the risk-taking of socially isolated individuals."

The Phenomenon Itself

Following Stoner's identification in 1961 of the "risky shift" at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, psychologists began to address themselves to the next logical question: Why does the risky shift take place? A number of hypothesis have been put forth in an attempt to explain the phenomenon. Wrightsman et al identifies four of the better known hypotheses.

(i) The familiarisation hypothesis suggests that the risky shift is not a true group effect but a "pseudogroup effect" — that is an effect that occurs in a group but does not actually result from group processes. Any
procedure that increases familiarity with an issue involving risk will cause individuals to become more risky with regard to that issue. The shift in this hypothesis is a result of the increased boldness and riskiness that ensues when someone becomes familiar with an issue.

(ii) The diffusion of responsibility hypothesis is described by Wrightsman as group discussion that may produce emotional bonds between members and may lead the individual to feel less responsibility for the risky decision because it has been at least partially shaped by the group (see Kogan and Wallach, 1967). Therefore, if the suggested risky course of action should lead to failure, the individual alone is not responsible — the responsibility is diffused through the members of the group.

(iii) The leadership hypothesis centres on the attributes of group members who are perceived by their peers as group leaders. This hypothesis suggests that these “leaders” are included to recommend a “risky” course of action and possess the characteristics of being dominant and influential in the group discussion. Thus it follows the final decision is a result of their leadership qualities and not necessarily the cumulative efforts of individual group members operating as a group. While this hypothesis has substantial logic in it, it can also be contended that group cohesion plays a significant role in attaining a similar effect. In this case strong peer grouping can also be seen as a leading instrument in the decision processes; in this instance no one person emerges as a leader, rather it is the “processes” that causes the shift to occur.

(iv) Risk-as-value hypothesis as referred to by Wrightsman is based on Brown (1965) original theory. Brown focuses on the possibility that willingness to take (or to advise) at least a moderate degree of risk is a cultural value in society. As one nonempirical argument in support of such a hypothesis, Brown suggested that “... riskiness is a concomitant of youth and since youths like to appear youthful perhaps they also like to appear risky”. This hypothesis would predict, then, that most individuals will see themselves as at least as willing as their peers to take risks. In the context of a group discussion, a process could be expected to take place in which the relatively cautious group members would be made to recognize their relative cautiousness and would therefore be motivated to change their judgements toward a more risky course of action in order to restore their perceptions of themselves as relatively risky. The risk-as-value hypothesis has been the most persistent and popular interpretation of the risky shift.

While there is reference to American Society that supports this hypothesis the changing face of Australian society could equally be used but perhaps not to the same extent. For example, the hypothesis supports the view that people, particularly the younger age group like to be seen as risk takers, while this may be true of Americans, Australians seem to be risk takers of a covert nature and perceive risk taking as a matter of course. Perhaps it is our historical background that adds reinforcement to this view.

Pruitt (1971) throws light on another point of view associated with “risky shift” taking. In particular according to Pruitt the diffusion-of-responsibility theory shows that:

more anxious individuals show a greater shift toward risk. This would be expected if we assume that more anxious people are more concerned about negative outcomes and hence are more profoundly affected by anxiety reduction when they have a chance to diffuse responsibility.

Other theories on which Pruitt focuses are a set of value theories one of which has already been discussed, the risk-as-value theory. These other theories have in common the assumption that groups shift in a direction toward which most members of the group are already attracted as individuals. These other theories are:

(i) Pluralistic-Ignorance Theory

Levinger and Schneider (1969) proposed a general theory of choice shifts which assumes that decision making in many areas is guided by a “conflict-compromise” process. This process is between “ideal preference”, that is, what the individual would “like to do” and a stand which they think other people would favour. Such a situation leads to compromise. This readjustment to a “compromise” leads to a “choice in shift”.

(ii) Release Theory
Similar to the Pluralistic-Ignorance approach, Release theory begins with the assumption that people come into a conflict-compromise situation between their own individual opinions and that of the group. On one hand, the value of risk is seen as one’s confidence and ability to cope with the environment. These are ego syntonic check in nature and are internalised within “the self”. On the other hand, a cautious approach becomes compelling, where moderation seems a reasonable course of action. This moderation attitude comes not so much from “conviction” but from a “conformity” motive. The view being held is that others will adopt a “mean” approach as well. Thus it prevents one as being seen as “left-out on a limb”. This approach provides a “release” from one’s need to comply with either extremes, thus the “mean” provides a useful compromise.

(iii) Relevant-Argument Theory
This theory supports the view that “values” in the decision making process elicit persuasive arguments. These values tend to convince group members to move in the direction of these values. This theory is not supported by the view that high risk takers are seen as the most influential in group discussion.

(iv) Commitment Theory
This theory was researched by Moscovici and Zavalloni in 1969. The theory rests on the assumption that individuals will commit themselves to their own initial decision, rather than learn about other people’s choices and opinions. The theory suggests that in the course of handling information the person interacts closely with “the self”, chooses alternatives, bind and commit themselves to that particular choice. Such a commitment moves the person closer to their original decision irrespective of the riskiness of that original decision.

In a most recent paper, Group Polarisation: A Critical Review and Meta Analysis by Daniel J. Isenberg (1986) addresses the two major remaining theories of Pruitt’s original eleven. Social comparison processes and persuasive argumentation. It will be useful to briefly look at the notes on each of these as a conclusion to this article.

The Social Comparison Theory (SCT) in this perspective is seen where people are constantly motivated both to perceive and to present themselves in a socially desirable light. To do this a continual processing of information occurs about how others present themselves and adjusting his or her own self-presentation accordingly. The theory further states that when all members of an interacting group engage in the same comparing process, the result is an average shift in a direction of greater perceived social value. Other investigations support the belief that people are motivated by a desire to be different and distinct from other people in a valued direction.

Persuasive Arguments Theory (PAT) holds that an individual’s choice or position on an issue is a function of the number and persuasiveness of pro and con arguments that that person recalls from memory when formulating his or her own opinion. As an example, pro-innocence or pro-guilt situations, group discussion will cause an individual to shift in a given direction to the extent that the discussion exposes that individual to persuasive arguments favouring that direction.

Isenberg notes:
PAT seriously qualifies the risky shift phenomenon by making shifts contingent upon the argument pool within the group. A given group may or may not shift in a given direction, depending upon the possession and expression of persuasive arguments during the group discussion. The role of novelty is particularly central. If arguments are presented that the individual group member is already aware of, a shift in his or her position will not occur as a result of the discussion (Kaplan, 1977). If novel persuasive arguments are presented that are opposite to the direction initially favoured by the group member, their position will shift in the opposite direction and depolarize (Kaplan, 1977; Vinokur and Burnstein, 1978). Thus, a juror who initially favors a guilty verdict will come to favor a more guilty verdict if and only if he or she is exposed to novel persuasive arguments in favor of guilt.

Implications for Defence
The Defence committee system is the central instrument whereby many decisions within the Defence organisation are made. The operation of this system is not confined to the civilian administrative element of the department but also extends into the Service decision making processes. A central feature of Command is decision making. A Commander will draw together his senior staff, seek their opinions, and a decision is made.
It is obvious from this article that the quality of decisions is a major determinant of the eventual quality of the outcome. Group think can play a pertinent role in decision making. For example, Over cohesive groups close ranks and the likelihood of a decision, deficient in essential properties of openness, individual integrity of thought, logic and analysis can play a significant role. A situation such as this is not difficult to imagine in this Department. Groups of civilian or Service officers may close ranks and force opinions on others. This could be done for expedience, perceptions of what that particular group sees is “really” required, or just out of sheer doggedness.

The necessity to be aware of the personal factors in the decision process is paramount when looking at group interaction. Risky shifts can often occur as a result of ignoring these factors. Committee members are usually chosen on the basis of their expertise rather than their ability to present a balanced point of view when faced by other people whose opinions, presentation and status may be higher than their own. These people may not necessarily have the highest levels of expertise but substitute it for the ability to present views which do not antagonise opponents and which at the same time fertilise a deeper and more analytical discussion. Such a discussion uncovers ground in which can be found a decision of the highest quality. Misunderstanding, and an absence of active listening, are two central deficiencies which not only slow up the committee process but are also responsible for preventing the committee to operate in an efficient and effective way. A lack of sensitivity towards others and their needs and perceptions in the decision process further hampers good quality decision-making. In this Department Utz in his 1982 review of Defence cites instances of this occurring. Paragraph 5.53 has this to add:

We are of the view that, whether or not there is currently a sufficient protection of the Service point of view in Defence decision making processes, an important means of ensuring that Service input is properly taken into account in the future is through improved processes for the conduct of business in Defence committees.

Defence committees do not have the luxury of immunity from effects of the risky shift phenomenon. Indeed in an organisation the culture of which is bureaucratic, highly segmented and whose sheer size adds to the likelihood of risky shifts developing, as a result of particular interest groups. Such an operating environment dictates that care should be exercised on the selection of committee members, discussion tactics, objective weighting of pro’s and con’s and finally voting procedures. These strategies will help reduce the influence of risky shifts. Chairpersons of committees, in addition to their normal functions of directing and facilitating discussion also have the added responsibility of identifying the symptoms of risky shifts and the group think syndrome. These committee ailments do not foster sound problem solving and decision making, rather, they slow up the operation of a very useful organisational tool that involves the bringing together of sound ideas and creative thinking.

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John McMillan is a graduate of the Canberra College of Advanced Education graduate in Arts (Further Education). He also holds a diploma of Teaching in Further Education from CCAE and a Graduate Diploma in Adult Education from the Sydney College of Advanced Education. John majored in Organisational Psychology at the CCAE and is currently Executive Officer, Curriculum Development, Defence Training Centre, Canberra.
The American Alliance: Defence on the Cheap for Australia?

By Lieutenant Glyn Harper, RAAEC

The current state of the Defence Forces in Australia, many would agree, is not ideal. Poor self image, low morale, loss of skilled manpower and doubts about the ability of the Defence Forces to meet even a low-level threat have all contributed to this low point in the Nation’s Defence Forces. Government policy has not helped to alleviate the situation either. The decision taken in 1986 to restrict Defence expenditure to 1% in real terms rather than the planned 3% indicated that the Government was determined to introduce an austerity budget upon its Defence Forces. This was reinforced by the 1988 May economic statement which further cut Defence spending. Defence expenditure in 1986 was $7.2 billion. This represented 9.6% of the total budget outlay and was less than the outlay needed to service the interest on Australia's Public debt for that year.

With the Defence Forces at this low point, the question must be asked on what or whom does Australia rely for protection against an external threat given that Australia is in no fit state to defend itself? If the answer to this question is “the United States of America because they are committed to Australia’s by a formal alliance and a 'special' relationship” a historical analysis of the American alliance does not give much assurance as to the willingness of the United States to defend Australia. While the alliance does serve to offer some assistance to Australia in time of need, it in no way guarantees Australia’s security nor should it be seen as doing this. Australia’s defence prior to World War II was to rely on a great and powerful friend for protection. One would like to think Australia has learned from this mistake.

The American alliance was formed during the war years out of need and not from any special relationship or understanding. Australia turned to the United States in 1941 as a matter of survival and the United States was forced to protect Australia because they had nowhere else to go. The United States had lost the Philippines to Japan and needed a base from which to launch their attack on Japan. Australia was the only logical choice. As W. F. Mandle has written, “The alliance was born out of fear and convenience. In many ways it has not changed to this day.”

If the United States felt any sense of long-term commitment to the defence of Australia, it was quite some time before it was formally acknowledged. The formal alliance, until recently known as ANZUS, was not signed until September, 1951 despite repeated requests from Australia, since the end of the war, for a formal commitment from the United States to the security of Australia and New Zealand.

The background to the signing of the alliance treaty is important as it reveals that at the time of the signing of the alliance the United States was less concerned with the security of Australia and New Zealand than they were with the re-emergence of Japan as a major power in South East Asia. When China fell to the Communists in 1949 the United States was forced suddenly to reassess its foreign policy in Asia. Japan was the key. What the United States wanted was for Japan to become the anti-communist workshops of Asia: strong, industrialised, an economic giant. For this to happen a "soft" peace treaty with Japan was needed; a treaty without large reparation payments, production controls or blacklisted businessmen or government officials. Australia and New Zealand would only agree to this soft treaty if their own security was guaranteed; ANZUS was the price they extracted from the United States for their acquiescence to the treaty signed with Japan. In fact both ANZUS and the peace treaty the United States concluded with Japan were signed in the same week and were entered into force within a day of each other.

As the ultimate guarantee of Australia’s safety against external threat, the alliance leaves a lot to be desired. There is nothing "special" about the alliance, the United States made dozens of alliances at this time with almost every non-communist state in the world. The United States treats the alliance as but one element of a broader network of alliances and defence and security weapons. Australia unfortunately does not treat the alliance in this way.
The alliance does not automatically bind the United States to the defence of Australia, a fact clearly recognised by the Americans at the time of signing. Article IV, considered to be the heart of the treaty states: “Each party recognises that an armed attack in the Pacific area on any of the Parties would be dangerous to its own peace and safety and declares that it would act to meet the common danger in accordance with its constitutional processes”12. This does not bind the United States to the defence of Australia at all and this fact was clearly recognised at the time. John Foster Dulles, soon to be Eisenhower’s Secretary of State wrote as such to General MacArthur in Japan, “While it commits each party to take action, it does not commit any nation to action in any particular part of the world. In other words, the United States can discharge its obligations by action against the common enemy in any way and in any area it sees fit”13.

Another point worth considering emerges from Article IV. If the United States responds “in accordance with its constitutional processes” it is Congress that has the power to declare war. Although the United States has not been to war constitutionally since 1941, the Vietnam debacle and the recent Iran-gate scandal has seen Congress emerge as a significant force in the United States foreign policy and Congress has been very reluctant to become involved in any foreign venture that could easily become another Vietnam.

The ANZUS treaty deliberately excluded any form of joint military planning or joint consultation. The involvement of Australia in Vietnam did not in any way change this fact and the consultation of the United States with its allies during the Vietnam War was extremely poor. Australia received no prior warnings of major United States initiatives in the war. In April, 1970 the Australian Foreign Minister, William McMahon, admitted that he had no knowledge of the future plans of the United States to forego any more interventions like Vietnam. It was a terrible irony for a country that had sent 8,000 men to fight in a war believing that this was a premium for its own life assurance, only to have that assurance policy proved invalid once payment had been accepted. What Nixon’s Guam statement implied was that in regional conflicts nations must not rely on the United States for their security; they should rely on themselves.

This message has yet to be understood in Australia. The American alliance may be helpful to Australia’s security but it in no way guarantees it. When the chips are down Australia cannot rely on the United States to help but should rely on her own resources. The United States may act to defend Australia but only if their own interests are threatened in some way. The American alliance should not be the central pillar of Australia’s Defence Policy. It is ridiculous to put all your eggs in one basket, especially if that basket contains a number of flaws.

It is somewhat ironic that Australia could be seen to be in breach of the terms and spirit of the alliance. Article II states “... the Parties separately and jointly by means of continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid will maintain and develop their individual and collective capacity to resist armed attack”14. There is certainly some doubt, given the current state of the defence forces, whether Australia is in fact fulfilling this obligation stipulated in Article II of the alliance.

NOTES
1. W. F. Mandle, Going It Alone, Australia’s National Identity in the Twentieth Century, P121.

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The Study of Foreign Languages

By Brigadier Grahame Hellyer

A Secret Desire?

Many Service personnel will have felt at some time or other the desire to learn a foreign language. Nearly all of them will have spent some years learning a language at school — and "wished they had kept it up". The lack of progress made at school may even deter them from making a second attempt later in life.

Yet there can be little doubt that a wide knowledge of foreign languages in a Defence Force is useful in wartime, both for cooperating with allies and for understanding the enemy. In peacetime, too, foreign languages are useful when travelling on duty. Even though a non-English speaker may be able to communicate in English, the ability to speak to him in his native tongue will give you an edge in establishing a good relationship. Project staffs who are based in foreign non-English speaking countries find living and working more of a strain than it need be if they had some grasp of the language. They also find their work effectiveness is reduced.

Anyone who has ever thought of learning a foreign language — and then talked themselves out of it — should recognize a couple of basic facts. Anyone can learn a new language; you do not have to be an intellectual. In the Netherlands, for example, it would appear that to obtain a job in a modest cafe or restaurant an applicant needs two or three foreign languages. Enthusiasm and incentive are more important than aptitude. Remoteness from the country of interest is also no bar to learning the language. Being able to take one's holidays in the other country is a great advantage, but probably as much for the injection of incentive as for the amount learnt.

The Trouble with Schools

Unfortunately, schools have managed to confer on language study an impression of difficulty which it does not deserve. In so doing, they have not only encouraged pupils to transfer to other subjects but discouraged them from trying again later. We can understand why if we look at the degrees of difficulty in using language. Starting from the easiest, the order of difficulty would be:

- Passive
  - reading (excluding character languages)
  - listening
- Active
  - speaking
  - writing.

(It is not possible to say clearly whether listening or speaking is the easier as it depends upon circumstances. We can communicate orally with a limited number of words by choosing them carefully and using circumlocations, or gestures, however we have no control over the vocabulary being used by the respondent and may also have difficulty with the accent. On the other hand, we will normally understand more words than we can use.)

Unfortunately, schools generally put the emphasis in the reverse order, with greatest attention being given to writing — probably because that lends itself more easily to structured teaching and "objective" methods of assessment. Writing is not only the hardest, but it is the least important of the skills — at least for most English-speaking students.

It is illuminating to turn to the other end of the scale and look at reading. Reading requires only a passive mastery of vocabulary, which is much easier to acquire than an active one (anyone with any knowledge of a foreign language will appreciate that one can translate far more words into English than out of it). It does not even require that we know many of the words being used in order to understand the passage. For example, take the sentence "While the tempest lashed his mackintosh, and his galoshes sunk into the mire, Tom shot Dick." The only key word which a foreign reader has to recognize in order to follow the plot is "shot". The rest is largely irrelevant — it is probably more than sufficient if the reader gets the impression that the weather was bad. Most importantly, it is not necessary to waste time and interrupt the train of the story to look up a dictionary if we already recognize the simple word "shot".

A mastery of grammar is also generally not very important for reading (except sometimes for a language like German where written sen-
sences can become very complex), but important in writing most languages. Grammar, which is a major deterring element for many people, can be put in perspective if we remember that many English speaking people who know nothing of English grammar can write perfectly correct English. We could look on the language as just vocabulary and idiom. For example, we normally regard his, her and its as just three different words in English, whereas in a foreign language we tend to regard them as grammar. In some, perhaps all, languages, the grammar does not even tell a foreigner how to use the language like a native: the idiom must be acquired through experience, not through rules. English is probably the best example of this, but Indonesian, which is usually regarded as easy because its formal grammar is not extensive, is another. In order to master a language it is necessary to store the normal, idiomatic sentence patterns in our head. To do this, it is necessary to see or hear as much of the foreign language as possible. We cannot stop after each word while speaking to check on the next applicable grammatical rule — although knowledge of the rules may be a useful aide-memoire when writing or reading. In the passive use of a language the context will usually provide clues to relationships which will compensate for lack of knowledge of grammar, just as it provides clues to the meanings of words. (Except, of course, in the one-off, unconnected sentences which are encountered in tests, many Teach Yourself books, or some modern literature.)

It may surprise readers to be told that vocabulary can be learnt without vocabulary lists or dictionaries — but that is in fact the way we learnt English. (Many Australians have never used a dictionary in their lives, but have still developed a workable English vocabulary). In reading a foreign language, words keep reappearing in the same, or similar, context. The brain will gradually refine the meaning of words without any conscious effort on our part (sometimes, it must be admitted, it will make a mistake, but this, too, will become apparent with time).

When choosing a method of learning a language the main considerations should be:
- avoidance of boredom and hence maintenance of enthusiasm,
- maximization of progress.

These are obviously inter-related. An extra consideration might be:
- the purpose for which it is being learnt.

For the next part of the discussion, I will assume a slight grasp of the language and come back later to the case of the complete beginner. The methods outlined may not be as applicable to character languages as to others.

**Developing Language Ability**

Simply put, once you have even a minimal understanding of the language you should start reading novels, or books of short stories by the same author. It will help if you can get these in simplified vocabulary or dual language editions, but it is not essential. We have seen above that a mastery of grammar and vocabulary is not essential in order to follow, if somewhat hazily at first, the plot. At the same time, the reading will be developing your vocabulary and building up in your brain the sentence patterns which gradually improve comprehension and provide the basis for correct active use of the language. This is a time-effective way to learn a language provided that you do not look up every word in a dictionary. I do not want to discourage the use of a dictionary altogether. There may be some words which seem vital to the story (was he shot or was he stabbed?), there are others which seem to crop up on every page; you may also like to take a break every five or ten pages and check up on a number of words with the dictionary. Nevertheless, the aim is to have the maximum number of words, in sentences, passing through your brain and you will not achieve this if you stop to look up every strange word.

I have emphasized above that you should not read short stories by different authors. Every author has his own style and vocabulary. Chopping and changing authors after a few pages (as some school books do) will not provide the reinforcement of pattern and vocabulary which persistence with one author for the full length of a book will do. The difference between authors is particularly noticeable in a foreign language. It can come as a shock after ploughing through one book, and feeling at the end that we have made progress with the language, to turn to a new author and find that nothing on the first page is intelligible.

In selecting material, the emphasis should be placed on interest. You should resist the temptation to kill two birds with one stone by reading, say, philosophy in a foreign language — unless you really do find philosophy fascinat-
ing! Similarly, "good" authors noted for their style and deep meaning should be avoided in favour of the author who writes a good "yarn". Stories meant for teenagers are good value because their style is unpretentious and they have to have a good story-line in order to sell — but do not expect them to have a simple vocabulary. Translations of English novels should not be looked down upon in the early stages.

Beginning

The complete beginner needs to start with books for beginners: not because they explain the grammar, but because they have exercises which progressively introduce vocabulary. In fact one series which works quite well is the French (etc) Through Pictures series which contains neither grammar nor English translations. When using the standard Teach Yourself type books you should not make the mistake of trying to keep your active use of the language abreast of your passive. This means that in each new Chapter you should not try to do the English to French exercises. Having done the French to English exercises, turn to the answers at the back of the book, where the answers to the English to French exercises will be given, and translate those back into English. The important thing when using language tutors (the books, not the people) is to read as many sentences in the foreign language as possible.

The problem with tutors is that the rate of progress expected exceeds the number of exercise sentences given. The authors expect the reader to sit down and learn the vocabulary lists, and to understand the grammar explanation. Inevitably after a few chapters the reader finds the language becoming harder and harder. He then becomes discouraged and loses self-confidence. When this happens take a different tutor and begin again at Chapter 1. Even though some of the vocabulary will be different your progress will be much faster, due to the words which you recognize and your familiarity with the sentence patterns. Your confidence will be boosted and your enthusiasm rekindled. The number of books you use in this way depends on how much you want to spend — but do not persevere with just one. What is happening when we use three books, for example, is that we are tripling the number of sentences we read at each degree of difficulty (remembering also that we have effectively doubled the number in each book by doing the English-French exercises in reverse order — from French to English). Most importantly, reading all these exercises provides so much reinforcement of each word's meaning that it is not necessary to learn the vocabulary lists "off-by-heart".

Developing Active Skills

If we have some passive grasp of the language then it must be in our head somewhere. However, to get it out in the active form, that is to speak or write it, requires practice. You can practise by talking to yourself — and will, in fact, probably make more progress than you would through talking to a teacher who might stop you every few words to correct mistakes. Frequent correction by a teacher makes it more difficult, not easier, to speak fluently. You may also go back to the first chapters of your tutors and do the English to French, etc, exercises which you skipped the first time through.

Learning complete conversations is probably not time-effective, unless you have the professional actor's ability to learn scripts. However, conversational phrases which you come across frequently are worth remembering as they will help you to give the impression of fluency. Phrases like "in my opinion" or "I'm just a simple soldier, but . . ." are also very good for switching our speech, whether aloud or mentally from English to the foreign language.

Accent

It is nice to have a good accent but the most important thing is to be understood. Some speakers try to hide their poor accent by mumbling — this makes the problem worse not better. Different languages use different facial muscles and probably require much more use of them than the average English speaker is used to. Trying to "fake it" by speaking with the mouth closed is no help at all! If you can not find someone to help with pronunciation, then tapes or records which maximise sentences in the foreign language and minimize those in English are the best value. I have gained the impression that native speakers form their impression of a foreigner's ability from his intonation and fluency rather than from the actual pronunciation of individual words. I personally believe that when someone has difficulty with accent it has less to do with having a "good ear" than with lack of real desire to sound like a native. They like the way they speak and
while they may wish to learn Swahili they don't really want to 'talk funny'.

Persistence
Learning a foreign language is not hard, it just requires persistence. It takes time to develop the knack of reading texts at reasonable speed without pausing at the words which you do not know, however, this is one skill at which you must persevere. In other areas you can please yourself. If you want to learn lists of vocabulary, or do all the exercises in writing, that's fine — but only if you are doing it because you want to, not because you feel you have to.

The ideal situation for language learning is in fact, while commuting. Anyone who spends an hour a day on public transport should be able to make excellent progress in twelve months. Others should try to find an hour, or even half an hour, a day when they are free from distraction — for example, at lunch-time. The important thing is that you work at it regularly. After all it is a matter of memorizing the language, whether or not you make conscious effort of memorizing, and memory depends upon frequent reinforcement.

Other Methods
The old method used by most schools has already been mentioned. It was based on learning grammar and a limited vocabulary, and achieving an almost perfect active written use of this limited vocabulary. However, reading exercises were minimal as it was felt that readings should have only words which had been introduced in word lists. Students were forced to learn the vocabulary by rote and while they may have developed a good grasp of grammar rules they had not had the opportunity to develop the sentence patterns which would help them to read quickly and subsequently to speak fluently. A more 'modern' method was the rote learning of conversations. This was time consuming and hardly appropriate for a system which allocated an hour or less per day for language study.

A different approach is that used at the RAAF School of Languages. There the emphasis is also placed on active use of language from Day One, with active ability keeping abreast of passive ability. A higher proportion of time is spent on speaking the language and the total time is of course incomparably greater. Nevertheless vocabulary is introduced at a very high rate and students are expected to achieve almost immediate active mastery of the new vocabulary. With selected students, forty hours a week instruction, and much homework, the method produces good linguists, however it is not surprising that many students find it difficult.

Selecting a Language
In choosing a language to learn, personal interest is a key factor. Certain factors should however be considered. The Western European languages are relatively easy due to the similarities with English. Learning one of the Romance languages — Italian, French, Spanish — will make learning the others even easier, and similarly with the Germanic languages. There are plenty of tutors and novels available in these languages. Malay/Indonesian is a relatively easy Asian language in which to reach a moderate standard — the script is western and the grammar is not difficult, however it has an enormous vocabulary and only a few words have been borrowed from English.

Conclusion
The test of efficiency with a language method should be how much time and effort it takes to achieve a particular ability level. I have no doubt that the above method, which can be described simply as maximizing the amount of foreign language material read, is the most efficient — even if the ultimate aim is to develop spoken fluency. Give it a try, you will surprise yourself.

NOTE
1. I acknowledge a debt here to Emmanuel Azzopardi (Teach Yourself a Foreign Language Quickly, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1981) for clearly explaining a method which I had also adopted through, I thought, natural indolence and lack of perseverance. Azzopardi also gives suggestions for turning passive knowledge into active expression. An aspect I have been unable to cover fully in this article.

Brig. Grahame Hellyer is responsible for joint training policy in HQADF. He recently chaired a working party examining language training in the ADF. He has served in Indonesia and Germany, and speaks French, German and Indonesian. He has previously written in the Journal on 'The Study of Tactics'.

1
A Letter to a Friend — The Martian Thesis of Armed Neutrality

By Colonel J. Wood, ARES

My dear friend,

RECENTLY, when I began a period of enforced inactivity, my close colleagues presented me with a book as a departing gift. This provocative action had two effects — firstly, it reminded me that we rarely find time to read and reflect when caught up in the day-to-day pressures of professional matters. Secondly, it made me think about the quality of the debate in our nation concerning the defence of the nation.

Because of my unease as to the author’s actual purposes I will refer to the book, which you have no doubt seen, as the Martian thesis. My usual practice, when considering another person’s point of view, is to ascertain what is known about the holder of the view. In this case the flyleaf gives me only a name and a recommendation as a writer of creative work, in areas other than defence policy. I know nothing of the author’s background or of his qualifications.

Put simply, the Martian thesis proposes that we should defend our vast estates by standing alone and well armed, secure in the belief that a publicised determination to remain neutral in any future conflict will be sufficient to shield us from that conflict.

The thesis rests on three propositions. Firstly, that the alternative to present policy is one of armed neutrality. Second, that this nation should abandon its alliance arrangements. Third, that this nation is able to defend itself, using its own resources.

You will be pleased to hear that an attempt has been made to encourage thought on the future directions for our defence policy. So was I, but frankly I soon got bogged down in potholes as I chased rabbits across the pages. These rabbits caught my attention for a moment, then disappeared. Thus, for example, I read that “the sole type of attack against which we would have no defence is one by nuclear missiles. Not only would our alliance not protect us against it, it would actually expose us to that danger.” Quite apart from at least three debatable issues in the proposition, no mention was made of other forms of attack that come quickly to mind, especially those of a chemical and biological nature. Neither was an attempt made to provide support for this proposition.

When I tried another approach I found myself trying to summarise impressions from the thesis. I was left with one — that the purpose of the writer was primarily to distract from our present objective in favour of another, as yet imprecisely defined and beyond our capacity to achieve. To do this the writer sought to beguile and confuse with a collection of historical material in support of the purported benefits of armed neutrality. I was reminded, for example, that Sweden has built a defence policy around this concept, but of little account that Sweden’s neutrality was violated when it suited the German Army to do so during a crucial period in World War II. Nor, as was so amply demonstrated during the Chernobyl nuclear accident, did Sweden escape even the passive effects of a nuclear disaster. As we have seen so often in recent times of peace, Sweden’s policy has not deterred the Soviet Union from repeated incursions into Swedish territorial waters.

I recall also the numerous casualties of history in terms of nations which espoused a policy of neutrality or independence. These include those nations swallowed up by Hitler’s armies or those independent nations, stretching from the Black Sea to the Barents Sea, which were occupied by the Soviet Union and remain occupied fifty years on. Closer to home there are many other examples.

For those who put their faith in formal treaties of non-aggression or neutrality I recall that France and England and Germany all had such treaties with Poland in 1939; that the Soviet Union and Germany signed a non-aggression pact in August 1939, only a month before the outbreak of World War II, both knowing they were only deferring the inevitable. I recall that the Soviet Union signed a non-aggression pact with Japan in 1940, and yet despite the des-
perate straits in which her allies found themselves in Asia, the Soviet Union did not attack Japan until after the US dropped the first atom bomb on Hiroshima. In this, the ultimate act of treachery, and only days before the Japanese surrendered, the Russians moved into Japanese territory which they still occupy to this day.

Our nation has an enviable military tradition forged in the company of friends and allies. We are not a warlike people nor should we seek to become so. We have not always done justice to our own interests and we are tolerant to the point of disadvantaging our friends. Our citizens often treat rudely our allies when they visit but are silent when others use shrapnel and gunships against distant tribesmen.

But what disturbs me most about the Martian thesis is the suggestion that by releasing ourselves from our allies we will actually improve our defences. I have watched with a great deal of concern the success achieved already in the loosening of our ties with long-standing allies. Paradoxically, in the same period we have passed from an age where the only intrusions made on our sovereignty were by straying fishermen, or smugglers, or foreign diplomats to a situation now, where foreign cruise ships, and soon fishing vessels, have regular access to our ports. We have passed from an age where our isolation was a benefit to one where our major cities are now within striking distance of land-based, nuclear armed aircraft, let alone the missile carrying submarines of a massive submarine fleet.

As I watch the growing presence of modern and more lethal warships in our area of strategic interest, which has followed the build-up of the infrastructure of intelligence and support vessels, I note the associated campaign to dismantle the infrastructure so important to the military integrity of our principal ally. A particularly painful consequence of this orchestrated effort has been the loss, from a valuable partnership, of a long-standing friend with whom we have shared so much over 70 years. The proposal, put forward in the Martian thesis, that we should withdraw from our alliance obligations could have no other result than that we cast ourselves adrift in an increasingly threatening sea.

My third concern is the proposal that we can stand alone. As a people we have been prepared in times of peril to give generously of our blood and treasure. This has not been our history in times of peace. Certainly we must do more for ourselves, by ourselves, but to do even this requires a fundamental shift in national will and the allocation of our resources. Certainly, also, we must develop more hard-nosed assessments as to what represents the optimum for our national interest and pursue this relentlessly. That we have survived so long is primarily an accident of history; very few other nations have been so fortunate. That we should now agree to weaken our defences by cutting our ties would be suicidal. No, the Martian thesis is not the answer. There has to be a better way and we are running out of light by which to find it.

Your old friend,

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**Australian Soldiers in Malaysian Exercise**

Members of the Australian Army rifle company at Butterworth Air Base took part in a joint exercise with Malaysian Army personnel in January.

Called Haringaroo, the exercise was held in the Kaula Kangsar-Gerik Road area, about 80 kilometres south-east of Butterworth, from January 25 to February 6.

Exercise Haringaroo is part of a well-established series of bilateral exercises that usually occur twice a year. The previous exercise was conducted in March last year.

The Malaysian Army-controlled exercise provided the Australians with practice in the planning, preparation and conduct of offensive and defensive operations in conjunction with armoured, artillery and other units in a tropical environment.
Government Defence Factories and Dockyards —
The Defence Implications of Privatisation

By Group Captain M. J. Rawlinson, RAAF

'The first priority for defence expenditure must be effective combat support, and Defence involvement in Industry must be continually related to that objective.'

Paul Dibb, 1986

Introduction

Rediscovered and made popular by the British Thatcher Government in the 1980s, privatisation has rapidly been taken up by governments around the world. Its primary rationale is economic efficiency. Narrowly defined, privatisation concerns ownership, and asset sales from the public to the private sector. However, there are many definitions of the term. Wiltshire (1987) lists eight, some of which are quite long-winded. The broad definition of Pirie (1985a), a British proponent of privatisation, will be used in this article.

The idea involves transferring the production of goods and services from the public sector to the private sector. At its lowest common denominator, it means having done privately that which was done publicly... it is not a policy but an approach. It is an approach which recognises that the regulation which the market imposes on economic activity is superior to any regulation which men can devise and operate by law.

This approach is currently being applied to the Government Defence Factories and Dockyards, following widespread agreement in numerous internal and external reviews, that for various reasons, the factories and dockyards had been uncompetitive and inefficient for a long time, at least since the 1960s. Domestic defence producers including the factories had operated with high margins of effective protection and sold at considerably higher than world market prices.

Reforms set in train by Minister for Defence Beazley have rationalized the factories and dockyards and placed them on a commercial basis with full commercial accounting from 1 July 1987. In 1989 it is planned that the Office of Defence Production will be corporatised as ‘Defence Industries Pty. Ltd.’ The Government Aircraft Factories (GAF) have already been ‘corporatised’ as Aerospace Technologies of Australia (ASTA), with a stated option of future sale of part of the equity; and the Williamstown Naval Dockyard has been sold to a private consortium, the Australian Marine Engineering Corporation (AMEC).

Since this sale, the selling of public enterprises or assets to private interests has become the subject of considerable controversy within the Australian Labor Party (ALP), where it is supported by ‘economic rationalists’ but opposed on largely ideological grounds by the ‘left’ faction of the party. However, for purely pragmatic political reasons, privatisation by asset sale has appeal for the Government, as it can directly help to reduce the budget deficit and avoid the large injection of capital that may be necessary for public enterprises such as Qantas and the Commonwealth Bank to remain competitive.

The purpose of this article is to assess what implications privatisation of the Defence Factories and Dockyards will have for the Australian Defence Force.

Self-Reliance and Defence Industry

As enunciated in the 1987 Defence White Paper, Australia's defence policy is one of self-reliance and independence within the US Alliance. Force structure is shaped primarily by the requirements of defending our area of direct military interest by employing a strategy of defence in depth. 'Self-reliance' relates to a force capable of independent operations, not to the uncritical local sourcing of defence equipment.

As Australian industry is not capable of producing either large complex weapons systems of the quality and capabilities that would meet Australian Defence Force (ADF) requirements, or smaller weapons systems at prices which are internationally competitive, any restructuring scheme must take into account the premium that it is worth paying to produce whole or
parts of systems and various items of material locally.

Currently, around 25 per cent of the Defence budget is spent overseas, most of it on capital equipment. In 1985-86 this equalled about five per cent of all imports of goods and services.\(^9\) Defence expenditure within Australian industry represents only one-half of one per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP).\(^10\) Overall Defence expenditure is less than three per cent of GDP and is squeezed by competing demands of health, education and welfare spending. This is a political constraint that is unlikely to be lifted in the absence of a major threat. Should an expansion of the ADF be necessary, the rate of expansion will be conditioned by the strength and responsiveness of the economy, Defence Industry and the industrial system in general. Policy for Defence industry is therefore closely linked with the nature of the force-in-being and Defence Capital Procurement.

The imperative of obtaining the best value for our scarce Defence dollars is only tempered with the need for reliability of supply under a range of risk conditions. The possibility of actual manufacture of Defence capital items during the time available to prepare for an imminent conflict will vary widely with the size and complexity of particular military equipment. Existing Defence manufacturing capabilities may also confer highly desirable economies of scale extending to repair, modification, adaptation, and maintenance of 'in-service' equipment.

In any conflict, there is of course a probability that supplies of imported material will be cut off. An adequate supply of high usage spares and munitions must therefore be assured by either local manufacture or stockpiling. As technical compatibility with civilian goods manufacture may be low, if the ADF is to form the sole market for military consumables, idle capacity in peacetime must be maintained in many areas to provide an excess (surge) capability during mobilisation.\(^11\) Maintenance of this capacity has become very expensive due to rapid technological development of military systems and associated obsolescence of manufacturing plant.

Government Factories and Dockyards

In contrast with most West European countries, the Australian Government's ownership of manufacturing industry has been confined to the Defence Factories and Dockyards. State and Local Government ownership of other manufacturing industries is insignificant.

The Defence Factories and Dockyards, hereafter referred to as the 'factories', are listed in the table below, which also indicates changes of status or ownership that occurred between 1984 and 1988.

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<th>Government Factories and Dockyards 1984-88</th>
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<td>Munitions Filling Factory St. Marys</td>
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<td>(Fishermen's Bend and Avalon)</td>
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<td>Australian Government Clothing Factory (Coburg)</td>
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<td>Garden Island Dockyard</td>
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<td>Williamstown Naval Dockyard</td>
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In 1984 the factories employed about 10,000 persons. Significant staff reductions were commenced in 1985 associated with restructuring, rationalisation, commercialisation and in the case of the Government Aircraft Factories (GAF) and the Williamstown Naval Dockyard (WILDOCK), preparation for corporatisation and privatisation.

With the exception of Ammunition Factory Footscray, which was built for the privately owned Colonial Ammunition Company in 1888, all other factories have always been Government owned and operated.

Defence Industries — Characteristics

As broadly defined by Cooksey (1986)\(^12\), Australian defence industry is small, both as a fraction of manufacturing industry in Australia, and in comparison with defence industries overseas. Its size and condition result from its almost exclusive dependence upon the ADF as its sole customer, and orders to the industry have waxed and waned over the years in phase with
the re-equipment programmes of the three Services.

In some respects the Defence industries are no different from any other manufacturing or service industry, in other ways they are very special. The customers of the arms industries are legitimately limited to national governments. The industries generally operate at the leading edge of technology where research and development costs and technical risks are very high. Also, both products and plant are subject to rapid obsolescence, and quality standards are normally much more stringent than is necessary for commercial markets. Order sizes have a key influence on production and are critical if any attempt is to be made at making a profit. Economies of scale relate primarily to spreading R&D and setting up costs over a longer production run, and in gaining full benefit from 'learning efficiencies'. Defence products are generally highly specialised and switches into commercial product lines to maintain continuity of production have rarely proved successful in the past. However, the advent of robotics and versatile numerically controlled machines has the potential for a lessening of specialisation in some areas of machinery. Problems of the Defence industry are not unique to Australia but have been an enduring feature of arms production since the industrial revolution, which is no less pertinent for the US military aerospace giants of today. A further, recent, complication is the excessive commercial risk inherent in developing large technically sophisticated systems, where escalating costs invariably lead to a reduction in orders and subsequent non-realisation of learning and scale economies.

Because of their relationship with national security, arms industries have always been characterised by a high level of Government intervention. While their product can be produced and sold by a private firm, it interfaces with national security, a 'public good'. It is this relationship which underpins the argument for protection of defence-related industries. In Australia, the 'Defence' argument for protection may have some validity, but it also provides a convenient cloak of security to cover industrial inefficiency and uncompetitiveness.

The international arms market is characterised by government subsidies, motivated either by support of foreign policy, domestic defence needs, or domestic political considerations, particularly maintaining steady employment in the arms industries. Conversely, sales may be stymied by foreign policy constraints of the exporting nation. Nevertheless, niches for the Australian Defence Industry to sell quality products seem to exist. Several product areas have been suggested by review committees where the Australian Defence Industry would appear to have a comparative advantage. These generally relate to technology developed initially by the Defence Science and Technology Organisation (DSTO) — pilotless aircraft, anti-submarine and mine-hunter systems, over-the-horizon radar, anti-missile ship protection systems, guided bombs and aircraft life extension techniques. There is a world and regional market for these specialist products. However, the market is highly competitive, especially for more basic items of equipment. In the Indian-Pacific region, India, China, and North Korea have emerged as active exporters of Defence equipment, while Japan, Taiwan, South Korea and Singapore are developing their defence industries.

Defence Industry Policy

Defence industry has been the most protected sector in Australia. The uncritical satisfaction of defence objectives has bred conditions that allowed inefficiency to develop and encouraged inward-looking and 'rent seeking' behaviour. Subtle elements of protection have included: subsidised excess capacity in the form of Maintenance of Productive Capability (MPC) payments, less than optimal use of government-owned plant and equipment by contractors and the factories, a focus on capability rather than on satisfying customer requirements, and effective confinement to the Australian market. A further disincentive to efficiency has been the use of 'cost-plus' contracts which allow the passing on of costs and thereby weaken the incentive to least cost production.

The Government (1987) now seeks to provide an environment where industry can become more efficient and internationally competitive. 'Previous policies have tended to establish important capabilities in industry and then allocate them work exclusively. This has established sole sources, which have subsequently lapsed into the poor performance and high costs that often characterise monopolies.' For the factories, the actual level of subsidies has been hidden by Departmental accounting procedures and MPC payments. Rationalisation of the factories will reduce some inefficiencies and the use of com-
commercial accounting procedures will reveal others that were previously hidden.

Industry protection measures are now implemented under the head of 'Australian Industry Involvement' (All). Where Defence equipment is purchased overseas, high priority is given to independent local repair, maintenance and adaptation capabilities. The aim of All is to assist industry in the acquisition of technology and necessary skills. The policy is applied in two ways: 'Defence Designated Work' under which designated local participation is required; and 'Defence Offsets'.

Defence Offsets aim to facilitate technology transfer and require that work to the value of 30 per cent of the imported content of projects must be placed with Australian industry. Work completed in Australia is supposed to be internationally competitive. However, as the offset requirement is a buyer's condition of sale which may be more important than price, it is reasonable to believe that a cost premium in the form of a higher price is most likely applied by the foreign prime contractor. Transfer of Defence technology under an offsets programme will invariably involve ‘second best’ technologies as the national security of the donor nation will be at risk. As offsets policy may be ineffective in achieving technology transfer, more resort is to be made to international collaboration as a means of sharing risks, spreading costs, increasing market size and exploiting specialisation and economies of scale. Better methods of obtaining ‘first best’ or ‘leading edge’ technology involve undertaking local R&D or participating in a collaborative venture and bearing part of the cost.

In addition to the notional application of relevant tariffs, bounties, and other forms of general assistance, including a 150 per cent taxation write-off of research and development expenditures, Purchasing Preference Policy provides a notional discount to the tendered price equivalent to 20 per cent of the value of the local content. If justified by strategic benefits, the Minister for Defence may even approve a price disadvantage in excess of 20 per cent preference. From an economic viewpoint, this additional margin of effective protection constitutes a disincentive to efficiency improvement.

As opposed to the cost-plus contracts, current policy is to allocate Defence work on a competitive basis using fixed price contracts, with payments against milestones of achieved targets rather than elapsed time, and with other incentives for performance. A large proportion of Defence work by private industry has been performed on Government-owned plant and equipment. In keeping with its commercial emphasis, the Government is now selling much of this machinery and plant, and in future, industry will be expected to own the machinery, plant and licences necessary to undertake Defence work in Australia, with the Commonwealth's interest being protected by contract. Australian ownership and control of technology will be protected by the requirement for local branches of multinational firms to isolate themselves from parents of other than approved nationalities, and for access to sensitive indigenous technologies to be restricted to Australian nationals.

Exports of Defence equipment are a traditional means whereby arms manufacturers extend production runs, achieve economies of scale and spread R&D costs. Until recently, Australian Governments were most circumspect in approving the export of defence equipment. The Hawke Government has overcome any such qualms. In June 1988, Defence Minister Beazley announced that Defence exports would be actively pursued, and the simplification and streamlining of Defence export procedures as recommended by Cooksey (1986) would be implemented.

Liberalisation of Defence export controls offers wider markets to industry. Provided Australian Defence Industry can discover market niches in which it can become internationally competitive, there will be an enhancement of our national strength. However, there may be several insidious side-effects which must be carefully controlled by government. These are: the inadvertent fostering of international instability, the possible use of military aid to disguise subsidies to local manufacturers, the danger of bribery and corruption of officials, and a possible tendency to subordinate legitimate Defence interests to the requirements of Defence exports. What is good for the exporters of Australian Defence equipment is not necessarily good for Australia’s security.

Privatisation and Competition

Much of the following discussion concerns privatisation by asset sale; however, Pirie (1985b) has outlined 22 techniques whereby a broadly-defined privatisation approach may be
implemented. These include franchising and contracting out. Privatisation by selling enterprises is unique in that it involves a change in ownership structure. It differs from deregulation and similar means to enhance the efficiency of competition, as these measures refer to changes in the operating environment of the firm — changes which may be necessary to complement asset sale to ensure that a newly-privatised firm does not behave like a monopolist.

The primary rationale for privatisation is economic efficiency, improving industry performance by exposing management, workers and their unions to market forces. Privatisation has been attractive politically as it lessens Public Sector Borrowing Requirements and thereby reduces budget deficits which have high visibility and are an electoral liability. Beyond economic efficiency, privatisation has a multiplicity of secondary objectives. In the UK an important reason has been to resolve the persistent problems of management and control which have beset nationalised industries. Other objectives have been to promote wider share ownership in the community, ‘popular capitalism’; to increase competition in the economy and reduce direct Government involvement; to make explicit all subsidies and transfer payments (transparency of decision-making); and to reduce the power of public sector trade unions by removing enterprises from the public sector umbrella and encouraging employee share ownership.

Privatisation recognises that private firms are exposed to greater disciplines than public sector enterprises and have superior economic efficiency. It is not the ownership as such, but the interaction of ownership and competition that promote efficiency. Private firms are normally driven by the profit motive and subject to the discipline of competition in the capital and product markets, and the sanction of takeover or bankruptcy. The fortunes of individual companies depend upon their ability to meet these ongoing challenges by innovation, flexibility, adaptability and growth. Successful entrepreneurial risk-taking will be rewarded by supernormal profits which benefit shareholders, management and employees. Unless a government-enforced monopoly exists, these profits will usually be gradually whittled away by competitors who imitate the product. Consistently high returns require ongoing entrepreneurial activity.

By contrast, public sector enterprises are not generally exposed to a comparable incentive structure. It is not surprising that they tend to be slow to adapt and innovate, and yield more easily to union pressure for inefficient work practices. A bureaucratic ethic also tends to develop which makes these organisations inflexible and unresponsive to ‘consumer’ demands. Incentives for management are often to expand system capacity irrespective of costs. This is only made possible by the ultimate recourse of government funding. Managers who are given responsibility, often lack the necessary authority to operate effectively.

While a single objective can be ascribed to the private firm, approximated by the maximisation of profits, public enterprises generally have complex multiple objectives, some of which are usually in conflict. Economic efficiency is compromised by the satisfaction of collateral objectives of Government, particularly social objectives. For example: the hidden cross-subsidisation of different consumer groups, the introduction of industrial democracy, or the legislated employment of particular minorities. State-owned enterprises may also be subject to direct and contradictory Government controls, statutory limitations, and outright political interference. A common problem relates to inadequate capitalisation and the associated operation of obsolete plant and equipment. Even where government intervention is minimised there are difficulties in formulating efficiency guidelines and providing meaningful financial targets.

Numerous comparative studies on the relative efficiency of private and public enterprise have been conducted. Difficulties of methodology and data occur in most cases as seemingly similar private and public enterprises have different objectives and different accounting systems. In an 1986 survey, Domberger and Piggott conclude that ‘privatisation through asset sale can in some circumstances be worthwhile, yielding a reduction in resource waste in the overall economy. This assessment is consistent with, but not overwhelmingly supported by the international evidence on comparisons of private and public sector performance (Australian evidence is sparse). Irrespective of ownership, market deregulation is the key to efficiency in the short term. When the market is inherently monopolistic and the government desires to retain control over output and/or price, fran-
chising may be a more appropriate mechanism than outright sale and subsequent regulation. The implication is that private operators are not intrinsically more efficient, but that market pressures are more effective at weeding out poorly performing firms in the private sector than in public. This 'weeding out' is a dynamic process which takes place in the real world of change and uncertainty, where competitive rivalry compels a firm to adapt continually or perish. The role of entrepreneurship is critical, ever alert to discover and exploit new opportunities for profit. However, only a system of private property rights (profits and losses), including private ownership of firms, offers direct incentives for entrepreneurs to personally benefit by innovation and adaptation. Competitive rivalry between firms and a minimum of Government intervention in the market, ensures that the energies of entrepreneurs will be directed at opportunities for profit, not rent seeking (i.e., lobbying Government for preference, protection, quotas, subsidies and tax breaks).

There is agreement in successive official reviews that the operation of the Government Factories as appendages of a government department was inappropriate and largely responsible for the inefficiencies which have occurred. Corporatisation should help to redress many of these problems in the short term. However, while the evidence suggests that public corporations can be operated with comparable efficiency to private companies-static efficiency; this equivalence may not be able to be maintained over a long period of time.

The world is characterised by imperfect knowledge, continued change and uncertainty. To cope, companies must be able to deal constructively with risks and uncertainties. Klein (1977) calls this ability 'dynamic efficiency'. The management of public corporations, for the reasons outlined above, may possess neither the incentives nor the flexibility to respond to these conditions. Market economists believe that it is dynamic efficiency, based on rivalry between private firms in a competitive or 'contestable' market which results in maximum sustained growth, innovation and productivity increases.

**Privatisation of the Government Factories — General Observations**

Privatisation as broadly defined by Pirie (1985a) includes a range of options, each tailored to particular circumstances and not necessarily involving assets sale. Nevertheless, asset sale may be appropriate for the factories and could be seen as the final stage of the process of privatisation that is already in progress, as preparation of public enterprises for sale usually involves rationalisation, corporatisation and the liquidation of unproductive assets.

The corporatisation of the factories under Government ownership should yield considerable efficiencies in comparison with their operation as parts of a Government department. As a customer, the ADF can expect to benefit from these changes in the form of lower prices and better service. However, as industry exports are now admissible, the ADF will lose its monopolist position and will itself be more subject to market discipline. But, what if the factories are sold to private interests?

Even though the remaining ODP factories are to be corporatised as a single entity, considerable differences exist in the work carried out by individual factories, and privatisation methods involving sales may need to be tailored to each element. Considering the factories element by element, the methods that appear most pertinent are the selling of the whole, or a proportion of the whole enterprise to the public or to capable existing companies, franchising plant and facilities, or contracting out particular operations. Staff participation in ownership may also be feasible.

After economic efficiency, other relevant factors in assessing private ownership are social objectives, market failure, national security and strategic considerations. While in its last years GAF was a laboratory for industrial democracy, the factories have no major social objectives. Nevertheless, regional employment must be considered, and in all cases of asset sale adequate provisions need to be made to look after the interests of existing staff.

Market failure generally concerns 'externalities', public goods and monopoly. Externali ties relating to the factories as a whole are not important. The products produced are not 'public goods' as defined by economists, neither are the factories 'natural monopolies'. Where elements of statutory monopoly or 'exclusive supplier' status have been conferred on the factories by Government, these are easily removed. The value and complexity of products may also confer a de facto monopoly on a prime defence contractor once a contract has been let; al-
though the leverage of the prime contractor is reduced by fixed price contracts. Further, a policy of encouraging the possible entry of rivals will help to make the market for Defence products contestable. As a last resort, the ADF can always cut its losses and opt for foreign sourced equipment as was done in the case of the Wamira trainer aircraft.

Private ownership is not inimical to national security, and with appropriate controls there may be benefits in having foreign equity, particularly in the context of international collaboration. Appropriate provisions already apply to foreign-owned Defence firms operating in Australia, but additional measures may be necessary. In the UK, national objectives for strategic industries like communications and defence, have been preserved by the means of Government nominated directors and 'golden shares' which allow the Government to retain specific powers over future ownership, control or conduct of a privatised company. The shares give the relevant minister power to prevent both concentrations of ownership and certain takeovers, particularly foreign takeovers. Regardless of the arrangement adopted, in a Defence emergency, Government control can be effected under Defence powers.

Irrespective of asset sale, if dynamic efficiency gains are to be realised and sustained, the operating environment must be competitive. Offsets should be minimised, and preferences should be no more than for Australian manufacturing industry; the protection of which should be subject to continued phased reduction. The very availability of protection is stifling to innovation and a stimulus to inefficient 'rent seeking' behaviour. Designated work should be strictly limited and allocated by tender or auction of franchise where firms enter fixed price contracts for both products and excess capacity. An implicit subsidy is conferred by Defence designated work, but it now will be the minimum subsidy necessary to achieve local production or capacity.

Exports offer a means of maintaining steady employment that has not been actively pursued in the past. However, this new opportunity created by the lessening of Government interference, should not give cause to unbridled optimism. The international market is most competitive and characterised by massive intervention. Nevertheless, market niches do exist and dynamic firms will seek them out. These firms do not require to be selected by bureaucrats but will benefit from constructive assistance within clearly defined policy guidelines. It is neither necessary nor desirable for the Government to try and behave in an entrepreneurial way. Instead, the Government should create an environment that is conducive to entrepreneurial behaviour by firms, which should be allowed to bear the risk and reap the profits.

The primary aim of ADF procurement must not be forgotten. This is to obtain best value for our scarce defence dollars. It is not boosting Defence exports, favourably influencing the balance of payments, maintaining employment in Defence industries, or acquiring technology. These aims may also be achieved but are secondary in importance and should not influence achievement of the primary aim.

For the full section of the market to be effective, privately owned companies must be subject to takeover and bankruptcy. While takeovers will need to conform to national security ownership requirements, if the market is to be dynamic, bankruptcy must remain a course that will not provoke intervention. The one certainty in a deregulated market with private ownership is that the industry will not remain the same. The profitable parts will grow, other areas will wither or be changed, there will be new entrants, new technology, and new products. The rate of change will be much more rapid than has been seen in the past. Subsidies will still be necessary for designated work, but this must be determined by strategic factors alone and the subsidies assigned in a manner that minimises distortion of the market.

Conclusions
‘If I were asked to act in the most responsible and economic way I would of course go where I could get the best equipment at the best price for the Defence dollar, even though I am conscious of the defence value of an industry.’

Air Marshal D. S. Evans, 1985

The privatisation of the Government Factories that is already in train should hold no fear for the ADF as the Services will be the ultimate beneficiaries of the productivity gains that will be achieved. In the longer run, there are no substantial non-economic reasons why the factories should not be sold. As only competition and private ownership provide full incentives for dynamic efficiency-innovation, adaptability
and steady growth, there need to be sound reasons for the factories to remain under public ownership. Privatisation with private ownership is not an economic panacea, but it should be the standard against which other options are assessed. Once stability has been achieved in a corporate organisation, the individual circumstances of each factory should be examined to determine whether further benefits can be obtained by private ownership.

Privatisation with private ownership is the planner's enigma. However, it should not be viewed as a process with an uncertain outcome but as a method of handling uncertainty. In the case of the factories, the choice to be made is not between a regulated industry and no industry, but is essentially about the size and type of industry. In the worst case of asset sale only essential capacity will remain. In the best and more probable case there will be a larger, stronger and more dynamic industry.

In both cases the ADF will get better value for its expenditure, without compromising reliability of supply.

NOTES
4. Between 1975 and 1986 at least 10 major Departmental, Consultant or Parliamentary Reviews have been conducted into strategic or Defence industries, e.g., 1977 Hamer Report, 1981 Eltringham Report, 1986 Cooksey Report.
5. e.g., For the aerospace industry, 'If it is accepted that the margin between domestic and world prices lies between 10 and 25 per cent, then in 1983-84 the effective assistance rate accorded two of the major private manufacturers lay between 25 and 55 per cent, while that accorded the Government Aircraft Factories lay between 100 and 170 per cent (depending on whether Nomad assistance is included or not). BIE, 1986, p349.
7. 'Corporatisation' refers to giving the enterprise the legal status of a public company with the government owning all shares. Qantas is structured on this basis.
12. 'Australian Defence Industry is that part of industry in this country with the capability of producing for the ADF or the Defence Force of any other country equipment, material, maintenance support or intellectual property.' Cooksey, 1987, p47. A number of major industry groupings are included. The organisations involved may be categorised as Defence Forces, Public Sector Factories, Private/Public operations, and Private Companies with varying degrees of participation in the defence area. Cooksey, 1987, p47.
13. 'Learning efficiencies' occur when workers and management 'learn' to perform tasks more quickly and efficiently. The learning curve is defined as the complement of the proportional decrease in marginal costs (the cost of the last unit produced) following a doubling of cumulated output. A learning curve of 80 per cent is typical of aerospace component manufacture. BIE, 1986, p53.
14. Aviation Week & Space Technology, March 28, 1988, p36-40, e.g., despite phased production of several military aircraft types, the employment history of the Lockheed Corporation has fluctuated over the period 1950-1988 with peaks of 20,000, 33,800 and 20,100 in 1955, 69 and '87 respectively, and lows of 9,000 in 1960 and 8,400 in 1986.
16. As defined by economists, a 'public good' has two distinctive properties: (a) it does not cost anything for an extra individual to enjoy the benefits of the good; and (b) it is difficult or impossible to exclude individuals from enjoying the good. As individuals can be 'free riders', the market will either not provide the good or provide it in insufficient quantity. Defence is the archetypal large-scale public good.
17. e.g.: In the 1980's US military sales to the Arab countries have been constrained by US foreign policy, and the politics of Congress, which supports Israel. Military sales to the Middle East by European nations and China have benefited accordingly.
18. Rent seeking behaviour in this context refers to efforts by industry to lobby government to increase protection or protect a monopoly position rather than meeting competition by increasing productivity.
23. DOD, 1987, p82.
29. Kay and Thompson, p15.
33. Kay and Thompson, p14.
34. Static efficiency presupposes that the future will be an extrapolation of the present with microeconomic stability and predictability taken as desirable norms.
35. A market with a single supplier is 'contestable' if the supplier is restrained from monopoly pricing by the fear of potential competition from firms outside the market (outsider entry).
36. Externalities of production arise when the production activities of a firm directly affect the activities of others. The siting of explosives factories in built-up areas has negative externalities.
37. A 'natural monopoly' is said to exist where a monopolist experiences increasing returns to scale. In this situation lower average costs will be realised if only a single producer supplies the whole market.
39. If the period of the franchise relates to technological change, the current problem of obsolete equipment will be eliminated as franchises will be influenced to depreciate their plant and equipment over the period of their exclusive contract. Otherwise, they risk being underbid by a lower cost entrant using new technology.
40. While it could be argued that balance of payments, employment and technology objectives are relevant in principle, the small size of defence industry in relation to the overall economy makes the objectives insignificant in comparison with the 'best value' objective.
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Group Captain Mike Rawlinson is currently Officer Commanding RAAF Base Laverton. A navigator and graduate of the RAAF Academy, he was formerly Commanding Officer, Officers’ Training School and Chief Instructor at the Australian Defence Force Academy. Group Captain Rawlinson holds a Master of Commerce Degree from the University of Melbourne and has an ongoing interest in economics. He is continuing research into the privatisation of the Government Aircraft Factories/Aerospace Technologies of Australia. This is his first contribution to the Journal.

Patrol Boat Forward Operating Base

Port Hedland in Western Australia will be the site for a patrol boat forward operating base in north western Australia, Defence Minister, Mr Kim Beazley announced recently.

A Defence team investigated possible locations last year for a forward support facility that could be established utilising local resources.

“This decision will allow patrol boats to be deployed away from their bases in Fremantle and Darwin for extended periods and amounts to an increased Naval presence in the northwest.”

Mr Beazley said Port Hedland was sheltered and offered adequate cyclone protection.

“Good wharf facilities already exist and the local industrial, commercial and recreational facilities have been developed to meet the maintenance needs of a patrol boat. The port is also suitable for mine countermeasures vessels that may need to deploy to the area.

“The Navy intends to trial the forward deployment concept in April/May this year in the preliminary phases of Exercise Kangaroo 89 to establish the feasibility of providing limited support in remote locations,” Mr Beazley said.
The Principles of War Applied to the 2/28th Battalion in the Battle of El Alamein

By Lieutenant Russell W. Jones, ARES

Australians . . . "immensely big and powerful men, who without question represented an elite formation of the British Empire, a fact that was also evident in battle."

Field Marshal Erwin Rommel
North Africa, 6 May 1941.

Introduction

The night of 23 October 1942 was calm, clear and brilliantly illuminated by an almost full moon. Dusk that evening had seen thousands of men rise from the ground, where they had hidden below the surface of the desert for 18 hours, to stand in their narrow weapon pits to stretch the cramp and stiffness from their bodies. At exactly 2140 hours 35 regiments of field artillery and two regiments of medium guns opened up against all known enemy batteries and proceeded to lay down the heaviest concentration of fire ever seen in North Africa. The Battle of El Alamein had begun . . .

Synopsis

In the Western Desert at the close of the Axis offensive in July 1942, the battle front was finally stabilised on a line running approximately north and south from the Mediterranean Sea at Tel el Eisa to Qaret el Himeimat; a 56 kilometre front approximately 95 kilometres west of Alexandria.

The Eighth Army defensive positions were constructed on a line originally laid out in 1941 between the sea and the Quattara Depression. The positions were known as the El Alamein Line and blocked the gateway to the Nile Delta.

Facing this line the Axis forces, nominally under Italian command but in fact controlled by Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, comprised five equivalent German divisions and nine Italian divisions. The German Panzer Army Africa included the German Afrika Corps (15 and 21 Panzer Divisions), 90 Light and 164 Infantry Divisions and the Ramcke brigade of paratroopers. The Italians were organised into three corps (10, 20 and 21) and included two armoured divisions — Ariete and Littorio.

The Eighth Army front was held by 13 and 30 Corps. The Army disposed six divisions and certain independent armoured and infantry brigades (refer Figure 1). It was an Imperial force in the truest sense, for it included 9th Australian Division, 5th (later replaced by 4th) Indian Division, 2nd New Zealand Division, 1st South African Division, and 7th Armoured and 50th Infantry Divisions together with Greek and French contingents (Montgomery, 1948).

The battle of El Alamein lasted for 12 days and nights from the evening of 23 October through to 5 November. During this time the 9th Australian Division was involved in much of the heaviest fighting and the 2/28th Battalion lost 2 officers and 44 men (Maughan, 1966). The battle was fought in three phases:

1) the Break In,
2) the Dog Fight, and
3) the Break Out.

The first phase was fought over two days and nights and strove to place Allied armour into open ground within the Axis lines on ground of the Eighth Army's own choosing. During this phase the 2/28th Battalion was involved in diversion and deception plans designed to confuse the enemy as to the precise Allied objectives.

The second phase was fought over the following seven days and nights and involved a "killing match" of gruelling attrition between the two forces. In this phase the 9th Australian Division bore the main burden of the attack (Maughan, 1966) however the 2/28th as part of the 24th Brigade, which had recently seen 99 consecutive days of front line action, formed part of the Division's firm base for the early part of this phase holding vital ground on the tip of a salient.

On 31 October the battle approached its crisis, Rommel concentrated the 15th and 21st Panzer Divisions together with the 90th Light Division for an all out drive eastwards along the Tobruk to Alexandria road. At this time the 2/28th effected a relief with the 2/24th of the 26th Brigade and took up position in front of the driving Axis forces astride the road and
SITUATION AND PLAN
OCTOBER 23RD.

Situation and Plan October 23rd.

Figure 1: (Carver, 1962).
railway. The presence of the 2/28th Battalion at this location on the 1 November was to prove the turning point of the El Alamein offensive.

The successful and courageous defence offered by the 24th Brigade effectively blunted Rommel's counter-stroke and also gave the Allied armoured divisions the day they needed to "break out" through the minefields and to engage the enemy from the rear. During this final stage the 2/28th launched several offensive actions and on 4 November the 2/28th Battalion finally pushed through to the coast.

Within any operation or campaign experiences of the past lend themselves to strategical planning and conduct. These experiences may congeal to become defined as principles. Such 'Principles of War' indicate a course of action that has been successful in the past and serve to warn that their disregard involves risk. The student of war must realise that the principles of war are usually inter-related, many and varied, suiting each situation to a greater or lesser degree. This article seeks to discuss the most important principles pertinent to the Battle of El Alamein and in particular the vital and valiant role played by the 2/28th, Battalion Royal Western Australian Regiment.

Theatre of Operations

In the Western Desert at the close of the Axis offensive in July 1942, the battle front had been stabilised on a line running north and south from Tel el Eisa on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea to Qaret El Himeimat on the northern edge of the Qattara Depression (Jackson, 1949). A 56 kilometre front approximately 95 kilometres west of Alexandria (refer Figure 2). The Qattara Depression is some 240 kilometres south-west to north-east. Parts of this depression are below sea level and large areas are covered with a salt crust through which a man can easily break. Descent into this depression from the north is precipitous (Jackson, 1949; Lloyd-Owen, 1985; Shaw, 1945) and thus it proves a serious obstacle. Hence with the Mediterranean Sea to the north and the Qattara

![Figure 2: Theatre of Operations (Carver, 1962).](image-url)
Depression to the south both flanks of the battle front were relatively secure and immediate envelopment by land forces was not possible.

The main tactical features of the area were the Meiteiriya, Ruweisat and Alam El Halfa Ridges in the north and centre, whereas in the south the terrain was more broken rising to Hunters Plateau (Jackson, 1949). No natural cover from air observation existed and little was available from ground observation (Carver, 1962; Jackson, 1949; Moorehead, 1965). Except in the minefields, vehicles could move anywhere in the north and centre but the broken terrain in the south resulted in rough passage.

**Selection and Maintenance of Aim**

Field Marshal, Viscount Montgomery of Alamein himself describes his mandate as being “... to destroy the Axis forces in North Africa” (Jackson, 1975; Montgomery, 1948). The simple, concise nature of this statement concurs with the necessity of all aims being clearly defined — however when Montgomery first received his instructions on 13 August 1942 this aim was by no means within the capabilities of the force available. The Eighth Army had lost confidence in their higher levels of leadership, they lacked sound battle technique, were deficient of equipment and weapons comparable to those of the Germans and the determination of the troops was undermined by plans for further withdrawals (Montgomery, 1948). It is a mark of Montgomery’s strong leadership and confidence that he did not yield to the enormous pressures from above to commence the battle before he judged the Eighth Army to be ready. Even on the occasion when General Alexander received a signal from Churchill to the effect that the attack must be in September so as to synchronise with Allied landings at the western end of the north African coast and Russian offensives, Montgomery replied that if a September attack was ordered “they would have to get someone else to do it” (Montgomery, 1958).

To fulfil this overall aim Montgomery made use of the 9th Australian Division within which was the 2/28th Battalion of the 24th Brigade. For much of the first stage of the battle of El Alamein the 2/28th Battalion had been untried, however immediately prior to the second stage there came the order for “... the 2/28th to relieve the 2/24th Battalion of the 26th Brigade” (Masel, 1961). This decision by General Sir Leslie Morshead has since been regarded by many high ranking observers as the “turning point in the battle” (Masel, 1961; Yeates and Loh, 1946). As is essential of any plan or action, this decision was calculated to further the favourable conclusions of the operation — in this case the destruction of the Axis forces. The operation which commenced the morning after the relief was effected came to be known as the Battle of the Thumb. If a giant left hand had been laid on the battlefield, 24th Brigade would have been the thumb which covered the main road (Masel, 1961) and railway (Yeates and Loh, 1966) to Alexandria, while the four fingers of the British armour probed for position behind the Axis force (refer Figure 3).

Hence the task of the Australians was to stay exactly where they were, to win a slogging match against the Germans, a test of guts and endurance rather than of skill as had been foreseen by General Morshead (Masel, 1961). When one further considers that the casualties suffered by the 24th Brigade on 1 November equalled the total number of men which the 26th Brigade would have had available to fight, one can truly realise that the relief of the 2/24th Battalion by the 2/28th Battalion was indeed a vital component in the achievement of the overall aim.

**Maintenance of Morale**

The commencement of the Battle of the Thumb found the 24th Brigade precariously located in a saucer shaped depression with the high ground to the front and rear held by the enemy. Within the 2/28th position opposing forces were within speaking distance of each other, there had been no time to dig in and the hard stony ground with its scattered salt-bush provided little natural cover. Battalion headquarters was in easy small-arms range of the enemy, no telephone cable had been laid to brigade, wireless sets were working sporadically, no artillery officers had been sent out with the relieving battalion with the consequence that defensive fire was restricted by lack of communications and by the inexperience of the infantry officers who tried to direct the fire (Masel, 1961). In contrast not only did the Germans on high ground have better observation, but behind them they were using the Sidi Abel el Rahman mosque as an artillery and mortar O.P. (Rainier, 1944) which the Allies were unable to damage for diplomatic reasons, not wishing to upset the indigenous population. Indeed every-
Figure 3: The Battle of Alamein, October-November 1942; Northern Sector (Masel, 1961).
thing seemed to add up to the fact that the "saucer" could not be held for any appreciable time.

The questions have been posed (Masel, 1961): "If the saucer was theoretically untenable, how did it come to be held against a skilful attacker who had been awaiting this opportunity and who knew that the elimination of the Thumb meant the difference between victory and defeat insofar as the entire battle was concerned? How can flesh prove stronger than steel?" In the case of the Battle of the Thumb the answer may lie in Morale.

Morale has long been recognised as one of the most important principles of war. Essential for any victory, high morale kindles a boldness of spirit which in turn fosters courage, determination and a faith in one's task, as well as the ability to fulfil that task. Fortunately the Eighth Army Commander realised this to the point where Montgomery considered morale of the soldier to be "the single greatest factor in war" (Montgomery, 1958).

Morale is affected by many factors; a soldier has to be given a challenge, kept active, alert and purposeful. He must be kept informed both of what is happening in the battle area and of what is required of him. In addition he needs to be led by officers in whom he has confidence and who he knows are living in relatively the same conditions as himself.

Morale is infectious, but its epidemic nature is most effective when reflected down from the higher levels of command. The 9th Australian Division commanders developed a strong confidence in both Montgomery and his plan (Jackson, 1975), which soon spread to the troops. Montgomery's personality had captured the men of the Eighth Army and they believed he could lead them to victory (Rainer, 1944). Whenever possible commanders were kept informed as to key developments and in the final 72 hours prior to commencement of the offensive the Staffs, battalion commanders, officers and men of the Eighth Army were progressively informed of the objects of the battle, of the high hopes that were held for the outcome and of the individual units' roles within the battle (Anon, 1965). In doing so each man was reminded of the reason he was there, the idealism with which he first went off to war was re-kindled and he was made aware of the expectations of himself with regarded to the overall aims.

As testament to the spirited defence by the 2/28th during the Battle of the Thumb one company used 19,000 rounds of S.A.A., 15,000 rounds of Thompson and about 250 three inch mortar bombs (Yeates and Loh, 1946). It can be safely assumed that the enemy suffered very heavy casualties.

Surprise

The evening of 31 October 1942 saw the mauled remains of the 2/24th Battalion facing the prospect of an all out assault on their critical position by Rommel's infantry and armour. General Morshead made use of all the elements of surprise (secrecy), concealment, deception, originality, boldness, speed and choosing the line of least expectation) to see that on the morning of 1 November the position was held by the fresh determined troops of the 2/28th (refer Figure 4). An intercepted radio message from Rommel to his troops (Maughan, 1966; Yeates and Loh, 1946) promised them an easy victory over a handful of survivors from nine days and nights of the bloodiest fighting. When the first attack commenced at 1130 hours Rommel's men would have quickly realised that their commander's information was erroneous, yet the Axis plan of attack was formed on the false belief that no stern opposition was to be encountered.

Dawn saw the Axis forces promptly open up with small arms, mortars, 88mm guns firing air burst shells and a variety of field guns (Maughan, 1966). At 1130 hours the enemy launched an attack from the north-west between the railway and the road; the two forward 2/28th companies taking the brunt. The attack was made by about a battalion and a half of infantry in conjunction with numerous tanks and was supported by sustained artillery, mortar and machine-gun fire. However the ill informed Axis infantry was soon forced to ground and the armour rapidly became reluctant to push forward alone (Masel, 1961; Yeates and Loh, 1946). At 1525 hours a second powerful thrust occurred between the railway and the road and this too was repelled. At 1550 hours 27 tanks were observed north of Thompson's Post. At the same time enemy infantry began forming up astride the road and railway about a mile or so to the west of the Australian positions (Maughan, 1966), however they were effectively shelled. The enemy then began probing the Australian positions seeking weak spots,
Figure 4: 24 Brigade Dispositions 1 November 1942 (Yeates and Loh, 1946).
after which an advance against the 2/28th was made by infantry riding on tanks with several self-propelled guns coming forward to support, but as a result of accurate Australian fire the German infantry was soon forced to go to ground.

At approximately 1730 hours the tanks and infantry again formed up to assault from the east whilst about 100 infantry advanced with determination between the road and railway. These were halted by steady fire (Maughan, 1966) and the attack from the east did not develop. At dusk tanks and infantry, half concealed by dust and smoke, attacked from the west while a simultaneous thrust, incorporating at least three tanks and 15 truck loads of infantry, was made from the north-east. Again the attacks failed to penetrate the defensive fire. A final assault supported by an artillery bombardment was made at 2030 hours but this too was successfully repelled.

This piecemeal commitment of the German force undoubtedly contributed to the victory won by the 2/28th. With equal certainty it was the element of surprise held by the 2/28th which led to the formation of the Axis battle plan rather than a much more awesome major coordinated attack.

Deception

The ability to throw an enemy's forces off balance, to make them behave in a way that will aid one's own forces whilst exposing or weakening the adversary is an enormous asset. This can frequently be achieved through deception.

Deceived as to the strength of the opposition on the morning of 1 November, the Axis forces had previously been duped by the deception operations of the 2/28th Battalion. On the evening the offensive began the 2/28th and 2/43rd Battalions each launched a raid camouflaged to look like an attack which drew enemy artillery fire for four hours (Maughan, 1966), thus drawing valuable fire power from other areas in the Allied offensive. Using Bush Artillery in the form of experimental 4.2 inch mortars and captured German 81mm mortars the enemy was lulled into believing that the raiding battalions had artillery support (Masel, 1966). Prisoners taken later in that sector (Maughan, 1966) declared that they thought they had encountered part of the main attack. That same evening the 2/28th Pioneer Platoon placed dummies dressed in Australian uniforms in No Man's Land which were interpreted by the Axis forces as further evidence of the attack. So realistic was the ruse that the following day the dummies were machine-gunned by a flight of Stukas (Masel, 1966).

Security

In order for a force to pursue the selected aim with freedom of action it is essential that adequate defence is secured for vital ground and key terrain. In the northern zone of the El Alamein line the most obvious vital ground surrounded the rail and road links with Alexandria and Tobruk. After 99 consecutive days of frontline action (Masel, 1966) the 2/28th Battalion was given a holding role astride the main road. This was the firm base from which the 9th Australian Division could manoeuvre. With the Mediterranean Sea to the right and the remaining might of the Allied forces along the Alamein line to the left, the 2/28th could feel secure to fulfil its holding role without fear of flanking interference.

On a broader scale the very nature of the El Alamein line (refer "Theatre of Operations"), together with its closeness and strong links to a firm supply base, enabled the Eighth Army to successfully operate from a firm and secure base whilst being almost immune to enemy interference from the flanks and rear.

Sound Administration

No matter how well planned an operation, how efficient the weaponry and how courageous and steadfast the troops, no military operation can succeed without the necessary administrative arrangements to link them altogether. In his book Pipeline to Battle Rainer (1944) describes the battle of El Alamein as "... one of the most carefully prepared engagements in all the history of war." Preparations followed three main areas of concern. Firstly, the accumulation, within a short distance of the battlefield, of sufficient men and munitions. The refusal of Montgomery to commence an offensive until the Allied forces were suitably supplied enabled the vast stockpiling of munitions and supplies in Egypt. This combined with the fact that the Eighth Army was operating close to its base with good road and rail links (Keogh, 1959) solved this first problem.

Secondly, that weapons and supplies be able to be moved to specific locations at appointed
times. This enormous task was overcome by long hours and dedication correlating distances, speeds, movement and tonnage (Rainer, 1944) on the part of administrative staff.

Finally, the proper training of the men in the use of their weaponry and in rehearsal of the particular task which each would be called upon to perform. For this task specialist schools, such as Mine lifting (Rainer, 1944) and Administrative Assault Forces (Keogh, 1959), were set up. Training was emphasised and phrases such as “Desertworthy” coined to describe both men and equipment.

Thus when the offensive finally commenced on 23 October 1942 detailed attention to all administrative areas resulted in the smooth coordination of the ensuing battle.

Concentration of Force

A vital principle in the successful conduct of war is the concentration of force, in particular, the concentration of strength against weakness at the decisive time and place. The El Alamein line was 56 kilometres in length and through careful application of many of the principles of war (in particular deception and security) the Allied forces were massed for a strike in the northern sector whereas the Axis defence, including the vital armour, was accumulated in the south.

By means of pooled transport and a large number of dummy vehicles (known by Rommel to be imitations), the layout and density of vehicles required for the main assault in the northern sector was established on the ground by 1 October. During the forward concentration substitute transport was secretly replaced at night by the operational vehicles of the formations concerned. The rear areas from which these formations moved were kept at constant density by replacing each departed vehicle which an appropriate dummy. The concentration of artillery was handled in a similar way, while the assaulting troops moved into slit trenches dug a month earlier. Thus from 1 October onwards no significant change in the density and layout in the northern sector appeared (Keogh, 1959).

In contrast to the concealment of concentration in the north, dummy vehicles, guns, dumps and tanks were moved into position in the south. Wireless traffic in the area was increased and the construction of a dummy pipeline undertaken and carried forward at a rate calculated to suggest that an assault was being prepared for early November (Keogh, 1959).

Thus on the eve of 23 October Allied forces were poised to attack the Axis battle line with the maximum amount of firepower, men and materials, possible, whilst the Axis forces were gathered in strength at the southern section ready to counter an attack expected in early November. Furthermore the time of the offensive was such that Rommel, the Commander in Chief of the Axis forces, was absent from North Africa on convalescent leave.

The advantage gained by a concentrated attack in an unexpected area was further heightened when the 24th Brigade launched their diversionary attacks with the result that the enemy’s resources were further dispersed as it was unclear as to the true Allied objectives.

Co-operation of all arms, services and resources of all the Allies also played a major part in the success of El Alamein. While preparations on the ground were being completed, the Desert Air Force delivered increasingly heavy and sustained attacks against the Axis air forces and land communications. By 23 October decisive air superiority had been achieved and continual fighter patrols were operating with no opposition over enemy landing grounds (Jackson, 1949). During the Battle of the Thumb the first Axis assault was attacked by Allied bombers (Maughan, 1966) and, in addition, British and American fighters successfully intercepted German dive bombers escorted by fighters which were destined for the Australian lines.

Naval vessels kept up a constant flow of necessary supplies to the port of Alexandria. A convoy also played an important diversionary role in pinning down enemy reserves (Keogh, 1959) by sailing on the afternoon of the 23 October and simulating a landing behind the Axis lines after dark.

The Eighth Army itself had learnt from its success at the Battle of Alam Halfa and fought as an integrated army under direct control of army headquarters. Likewise artillery and armoured forces fought as concentrations (Jackson, 1949; Montgomery, 1948), not as split up divisions with attached units and subunits as had previously unsuccessfully been the case. Co-operation and inter-reliance within the Army was excellent not just between the regular Divisions but also within other specialised elements such as the Long Range Desert Group.
THE PRINCIPLES OF WAR APPLIED TO THE 2/28th IN THE BATTLE OF EL ALAMEIN

Thus the Battle of El Alamein was a shining example of the concentration of strength against weakness as well as co-operation between all arms and services.

Economy of Effort

A natural consequence of the correct application of concentration is the principle of economy of effort. A commander only has a certain amount of resources — men, weapons and equipment — at his disposal. Thus it is essential that he concentrates them in such a way as to maximise resources at vital positions whilst economising in less essential areas. Hence the enormous concentration of men in the vital area surrounding the railway line and road in the Battle of the Thumb (refer Figure 5) whilst the Allied forces were spread more thinly in other areas of the Allied lines. In this small crucial area the front line of the defended locality (facing west) comprised one company of the 2/43rd astride the main road (Maughan, 1966), on its left two companies of the 2/28th between road and railway, on the left of the railway the depleted 2/32nd Battalion holding a flank out towards the 2/15th defences; the remaining three companies of the 2/43rd were in depth behind the two forward companies of the 2/28th and the other two companies of the 2/28th were in depth behind the 2/32nd Battalion.

In addition economy also means the commander must ensure that he exploits the line of least resistance when obtaining an objective so as to fulfil the overall aim whilst not being wasteful of available resources.

Flexibility

Having once applied concentrated strength against an enemy's weakness the enemy will naturally respond by changing his disposition. Thus a modern battlefield is a continuously changing dynamic arena and it is essential that both plans and dispositions be flexible and adaptable to best meet these changes, thereby capitalising on opportunities proffered whilst countering potential threats.

El Alamein was an enormous battle over 12 days and nights and the Allied forces constantly adapted their resources to each success or failure or, the more common, partial success. Montgomery describes the entire battle as “an outstanding example of the employment of the principle of flexibility” (Montgomery, 1948), indeed this principle can be perhaps most clearly demonstrated by the actions of the Australian

(Shaw, 1945) who constantly gathered intelligence and harassed the enemy from behind Axis lines.

Figure 5: Dawn, 1st November (Maughan, 1966).
forces in the days of 28 October to 1 November leading up to the Battle of the Thumb.

The 9th Australian Division was to launch a full-blooded attempt to destroy the Axis coastal salient on the night of 28/29 October enabling 30 Corp to drive westward along the coastal road and achieve the long sought after "break out". The Division succeeded in driving a narrow wedge northwards through extensive minefields and strong opposition into Axis defences but not to the coast. However Rommel reacted to the threat by concentrating the whole strength of the Afrika Corps in the north (Jackson, 1949). Consequently the Allied plan was modified; the 9th Australian Division ordered to resume its attack on 30/31 October (refer Figure 6) to confirm the enemy's fears whilst the Axis of 30 Corp's drive westward was switched further south against Italian opposition. The attack was resumed and was successful in crossing the coast road but failed to reach the sea. The German forces then launched a series of furious counter attacks (Jackson, 1949; Montgomery, 1948) which effectively prevented exploitation of the gains in this area.

It was here in the Saucer — "the most hotly contested ground in the whole front" (Maughan, 1966) — that Morshead effected the fateful relief of the 26th Brigade with the 24th Brigade including the 2/28th Battalion. It was not until late afternoon on 31 October that it became known at Morshead’s headquarters just how weak and depleted the Battalion at the Saucer had become, yet flexibility of plan and disposition was such that orders for relief were issued by 1930 hours and the relief completed by 0330 hours the following day. It was due to this relief with the subsequent valiant efforts of the 2/28th in the Battle of the Thumb that 30 Corp were finally given the opportunity to move away from the strength of the Africa Corp and achieve the essential Break Out.

Offensive Action

The battle plan for El Alamein centred around one essential keystone (Jackson, 1947; Montgomery, 1948), the gaining and keeping of the initiative. This can best be obtained by the use of a marked degree of offensive action. No campaign can succeed without operations of an
offensive nature and in addition to obtaining the initiative, offensive actions also provide freedom of movement whilst heightening morale.

The very nature of the battle of El Alamein required the constant initiation of assaults and attacks. The enemy had strengthened his defences to a degree previously unknown in the desert, including deep, extensive minefields and there was no open flank. The problem was (Montgomery, 1958):

First — to punch a hole in the Axis lines,
Second — to pass 10 Corp, strong in armour and mobile troops, into this hole, and
Third — to develop operations so as to destroy Axis forces,

all of which involved extensive offensive operations and in all of which the 2/28th played their part. As mentioned previously, the 2/28th launched a major offensive action during the "break in" in the form of a camouflaged raid designed to look like an attack. Launched from Trig 33 against a post 1500 yards to the west, close to what was known as the "ring contour", Lt. G. Barnes took out 13 Platoon with four sappers and struck heavy opposition. The patrol was severely battered and the patrol commander (after whom the post was named) was seriously wounded, but managed to crawl back to safety. It was in this action that Sgt. G. Moore earned the M.M. (Yeates and Loh, 1946).

Following the valiant action at the Saucer on the evening of 2 November, Lt. R. Boekeman led a D company fighting patrol. The patrol set out later than was planned and artillery preparation served only to place the enemy on alert. The patrol hurried out along the main road and charged into the German posts approximately 500 yards from C company's forward defensive locations. After killing half a dozen Germans it withdrew as smartly as it went in and on its return produced two prisoners, one of whom had a bayonet wound — striking evidence that the patrol had not dallied on its homeward trip (Yeates and Loh, 1946). As a result of this dashing raid, Lt. Boekeman won the M.C.

It was by offensive operations such as these that the initiative was gained and held throughout the 12 days and nights of battle, at all times making the Axis forces respond to Allied movements and not the reverse.

Conclusion

The Battle of El Alamein was an enormous offensive lasting 12 days and nights to become the first great Allied victory of the Second World War. Few operations can achieve success without careful consideration and deliberate application of the Principles of War and El Alamein was no exception.

The battle was fought to fulfil an aim that was simply and clearly defined. All plans and actions were continually tested to ensure they followed the aim and all efforts continually directed towards its fulfilment. Most importantly the battle itself was not commenced until the achievement of the aim was within the capabilities of the Eighth Army. Morale proved to be an essential factor and was almost certainly responsible for a victory on ground in conditions which ought to have been untenable.

The very time and location of the initial onslaught was kept secret through elaborate deception plans which permitted the build up of strong forces, especially armour, in the north for an attack in October, whilst giving the impression of build up in the south for an attack in November. Surprise resulted in the Axis forces forming a battle plan to commit their forces piecemeal to destroy Allied forces holding vital ground at a critical moment in the battle when a single major co-ordinated assault would surely have granted them victory.

Throughout this time security maximised the advantages gained by deceptions and surprise.

Careful, detailed administrative planning ensured that sufficient men, munitions and supplies were accumulated in specific locations at specific times as well as ensuring that troops were trained and rehearsed in their weaponry and tasks. Accumulation of force, concentrated in strength at the time and location of the enemy's weakness, was another key factor in the victory. The flexibility of the Eighth Army to respond to the Axis forces enabled the Allies to capitalise on opportunities proffered whilst countering potential threats. Finally the initial offensive action by the Allied forces gained the initiative and continual attacks, harassment and assaults retained this initiative, enabling freedom of action and heightening morale.

Throughout the offensive the 2/28th Battalion, Royal Western Australian Regiment, fought courageously being conspicuous in the success of each of the three phases within the battle.
Special credit must be given for their fateful relief of the 2/24th Battalion on the night of 31 October/1 November and their subsequent valiant defence of the Saucer. Few units can ever be given credit for an action destined to become the turning point in a battle, however the 2/28th Battalion is one such unit and their victory at the Saucer became the turning point of the battle, just as El Alamein became the turning point of the war.

REFERENCES

Russell Jones completed a Bachelor of Science Degree in 1984 and a Postgraduate Diploma in Education in 1985 at the University of Western Australia. He taught secondary science for the following two years. He then returned to the University of Western Australia to commence postgraduate research in Education. Since completion of this article he has been posted to 11/28th Br, RWAR as a platoon commander with D Con. The 11/28th is the descendant Brn of the 2/28th.
Personnel Problems and the ADF — An Organisation Theory Perspective

By Peter Jesser, Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education

MACS

On 28 October 1987, the Opposition in the House of Representatives brought on for debate, as a matter of public importance, the Government's "... continuing neglect of the Australian Defence Force as evidenced by the record high wastage rates ... and the reduction in ..., [its] operational capabilities". Not surprisingly, in view of the political nature of the debate, argument centred upon the level of Government funding for defence and the failure of the Government to act on the recommendations of reports it had commissioned on the problems faced by service personnel.

The particular problems which concerned the Opposition have been aptly described as stemming from a "crisis of confidence" within the ADF, the dimensions of the crisis being defined — by politicians, the media, and service representatives — in terms of the presumed links between the commitment involved in soldiering for one's country and the appropriation of sufficient resources to achieve national defence objectives, as well as between the performance of the duties of a soldier and the provision of an adequate level of reward for the performance of those duties.

There can be little doubt that financial considerations have had a significant impact on military employments and conditions of service in recent years. It is clear, also, that the growing level of social and political awareness in the service community reflects some dissatisfaction with the situation. But while the issue is generally discussed in budgetary terms, it is rarely, if ever, that personnel problems can be solved simply by a more liberal application of funds.

The Organisational Perspective

A "crisis of confidence" suggests that more than money is at issue for the men and women of the ADF; it suggests difficulties with the internal functioning of the services. Internal issues are also indicated by the frequent references to a lack of job satisfaction contributing to the current high wastage rates. Too often, however, such issues are considered only in the context of the attitude of the individual, and overlooked as organisational problems until they reach a critical level — for example, when the effects of turnover or absentism become apparent. This implies that an organisational perspective should be employed more frequently in analysing situations such as those now facing the ADF. Such an approach would rely on models taken from organisation theory, and would take account of the extent to which the ADF has adapted to the changes of the 1980s, as well as the ways in which the prevailing attitudes of service personnel have been shaped by the organisational contexts in which they serve. Although the analysis of military organisations is not usually conducted using such models, there are sound reasons for adopting the approach in the current circumstances.

Historical analyses of military management (such as Norman Dixon's On the Psychology of Military Incompetence (1976)) have tended to concentrate on the psychology of the individual commander. While the military organisation has been the subject of some scrutiny in the process, most questions regarding organisational function have been posed in the context of the quality of military leadership and the behaviour of military leaders under the stress of war. How have commanders utilised the resources at their disposal? What were their motives? How did they adapt to technological and social change? In peacetime, however, the organisational aspects of military management assume greater significance. While the management of the Defence Forces is no less critical in peace than in war, in peace the forces must compete much harder for their share of resources; and while there is still a need to identify and incorporate relevant defence technology and to stay abreast of social change within the nation, there are seldom clear concepts of the way in which the Defence Force should develop. This may give rise to feelings of a lack of direction, particularly in the lower echelons of
the Defence Force and (for reasons connected 
to the ways individuals are paid, equipped and 
trained) to an evaluation of the rewards of a 
service career as not measuring up to the stand­
ards individual set for themselves.

Aim

A number of service writers have addressed 
organisational aspects of military management 
in recent years. The aim of this article is to 
highlight some of their observations, and to 
review them, from an organisation theory per­
spective, in the light of those technological and 
social changes which may now be producing 
stresses within the ADF.

The Changing Environment

Since the 1960s there have been a number 
of books published on the socio-political, eco­
nomic and organisational ramifications of the 
emergence of the post-industrial society. Barry 
Jones, in Sleepers, Wake! (1982)⁶, reviewed the 
questions raised in such works from a specifi­
cally Australian perspective. His assessment, 
based on the breadth of technological change 
that had taken place in the 1970s, was that 
society in the 1980s would change more rapidly 
than in any decade since the 1780s when the 
Industrial Revolution began in Great Britain. 
Jones predicted that the surge of change would 
shift the emphasis in employment towards areas 
such as welfare, education, administration and 
the transfer of information.

This article will not attempt a full review of 
post-industrial change in Australia. It is clear, 
however, that while the economic uncertainties 
which Australia has faced in recent years have 
alerted some of the contexts in which change is evaluated, Jones was correct in his broad 
assessment of the situation and the basic model of change which he put forward.

The revolution in computing, communica­
tions, transport and manufacturing which has 
transformed industrial societies over the past 
decade was made possible by the mass produc­
tion of the microchip. The new information technology which the microchip introduced has 
been rapidly adopted by Australian organisa­
tions, resulting (as predicted) in an expansion 
of employment in the information industry. The 
fact that information managers now tend to be closely associated with strategic decision-making 
activity is an indication of both the emphasis placed on information management and the 

degree of economic advantage that the new technology is presumed to confer.

The predicted growth in employment in areas such as administration and welfare has also 
occurred, but in these areas, where there is no associated payoff in productivity, there is some 
questioning of the basis for the type of change anticipated by Jones. The reasons for this are clear. The original prediction of an expansion in the areas of welfare and administration was 
posited on the notion of increasing equity as society’s store of wealth increased. But a wors­
ening national economic situation has militated against any sympathetic redistribution of wel­
fare to absorb the general shock of post-industrial change in Australia; and while employment in welfare and administration have increased, the political impetus has been for a reduction of spending in these areas.

From another perspective, the education di­
lemma highlights the conflict of interests be­
tween the need to foster education, particularly in those areas which support a competitive Aus­
tralian position in a post-industrial global 
marketplace, and the desire to reduce public spending on education to meet economic con­
straints.

The ADF has not been unaffected by these 
developments. Consequently, the attitudes of members of the ADF cannot be expected to 
differ greatly from other members of Australian society who are experiencing the effects of post-­
industrial change. But the effects of the change on the ADF as an organisation are subtly dif­
ferent from the effects felt by organisations in the wider society — because there are qualitative differences between the military institution and the type of organisation we recognise as generally represenative of public or private enter­
prise.

The ADF suffers some structural inflexibili­
ties which inhibit the effective incorporation of new technology. Prolonged peace also places it in an ambiguously “client” relationship with the wider sociopolitical system.⁸ These consider­ations have important consequences for the way a military career comes to be evaluated by service personnel.

The use of computer technology is now wide­
spread in Australia’s Armed Services, not just in combat systems, but in military strategic, 
logistic, and personnel support systems. Van 
Gelder predicted, in the early 1970s, that the communications revolution of which these sys-
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tems are a part would place great stress upon military commanders.' His assessment has been borne out by Israeli battlefield experience in subsequent years which demonstrated that computing and communications power in combination closes the information gap between the operational and politico-strategic levels of command. While this has obvious implications for those intermediate levels of command which may be by-passed in a combat situation (implications which would be readily appreciated by military leaders) the effects on the services in peacetime, where administrative systems are involved, are not always so apparent.

A different type of threat to the military hierarchy develops with the implementation of administrative computing systems. As more service personnel at all levels begin to acquire educational qualifications relevant to information management, a threat to the hierarchy develops through the power that accrues to those able to control the flow of information. This, in turn, is only one aspect of the redistribution of knowledge bases brought about by the general increase in education at all levels in the services. Although these changes have taken place in an environment which recognises the need for such changes, the organisational implications of higher education are not necessarily understood. If higher education holds the promise of greater accomplishment, it also heralds a greater tendency to question the status quo; and if an organisation cannot functionally integrate the new skills into its systems, and provide the skilled personnel with career structures which reflects their value to the organisation, the process of questioning will lead to increased organisational stress.

The hierarchy of command is, at the same time, under attack from another direction — by successive government initiatives to "civilianise" aspects of military administration. The process of civilianisation has been defined by Toner as involving a shift from emphasis on the primacy of the organisation to primacy of the individual, and from authoritarian command structures to judicial decision making. In Australian it is seen in the increasing formalisation of, and concentration on, the administrative aspects of defence. This has produced an increase in the number of civilians employed by the Department of Defence, as well as a growth in the number of uniformed personnel performing administrative duties.

Perhaps the most significant aspect of this process, however, and one which underlines the "client" status of the ADF, is the growth in senior civilian appointments and the extent to which they outnumber military appointments at the higher levels of Defence administration. While these developments conform to the general model outlined by Jones, there is an important distinction to be made between changes in technology and the emphasis on education, which are primarily due to military initiatives, and the administrative changes which are more politically inspired. While both types of change may produce organisational stresses due to the mismatch between their requirements and the requirements of existing military structures, they lead to discontent with different aspects of a service career.

Effects on the Individual

Public expressions of dissatisfaction with life in the services are commonly associated with factors bearing on the context of service employment, including the changes associated with civilianisation. While in part they reflect a mismatch between the concepts of military command and the administrative requirements of the new civilianised system, they also highlight differences between the way conditions of service are regarded by service personnel and the way that they may be seen by those outside the military. Civilianisation can result in a "welfare" view being taken by some conditions of service if the needs of personnel are not considered in the light of the special demands of a military career. Unfortunately, such a view may be politically convenient, particularly in times of economic constraint or when defence is not deemed to be a high priority. The resulting dissatisfaction is not just a consequence of conditions which have been lost, but a reflection of the altered relationship between the soldier and his or her service which the changes have produced.

In the areas where military leaders have the initiative in decision making, service personnel are more likely to be disillusioned with the opportunities developing for them within the changing system, than to experience dissatisfaction as a result of changes in the work they do. For most military employments affected by recent advances in technology, the potential for job satisfaction has increased in line with the extended range of responsibilities and level of
training arising from the change. But specialist training and increases in responsibility also cause personnel to pay more attention to the way they are employed and their potential for advancement. Yet, in contrast with the attention that the military organisation pays to training, the personnel management side of the equation is often neglected — the acquisition of specialist skills and qualifications is not matched by improved prospects for the individual. It is, as Hudson has indicated, a situation in which the organisation does something to, rather than for, the individual.

The differentiation here between dissatisfaction arising from factors affecting the job environment, and the lack of satisfaction associated with the job itself or career structures, is reflected in Herzberg's two-factor theory of work motivation. Herzberg makes a clear distinction between feelings of satisfaction and dissatisfaction towards work, as well as between factors acting to produce those feelings. He postulates that dissatisfaction arises from negative feelings about factors encountered in the job environment — for the military this means pay and conditions and many of the civilianised areas of policy-making. But while deficiencies in these areas may produce feelings of dissatisfaction, improvements in pay and conditions cannot themselves produce job satisfaction. Factors associated with the job itself determine the level of satisfaction, and deficiencies in this area are usually indicated by a climate of general apathy.

Herzberg's theory enables analysis of the organisational climate and supports diagnosis of organisational problems. Exhibit 1, which classifies the organisational climate in terms of the presence/absence of employee satisfaction/dissatisfaction, is of interest because it sheds some light on the current sources of discontent within the ADF.

Legal relationships within the military organisation should preclude the more obvious manifestations of an explosive organisational climate. Although the current depth of feeling is indicated by recent incidents in which service members and their families displayed open hostility towards Ministerial representatives, more generally, military personnel who derive no satisfaction from the duties they perform, and who are dissatisfied with other aspects of their employment, could be expected to “vote with their feet” rather than force the issue. Having regard, then, for both the raised voices of discontent and the increasing personnel wastage rates, circumstances suggest that in some areas of the ADF there is both dissatisfaction with pay and conditions and a generalised lack of job satisfaction. Elsewhere, while there are areas of employment where felt inequities are clearly most important (for example, among aircrew), no one who has worked within the military could fail to note the strong sense of apathy which pervades in some areas. Indeed, there is evidence to suggest that for many personnel the lack of job satisfaction may be the most important consideration in their decision to stay or quit the forces. It is only the powerlessness of the individual to exert any influence in the face of organisational apathy, and the difficulty often encountered in specifying the reasons for a lack of job satisfaction, that shifts the focus to the more easily articulated area of pay and conditions.

The analysis points, then, to a generalised lack of job satisfaction at the root of current personnel problems, and to decision areas where defence chiefs have most discretion — areas relating to the mission of the ADF. It is the management of change in these areas which is likely to have the greatest impact on the attitudes of service personnel towards their employment; certainly, it is the consequences for personnel flowing from decisions made in this area which will, in the end, make or break the military organisation.

**EXHIBIT 1**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Herzberg's Classification of Organisational Climates</th>
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<tr>
<td>Conditions:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dissatisfaction with conditions</td>
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| Climate:                                        |
| Explosive                                      |
| Apathy                                         |
| Inequity                                       |
| Ideal                                          |

**Structural Analysis**

To review the position in the ADF today, it is necessary to consider how the forces of change outlined above have interacted with service structures over recent years to produce the stresses which result in personnel problems. The existing situation in the Army illustrates the point.

In the early 1970s, Australia abolished conscription and withdrew its commitment to South Vietnam. Within a few years the ADF had
settled down as an all-volunteer force employed in routine peacetime duties. For an organisation which admits no lateral entry into the upper levels of its hierarchy this is a recipe for entrenching conservatism, and there are some grounds for asserting that this occurred.

In the Army, in the mid-1970s, the investigations of Regular Officer Development Committee (RODC) and Regular Soldier Career Development Review (RSCDR) were conducted with a view to establishing the relevant models for the management of military personnel. Of these two investigations, that of the RODC was the most significant because of the implications it had for the future structure of the Army.

The report of the RODC firmly entrenched a personnel system which based officer career management, and the broad structure of the Army hierarchy, around the concept of the General Service Officer (GSO) by applying a model of military management applicable to the most recent war the services had been involved in — the conflict in South Vietnam.

The pivotal (but protected) position of the GSO in the structure of the Army has a parallel in Thompson's theory that organisations structure themselves to buffer their “technical core” from environmental influences. The GSO may be considered the repository of the technical expertise which is the reason for the force's existence, and the protection of the “institution” of the GSO appears outwardly rational when this perspective is adopted. According to Thompson, organisations structure themselves to protect their technical cores through a process of rational decision-making and, in the climate of open competition which he envisaged, success or failure is the measure of rationality. But during a prolonged period of peace the defence capability remains untested, and the rationality of defence decision-making cannot be measured. This point was recognised explicitly by the Canadian Defence Force in a recent review of its organisation.

Dixon provides numerous examples of military decision-making directed towards protecting an existing “core” concept which demonstrate that purposeful adaptation in the face of change may be rejected, consciously or unconsciously, by adherence to tradition or plain incompetence, in favour of the irrationality of preserving the existing core structure. It is interesting to note that Dixon saw this situation emerging in Britain between the two World Wars in part as a result of public attitudes to war and economic constraints at that time — environmental factors militating against significant change. On a more contemporary note, Shaw has suggested that the British Army has been slow to adapt in the face of recent social changes because it is impeded by its “apparently rigid internal stratification” and also because the “parent society” which does not accept the need for an effective Army applies little pressure for change.

These observations point to a relationship between the internal state of the defence organisation and the external pressure (or lack of pressure) acting on the military system. Gabriel has modeled this situation in a manner which suggests an explanation for the entrenchment of conservatism within the forces. He argues that bureaucracies respond most rapidly when pressured to do so from the outside, and asserts that external support for change, and pressure for change in the direction of new values, is the only way to make those new values functional for behaviour within the military.

The point argued in this article is that the protected status accorded the GSO by the RODC was inappropriate considering the era of rapid change which the Army was then entering. There is nothing new in this argument, as the type of problem now emerging in officer management was anticipated by critics of the RODC in the late 1970s. The ineffectiveness of that criticism — criticism originating within the Army — is explained in terms of Gabriel's model. But the criticism itself remains valid.

Cheeseman argued that the RODC had set up inappropriate models for career management because it underestimated the future effects of technological change. Van Gelder also voiced concerns over the Committee's assessments of the future, with his main criticism being that the RODC did not sufficiently address the issue, except in the most general terms.

Cheeseman's specific criticism was that defence was no longer the domain of the “military” officer because the new conditions of work would not be under the rigid organisational constraints previously encountered in traditional defence environments. He suggested that a polarisation of the military profession would emerge as a result of external change — new educational patterns and attitudes linked to technical and social change — but predicted that the Army would continue to be dominated
by the traditional set of "military" officers because the Army's approach to officer management was not in keeping with the new requirements. In other words, the system of officer management proposed would protect the existing position of the GSO "core".

Van Gelder, on the other hand, expressed concern for the inconsistencies in the RODC's approach to manpower planning and development. His critique highlighted the continuing preoccupation of the service with manning its establishment (the "liability") rather than looking to the type of establishment which fitted the development potential of its manpower. While Van Gelder acknowledged that the RODC Report contained within its logic some of the essential seeds to remedy the manpower problem, the possible reasons for the committee's inconsistencies were not pursued. It seems likely, however, that those inconsistencies arose because the traditional military structure was not taken as the point of departure for future planning, but was carried forward as the model to be fitted to possible future environments. This would have encouraged modification of anticipated future environments to suit the preferred structure, rather than modification of the structure to suit the environment. It also explains why the traditional "military" (GSO) officer was expected to continue to dominate the Army.

The picture which develops from this is that of an organisation structured on an assumption of internal stability, attempting to operate in an environment which is neither stable nor predictable in terms of technological and social change. The question which remains to be answered is how these circumstances combined to inhibit environmental adaptation on the part of the Army.

Evidence linking organisational structure and processes with environmental adaptation was first presented by the British organisation theorists, Burns and Stalker, in the 1960s. The mechanistic-organic theory of organisations developed by Burns and Stalker is relatively simple and intuitively appealing. It is summed up in Exhibit 2. Briefly, however, mechanistic systems only prosper in environments which are relatively stable. The absence of change in an environment permits a fairly narrow concentration of knowledge within and towards the top of the hierarchy, and allows the rigidly bureaucratic system to function. The organic system, on the other hand, is adapted for change, with a widely consultative approach to problem solving and more flexible use of knowledge and experience from wider professional fields.

In many ways, Cheeseman's arguments directly support the contention of a mechanistic organisation attempting to protect its existing "core" structure in the face of the forces of change, while Van Gelder's observations on the inconsistencies in the RODC Report are a comment on the blinkered perspectives of mechanistic management processes.

The mechanistic approach to management in the Army is reflected in the preoccupation with manning the "liability" and the rigidity with which career structures are mapped out. These concerns, when they are out of step with the forces of change in the environment, have dysfunctional consequences for personnel management.

The mechanistic concern with job specialisation and pursuit of job-related rather than organisation-related goals, together with the entrenchment of a traditional military philosophy centred on the GSO "core", encourages careerist job behaviour on the part of individuals who might otherwise be motivated to contribute more positively towards the organisational objectives. Difficulties lie in the gap which is deliberately maintained between the GSO "core" and other groups within the Army, in the career structures open to different groups, and in the continuing dominance of the traditional set of "military" officers referred to by Cheeseman. Two examples of the dysfunctional consequences of this situation serve to illustrate the point.

The first example is that of a GSO officer possessing post-graduate qualifications in a special area of direct military application. The officer was considering embarking on further post-graduate study in a field of broader military significance, but hesitated because at his next promotion he could be considered for command. In his view, the active pursuit of further military-related studies was likely to mark him, by the standards of the traditionalist ethos which still determines who shall command, as "too intellectual" for such a position. While senior officers of the Army continually reiterate the need for more, and better, tertiary (including post-graduate) educated officers, it appears that among the officer cohorts from which the future leaders of the service must emerge, there is an underlying feeling that they must appear...
outwardly traditionalist to secure their futures. Because this particular officer wishes to safeguard his opportunities to rise within the military structure, he felt constrained to minimise his involvement in further military-oriented self-development in order to maximise his chances of “punching the ticket” of command.

The second example is that of a sergeant who had made a significant contribution towards the development of an Army computer-based information system while studying for a degree in computing part-time. The sergeant was offered full-time sponsorship to finish his degree, in return for which he was to be managed as a “non-corps asset” indefinitely; further discussion of the meaning of “non-corps asset” established that no concept of a career structure was attached. Once again, there is a demonstrable gap between rhetoric about the need for better educated soldiers and officers, and the provision of career structures which reflect those needs appropriately. Because the sergeant viewed the opportunities open to him within the Army as incompatible with the value that the service claimed to place on the skills that he possessed, he promptly sought discharge and took his skills elsewhere.

These examples highlight just two situations in which educational development, and the quest for development, was in keeping with new standards exopoused by service chiefs. However, the processes of personnel management within the Army did not suggest that the service was poised to capitalise on that investment in education. Even though the individuals were ostensibly what the Army wanted them to be, the organisation either could not ful­fill their reasonable career expectations, or forced them to limit their achievements in deference to the traditional “military” model. Such problems are not confined to the Army. Each service labours to some extent under the limitations of its own traditions.

The Organisational Issue

While the analysis in this article provides only a brief overview of some of the issues raised in the current defence debate, it does suggest that there are ways in which the current problems of the ADF can be fitted to coherent models of change. The analysis also points to possible sources of dissatisfaction within the services. Other models might have been used to illustrate different aspects of the personnel problem, but Jones’ model of change is useful because it allows a distinction to be drawn between organisational change in areas under the direct control of defence chiefs, and those in which there is greater socio-political input. Applying Herzberg’s model of work motivation in conjunction with the results of current research into attrition from the services, the analysis underlines the criticality, from a personnal perspective, of the management of change in areas under military control. But is this reason enough to conclude that a real personnel management problem exists?

Australian defence planning has come under close scrutiny in recent years in a number of Government-commissioned reports and papers.
None of those papers has reported favourably on the planning process; Babbage describes it as "patchy and rudderless," approached incrementally and often without a clear end in view. Such criticism is generally applied to the highest levels of planning activity and major equipment acquisitions.

With obvious problems at the highest levels of planning, problems at the lower levels of the organisation must be anticipated. Indeed, it is a basic tenet of organisation that the consequences of inadequate strategic management will be magnified rather than diminished through implementation at lower organisational levels. As a result, we should expect, rather than be dismayed, to find that personnel problems are just as much connected with higher level defence planning as are the more obvious issues of force structure and equipment. Certainly, the application of organisation theory to the situation existing in the Army suggests a mismatch between the traditional military philosophies which determine how jobs and careers will be managed, and the expectations of the new generation of service personnel. But this problem is confined neither to the Army nor the ADF. Similar observations have been made in relation to other defence forces sharing similar military traditions to the ADF, and the issues of job satisfaction and professionalism in the modern military have been considered at length. Most important, from the perspective of this article, are those deficiencies in personnel practice associated with higher level planning in the ADF, which have been clearly identified by critics within the services.

Why is it then, that the ADF has been so slow to respond to its personnel problems? It is not because defence chiefs reject change. The services have undergone major changes with the adoption of new technology and a growing emphasis on education; higher defence leadership has been instrumental in introducing these changes. But change in the services is constrained by the incremental nature of the planning process, and the incremental approach suggests limited perspectives on change itself. This situation — typical of the mechanistic organisation — continues because the skills of the traditional military officer are not sufficient to deal with contemporary challenges.

What is needed in the ADF today is a better understanding of the technological and social forces acting on the services, and of the implications that these forces have for personnel within the ADF. The way the ADF is structured and manned must change if it is to optimise its utilisation of the new technology; and the way defence personnel at all levels are managed will need to be reviewed. There is no need for the ADF to abandon its traditions, but there is a need to make the traditional military forms relevant for a modern defence force. As the Chief of Defence Staff of the Canadian Defence Force recently observed, the services simply cannot afford to "march backwards into the future."
theory. The separation between feelings towards the job itself and feelings about the conditions under which the work is performed were demonstrated quite clearly in the 1975 study of Australian workers and work attitudes by Emery and Phillips. See Emery, F.E., and Phillips, C., *Living at Work*, AGPS, 1976.


17. The contention is supported by current research which suggests that although dissatisfaction with pay and conditions is most frequently given as the reason for quitting the Army, assessments of job satisfaction and career opportunities are a better predictor of the decision to quit. See Hodge, *op cit.*, pp. 12-13.


24. As Van Gelder indicated, the statement that the Army was “not adequately prepared to meet the demands of the future” was a less than satisfactory conclusion in a report supposedly addressed to the future development of the officer ranks. See Van Gelder, M.M., “Review Article: An Appraisal of the Regular Officer Development Committee (RODC) Report”, *Defence Force Journal*, No. 18, September/October 1979, pp. 52-60.


28. To what extent this feeling pervades other Defence Forces is not known. However, the Canadian Defence Force looking to its requirements for officer professional development based on an assessment that far fewer traditional "military" officers will be required on the modern battlefield, and that the most effective leaders of the future will not necessarily be in the traditional "military" mould. See Manson, P.D., "Officer Professional Development", *Canadian Defence Quarterly*, Volume 17, No. 1, Summer 1987, pp., 13-20.


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**US Aircrew Training in Australia**

The Minister for Defence, Mr Kim Beazley, has announced adjustments to the long-standing arrangements for United States B52 navigation training flights over Australia.

Under the revised arrangements, B52 training flights will now be conducted by groups of up to three aircraft instead of the present practice of flying in groups of two.

"Commensurate with this change," Mr Beazley said, "at the request of the US Air Force, I have agreed to an increase from 16 to 24 aircraft a month in the number of B52 aircraft that may conduct low level training flights over Australia."

The number of associated B52 landings at Darwin each month will also increase from 4 to 6 in line with the revised arrangement.

Mr Beazley said that the training flights would continue to be conducted by the B52G aircraft operated by the 43rd Bomb Wing stationed at Guam.

"The training techniques used by the 43rd Bomb Wing are being modified in accordance with the USAF announcement on May 11, 1988, that the Wing would be the first of the four B52 wings to convert to conventional operations in late 1988," Mr Beazley said.

"Since these training flights started in 1980, the B52s have participated in many ADF exercises, providing our personnel with valuable training that would not be otherwise available."

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Peter Jesser is a previous contributor to the Journal. A former Warrant Officer in the Army, he was discharged in 1988 after eighteen years service in a variety of postings involving personnel and records management. He is now employed as a Lecturer in Management at the Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education in Toowoomba."
Some Lessons Learnt by the Australian Army in Timor During World War Two

By Major G. Hourn, Aust Inf.

Introduction

War Cabinet's decision in 1941 to occupy Timor was to result in military disaster, with the exception of the experience of the 2/2 and 2/4 Independent Companies in Portuguese Timor. The exception is instructive.

The independent companies were not committed to fixed positions and were well trained as mobile units to fight a guerrilla war against superior forces. This resulted in a highly effective campaign which achieved results out of all proportion to the size of the units employed.

The role assigned to the Australian units in Dutch Timor was totally different to that of the Independent companies. In Portuguese Timor units were to defend large areas against Japanese invasion with resources which were entirely inadequate. The role of denying the Japanese control of territory was based on a strategy which was unrealistic and this resulted in the defeat of the Australian Force in Dutch Timor.

Background to the Operations in Timor

An Australian Chiefs of Staff appreciation in February 1941 deduced that AIF units should garrison various locations to the north-east and north-west of Australia. Subsequently, Australian political and military leaders adopted a strategy of defending forward air bases which were seriously deficient in air strength. Such a strategy, of holding fixed positions by ground forces, neglected the fact that an enemy would have control of the sea and air and would be able to plan the timing, location and strength of its operations.

Timor, situated no more than 840 kilometres from Darwin, had two main airfields in 1941. At Koepang in the Dutch section was a first class aerodrome. A smaller one was located at Dili, the capital of the eastern, Portuguese, part of the island. Timor was therefore an early objective of the Japanese, who landed both at Koepang and Dili little more than two months after the attack on Pearl Harbor and the declaration of war.

Australian Forces in Timor

A battalion group, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel W.W. Leggatt DSO, MC, was tasked to defend Timor. This group totalled about 2000 men of all ranks and was known as Sparrow Force. Sparrow Force consisted of 2/40 Battalion, 2/2 Independent Company, 2/1 Heavy Battery with two six-inch guns, 79 Light Anti Aircraft Battery with six Bofors, an anti-tank troop with four two-pounders and engineer, medical and service detachments. The only air force on the island was an understrength RAAF squadron with some Hudson bombers.

Sparrow Force arrived at Koepang in Dutch Timor on 12 December 1941. Two days later the 2/2 Independent Company re-embarked and sailed with a Dutch contingent to Dili. The remainder of Sparrow Force began preparing for a defensive action around Koepang against a Japanese invasion.

The Japanese Invasion of Timor

Singapore surrendered to the Japanese on 15 February 1942 and on 19 February the Japanese landed 5000 troops in the vicinity of Koepang and 1000 at Dili, with successive waves of reinforcements close behind the initial assaults.

The Japanese used veteran troops for the invasion of Timor and included 630 paratroops who landed in two drops. The Japanese also had light tanks.

Operations in Dutch Timor

Against such odds the result for Sparrow Force in Dutch Timor was inevitable. For four days Sparrow Force fought eastwards from Koepang to gain the wider portion of the island and more room to manoeuvre. Their progress was greatly impeded by the paratroops who slowed the retreat so that the enemy were able to envelop on both flanks. Japanese tanks then moved forward from the west to complete the encirclement. Leggatt was forced to surrender.

Leggatt and his troops fought well. Initially tied down in a defence role the battalion group never did have a chance of doing any more than delaying its eventual defeat by superior,
Operations in Portugese Timor

The strength of 2/2 Independent Company consisted of 327 men of all ranks when the Japanese landed a force of about 1000 men in and around Dili. The Japanese force was later increased to 6000 men.

The men of the 2/2 Company hit hard at the first Japanese to land and, after attempting to sabotage the airfield, withdrew into the nearby hills and commenced guerilla operations. This involved incessant ambushing and raiding whilst living off the country. The company conducted these operations as a coherent and disciplined force, and with great skill.

For months the Australian Government was unaware that the company had not surrendered, until they built a radio transmitter from odd parts and established communications with Darwin.

The early hit and run guerilla tactics set the pattern for succeeding operations for the 2/2 Company and later the 2/4 Independent Company which replaced it. The Australians attacked the enemy almost at will and avoided two major Japanese offensives designed to destroy them. In 13 months, until they were evacuated to Australia by sea, the Australian companies killed about 1500 Japanese for the loss of only 40 of their own men. The effect of these operations on the Japanese High Command was out of all proportion to the size of the Australian unit. The Japanese committed the 48th Division of 15000 experienced troops to reinforce the existing garrison of about 6000 men. Of great significance was that this occurred at a time when the Japanese advance had been halted in Burma, bitter fighting was in progress in Papua and America forces had landed at Guadalcanal.

Few soldiers in history can claim to have achieved greater success as part of such a small force. The campaign in Portugese Timor stands as an example of how operations can be conducted successfully in the face of overwhelming odds. It also stands in stark contrast to the Australian operations in Dutch Timor.

Main Lesson Learnt in Portugese Timor

The success of guerilla warfare operations was the main lesson learnt by the Australian Army in Portugese Timor. This was reflected in the ability of a small, properly trained and equipped unit to inflict casualties on the enemy totally out of proportion to its size. This also caused the enemy to commit large forces in an attempt to counter Australian operations at a critical stage of the war.

This lesson became particularly poignant as contingency plans for the use of ground forces in a guerilla role throughout Timor, rather than to defend fixed positions, were never considered. The 2/2 Independent Company was initially allocated to reinforce Sparrow Force whose main role was to defend the two airfields.

Main Lesson Learnt in Dutch Timor

The most significant lesson learnt by Australian political and military leaders following operations in Dutch Timor was the serious weakness inherent in the strategy of committing 'penny packet' garrisons to defend forward air bases without air cover. It became clear, even at the time, that defence of a network of strategic points by isolated small garrisons did not deny or sufficiently delay the enemy to justify the sacrifice of units that would have been valuable if concentrated elsewhere. It is interesting to note that at the same time reinforcements were attempting to reach Timor on 15 February, General Sturdee, the Chief of the General Staff, wrote: "So far in this war against Japan we have violated the principle of concentration of forces in our efforts to hold numerous small localities with totally inadequate forces."

The perceived Japanese threat to Australia did nothing to deter or reverse what may seem a willingness to expend a poorly equipped small garrison on a poorly planned operation. There appears to have been a great deal of time during 1941 for consideration of tactical requirements within the general strategic policies laid down for the defence of the islands to the north of Australia, such as Timor. The outcome of neglecting proper consideration of strategic and tactical options should have been evident long before the outbreak of war in the Pacific on 7th December 1941. A simpler possibility is that Japan's entry into the war caught Australia short.

Conclusion

Australian military leaders of the time seem open to severe criticism for their handling of operations in Timor in 1941 and early 1942.
There appears to have been more than adequate time in 1941 for consideration of tactical and strategic requirements for the defence of Timor. It had long been obvious that a network of isolated 'penny packet' garrisons like those in Timor was no substitute for concentrated naval and air power. It took the defeat of Sparrow Force to drive home this lesson.

Australian military leadership proved incompetent in consciously developing training requirements and tactics appropriate to a situation where naval and air power would be weak or non-existent, and where small army units would face overwhelming enemy superiority. It was mainly due to circumstances, and not good planning, that enabled the 2/2 Independent Company to be in a position to conduct guerilla warfare against the Japanese. The overwhelming success of such operations is a lesson that should be well learnt by the Australian Army.

NOTES

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AUSTRALIA'S PERILOUS YEAR. By Colonel John Buckley OBE. (Published by the Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, for the Department of Defence.

Reviewed by Frank Hanily, former Editor of "Mufti"

FREEDOM, that priceless possession which underscored Australia's Bicentenary, has sadly, been too often taken for granted, and those who fought to preserve it too easily forgotten.

Just how perilously close we were to the loss of this way of life 47 years ago, is revealed by Colonel John Buckley in "Australia's Perilous Year", an absorbing 64-page journal of 12 riveting chapters.

That fateful period, January 1942-January 1943, marked the gravest threat to Australian in its 200 year history when a ruthless Japanese enemy was at our doorstep, hell bent on invading Australian soil.

Colonel Buckley is well known to readers of this journal and of the RSL journal "Mufti" for his authoritative reviews of many books of Army content. He aims to bring home to our younger generation and migrant citizens a clear perception of the danger Australia faced at that time and an awareness of the desperate struggle to protect the freedom they enjoy today.

Few writers of that period are better qualified than the author to record the events that so dramatically highlighted it. Colonel Buckley was involved in much of the action, serving in the AIF in the Middle East, New Guinea, France and Germany. He was personally known to the military leaders and Defence Department heads and served under many of them.

Like them he shared the painful realisation of the deplorable state of our defences when war with Germany broke out in 1939. The Army was in a parlous state as was the RAAF. Our outer defences were practically non-existent as he discovered when sent to Darwin shortly after the outbreak of hostilities to install some fire control facilities to enable the obsolete coast defence guns to be used. The RAN was a little better off in that it at least had a few ships.

This was the scenario which marked the emergence of John Curtin, first as leader of the Labor Party in opposition, and later to prove the greatest Prime Minister in this nation's history.

Colonel Buckley describes him as the most patriotic Australian ever to emerge in our first 200 years. No one could question this.

Curtin's role in opposition is well documented, his transition from "pacifist" to "great war time leader" explained, and his role as Prime Minister highlighted when he mobilised the whole of Australia and led it to final victory against Japan.

His courageous stand on issues he believed to be in the interest of his country for which he had a passionate love, his agonising concern for the welfare of those fighting beyond its shores and his strong faith in their officers left a lasting impression on the author.

He tells of Curtin's demand for the relief of the members of the 9th Division in Tobruk and his inflexible stand on this issue in the face of Churchill's opposition.

The journal highlights the disagreements between Curtin and Churchill over the recalls of AIF servicemen from the Middle East and the role played by General Vernon Struddee CGS, to prevent their diversion to Burma. Colonel Buckley was in that convoy and recall its delay at Colombo while cables were being exchanged between the two Prime Ministers.

Curtin enjoyed the support and friendship of General Blamey, Sturdee, and Secretary of the Department of Defence, Frederick Shedden. The four comprised the team which amounted to successful leadership.

"Australia's Perilous Year" recalls the attack on Pearl Harbor and later in January 1942, the fall of Singapore, exposing the myth of its impregnability and heralding the threat to Australia. Curtin's persistence with Roosevelt and his radio broadcast to the American people which preceded the arrival of MacArthur in Australia as Supreme Commander of the South West Pacific Area make interesting reading.
Colonel Buckley provides authoritative reports on the Coral Sea and Midway Battles, the land battles in New Guinea and the decisive victory at Milne Bay where a ferocious enemy was repulsed, marking the first decisive defeat experienced by the Japanese on land.

One chapter of this journal devoted to jungle warfare reveals the appalling conditions experienced by the troops fighting in this theatre. Colonel Buckley had opportunities to compare active service conditions in New Guinea, Middle East, France and Germany and is convinced beyond doubt the very worst of those theatres of operations was New Guinea.

Colonel Buckley displayed considerable skill by highlighting all the issues and important events of the period in a 64-page journal which he produced as a special commemoration of Australia's Bicentenary.

A foreword by Prime Minister Hawke commends him for such a timely and valuable contribution to the nation's Bicentenary.

I hope Colonel Buckley's suggestion that some public institution will be named in honor of the nation's greatest Prime Minister, will receive speedy and favorable consideration.

This journal should be in every library and I wish it could be studied in every Australian household.

AUSTRALIA'S PERILOUS YEAR - JANUARY 1942-JANUARY 1943. SPECIAL ISSUE OF THE DEFENCE FORCE JOURNAL. By John Buckley OBE, ED. Published by the Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, for the Department of Defence.

Reviewed by Harry Powell

Colonel John Buckley is well known to readers of "Mufti" as the regular reviewer of military publications. Also, he is a regular contributor to other publications, particularly the Defence Force Journal in which he has written articles on many of Australia's military and political leaders. As a special Commemoration of Australia's Bicentenary, the Defence Force Journal invited Colonel Buckley to write an article for a special issue on "Australia's Perilous Year". It is doubtful if there is anyone more qualified to write of that period, January, 1942 to January, 1943, which is, without argument, the most perilous and most important single year in Australia's two hundred years of settlement. Not only was he involved in much of the action, but he was known personally by the military leaders, and served under many of them.

There have been hundreds of books written about the Second World War. However, this small Journal of 12 Chapters and only 64 pages encapsulates, perhaps more than any previous work, the policies, frustrations and victories which led to the final defeat of Japan and enabled Australia to remain free. The article defines the leading roles played by political and military leaders, particularly Curtin, Shedden, MacArthur, Blamey, Sturdee and Herring. Before launching into the events of the period the Author gives a brilliant description in Chapters 1 and 2 of the background leading to the entry of Japan into the War, and the folly of "Fortress Singapore". John Curtin became Prime Minister in October, 1941, and he began to lay the plans which saw the Australian Divisions returned to Australia, against Churchill's wishes, and the invitation to the United States of America, in December, 1941, to set up Bases in Australia, which led to MacArthur's arrival and appointment as Supreme Commander.

The Author's description of the frightful conditions experienced by the Troops in New Guinea under the heading of "Service Conditions" in Chapter 10 is one which all servicemen who served in those areas will find deeply memory-provoking. He concludes by saying that he is convinced that the very worst theatre of war operations experienced by Australian Troops during WW2 was in New Guinea. Colonel Buckley gives superb descriptions of the various major battles, and of the part played by the various Divisional, Brigade, Battalion and Company Commanders, including the disagreements and tensions which existed at the higher levels.

It is hoped that this special issue of the Defence Force Journal will have a very wide circulation, particularly to the A.D.F. Academy, tertiary education bodies and schools — in fact, I feel that it should be in every school library throughout Australia.

It is interesting to see that the Foreword is written by the Prime Minister, and I hope that he makes it compulsory reading for all Ministers and Parliamentarians. Whoever reads
it will gain a true perspective of the perils and dangers faced by Australia and the Free World almost 50 years ago, and the debt that is owed to all who fought for freedom.

One of the things that has surprised this reviewer is, that although this was a Bicentennial Project, the Author has researched and written this absorbing article in a completely honorary capacity.

When you have read it, I am sure that you will agree that the Nation owes Colonel Buckley a deep debt of gratitude. The Department of Defence is to be congratulated on sponsoring the project — try and get a copy soon, as I believe distribution is limited.

**ARMY AUSTRALIA: AN ILLUSTRATED HISTORY.** By George Odgers (Child & Associates, $39.95).

George Odgers' *Army Australia* is a worthy complement to the magnificent *Army Tattoo* which was one of the the best events of the Bicentenary.

Odgers, a former WA journalist, soldier, and head of historical studies at the Defence Department, deserves every congratulation for a most handsome volume which, within the limitations of what a single book can encompass, seems notably comprehensive and accurate.

Many of the classic pictures of the Australian Army at war are reproduced as well as some little known pictures from campaigns like the Maori wars.

This is one of the best selections I have seen of Australian military photographs and paintings. Colonial volunteer troops, proud in their uniforms, contrasted with Bruce Fletcher's painting of the Battle of Long Tan, provide food for thought worth thousands of words.

In dealing with the earliest days of Australia's military defence Odgers even remembers the tiny fort at Albany and Perth's first garrison (with one officer and 66 men), a good test of any book's comprehensiveness. He also makes the point that the notorious Rum Corps of early New South Wales was actually quite efficient.

The First and Second World Wars are dealt with comprehensively, as are the wars in Korea, Malaysia and Vietnam, and the history of the peace-time army.

Odgers also raises issues other historians have glossed over, such as whether some of the Australian campaigns against Japanese-held islands at the end of World War II (which cost far more Australian lives than Vietnam ever did), had any point.

Odgers combines wide knowledge with the ability to treat complex matters freshly and lucidly.

In the chapter dealing with Vietnam, for example, he avoids glib judgements and his conclusion differs from the junk thought peddled at large about the Vietnam War.

Odgers points out that although Saigon fell in 1975: "Those Australians who fought in the Vietnam War and won all their battles helped buy time for larger, much more populous and significant areas of South-East Asia closer to Australia to achieve stability.

"Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore had time to consolidate while in Indonesia the Communist Party was virtually eliminated and "confrontation abandoned.""

This excellent book is one every Australian should own.

**MEMOIRS OF GENERAL JEAN V. ALLARD. AUTOBIOGRAPHY, WRITTEN IN CONJUNCTION WITH SERGE BERNIER, UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA PRESS, VANCOUVER, 1988.**

Reviewed by: Lt Col R.E. Bradford

Quite often one of the advantages of reading memoirs of foreign soldiers, is the ability to read about mistakes or successes that may have occurred in those forces, whilst the author was part of the services. In the case of this book, General Allard was CDS of the Canadian Army Forces during two fairly dramatic activities, that of unification of the three services into one, and the attempt to assimilate into the defence force French speaking Canadians into French speaking units. Both issues had considerable controversy associated with their introduction, and consequently given the position of the author, the reader could rightly expect some meaningful comments on
how the problems were solved. Unfortunately, the book offers a great deal, but delivers little. General Allard was born in Canada to a French speaking family and joined the Canadian Militia in 1933. Originally an Armoured Corps Officer, his career developed quickly during World War II, where he eventually commanded an Infantry Brigade. On the completion of the war, he was posted as Canadian Military attache to the Soviet Union, a posting which could excite interest in a reader. He again commanded an Infantry Brigade in Korea in 1953/54 and after a series of postings in Canada, eventually commanded the British 4th Infantry Division in Germany. He eventually became CDS in July 1966 and subsequently left the service in September 1969.

As one can see by this outline of postings he had a most interesting career, deserving of memoirs, which were first published in French in 1985. Many references in the book indicate that it was written for Canadians familiar with the internal political events (and associated players) of the time. He regularly mentions names, dates and places, but offers no explanation of them. Consequently, without this assumed knowledge of Canadian political events, I was lost at times with their relevance. Although, relatively easy to read, the book is somewhat stilted in construction — this may be due to the translation from original French. Description of events, from operations to peacetime soldiering are simple, but lack the depth of comment that military historians appreciate. Without more detailed descriptions and depth of thought, the book is difficult to recommend to any reader. If more discussion had occurred on the area of unification of the three services, this may have been different.


Reviewed by Lieutenant Colonel R.E. Bradford

This biography was an attempt by the author in comparing Canada's most famous soldier of World War I with other soldiers. The author Professor A.M.J. Hyatt of the University of Western Ontario never quite achieves this aim because of a variety of reasons, but in his attempt to do so produces a very readable book.

General Sir Arthur Currie was not a professional soldier, and entered the war with an appointment of Brigade Commander in the Canadian Expeditionary Force. As a political appointee he controlled the destiny of 4000 men, having never commanded more than 400 in peacetime. During the war he rose to finally being the Corps Commander of the Canadian Corps of four divisions.

The paucity of information both private and public makes the telling of the Currie story most difficult. On more than one occasion the author mentions the fact that such information when it was available was sparse and often trivial. Currie did not keep diaries (other than appointment diaries) and was not one for personal letters which could throw any light on his personal nature. Quite often this gives rise to generalities in the book when describing his character, which detracts from its overall quality. This could have been overcome by describing in more detail the achievements of the formation he commanded and how they were achieved — in this way we may have learnt a little more of the man by way of his leadership style and effects on the results.

One aspect of the book of interest to Australians, is the authors occasion comparison of Currie to Sir John Monash as Corps Commanders. Both the men were colonials and in civil life when the war broke out. Both proved themselves to be excellent military leaders and went to the top during the conflict. The author also suggests that they both struggled to the top in spite of their civilian background and radical notions. While of interest no detailed comparison occurred in the book, and in fact the author only hinted at a comparison, not really dissecting the topic.

The book is easy to read, well composed and provides battle descriptions which are easy to follow. The inclusion of more detailed maps than those provided would have been of benefit but do not restrict the readers ability to follow the action described. All in all I found the book interesting, and while it did not develop some arguments as far as I would have hoped it did provide an insight into the man and to the Canadian activities of World War I.
Defence Force Journal

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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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