Defence Force Journal

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

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The Western Australia-based submarine HMAS Oxley seen departing its base, the HMAS Stirling fleet support facility on Garden Island in Cockburn Sound.
Letters to the Editor

Australia's Perilous Year
Dear Sir,

I refer to the letter from Robert Hyslop which appeared in the January/February issue of the Defence Force Journal and through which the writer not only makes an attempt to discredit "Australia's Perilous Year" by Colonel John Buckley but also makes a deliberate attempt to belittle the author as well.

Defence Department Heads and Defence Service Leaders who clearly understood the situation about which Buckley writes would be horrified at the malicious taunt to a soldier who was involved in the action at that time and who served under most of the leaders named in the story. I am sure he would be far better qualified than Hyslop to express opinion on the policies and strategies as they related to Australia during World War II.

To complain that the article is written from a local point of view is evidence that Hyslop even misunderstands the title. Did he expect Buckley to write it from Churchill's or Roosevelt's point of view?

There is no evidence to indicate the article reveals a misunderstanding of defence policy, and for Hyslop to suggest that Buckley failed to recognise that Singapore was only a base to support the fleet and the RN the supposed key to the defence of the region is too silly for words.

To suggest Buckley praises General Sturdee (his father-in-law), and is over zealous in his criticism of others is a cowardly slur on the man's character. Hyslop conveniently overlooks the glowing terms the author adopts towards Curtin, Chifley, Gowrie, Blamey, Berryman, Wootten, Field, Shedden, Herring, Rowell, Vasey and others. Buckley is also accused of repeating discredited myths on Australia's defence policy. What were these myths — what does he mean? This is nonsense.

Hyslop's claim that the Coral Sea and Midway Battles stopped the possibility of enemy invasion in 1942 completely misunderstands the situation. Historical record reveals that General Macarthur's expressed opinion was that the threat of invasion was finally eliminated by the Battle of the Bismark Sea in March 1943, some 9 months after Midway, and it is authoritatively stated Shedden agreed with Macarthur.

Hyslop also claims that Buckley provides no detail of how Australia would have been disadvantaged by a change of the Allied strategy — "Beat Hitler First" (the strategy to fight a holding war in the Pacific) but he fails to understand that Curtin and Macarthur did agree with a holding war, but needed manpower and equipment to make this possible. That's why Sturdee was sent to Washington. Hyslop is all at sea about the war in the Pacific and his narrow view does not help.

The author credits Curtin with initiating the close relationship with the United States in war. Hyslop scoffs at this and asks: "What of Menzies and Casey?" I suggest he takes his blinkers off and reads Curtin's historic message of 27 December, 1941 (p 17), and his radio appeal to the people of the US of 14 March, 1942 (pp 28-30). Hyslop does not provide any authority for his comments — in fact this applies to most of his letter.

His jibe at the selection of Prime Minister Hawke for the foreword to the article is made in very poor taste. Mr Hawke's admiration for Curtin is widely known and it is appropriate that his comment should join the expressed opinions of Hughes, Menzies, Bruce, Fadden and Hasluck in recognising Curtin's achievements.

As one privileged to review the article for this journal, I feel sure the views expressed by Hyslop will not be taken seriously by your readers, most of whom will have found flaws in his letter which is out of place in a professional journal.

The Defence Department is to be commended for publishing the story of "Australia's Perilous Year". It has made a substantial contribution to Australia's history by an author best qualified to do so.

Frank Hanily.

Editor's Note:
Frank Hanily is a well known Military Historian and book reviewer. He was the Editor of Mufti for some 15 years and is an Honourary Life Member of the AJA.
Dear Sir,

Robert Hyslop's attack on Colonel John Buckley's *Australia's Perilous Year* was depressing and mean-spirited.

Buckley provides a concentrated focus on what he rightly distinguishes as the most dangerous period this nation has known. He speaks with the authority of one who was actually there, and who was on closely trusted terms with many of the leaders of the day — a privileged conduit for accurate information and matured opinion. We do not have to agree with every word he writes, but we are obliged to be grateful that he has given us such vital material.

Since that crisis year of 1942 John Buckley has not ceased to read widely and to reflect deeply on these matters, and I for one keep that issue of the *Defence Force Journal* handy in my study as an invaluable quick reference.

I don't know where Hyslop was, but I was there too, albeit much junior to John Buckley. Hyslop may admire our "defence development that began in 1937". Much good it did me! The only light machine gun available for training my lot in 1941 was the Hotchkiss gun, a weapon that was state-of-the-art in 1890. Upgrading even to Lewis guns seemed marvellous; I didn't even see a Bren until April 1942, in Papua.

Given space, I could dismantle Hyslop's letter paragraph by paragraph, but why bother, when any real student of the subject can strip it for himself.

Peter Ryan

**Editor's Note:**

Peter Ryan was the Director of the Melbourne University Press for 27 years. He is the author of *Encyclopaedia of Papua New Guinea, Fear Drive My Feet* and other well known books. He is recognised as an outstanding book reviewer on military subjects and writes special features for the *Melbourne Age*.

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**The Churchill Tank**

Dear Sir,

The review of the Churchill Tank vehicle history (LT D.A. Biglands, Issue 71, July/August 1988) has a misleading statement which must be corrected.

The reviewer stated that the "Churchill was phased out in 1942 because it was no longer capable of being developed to meet the technical advances of its German equivalent". That statement is grossly incorrect for the reasons discussed below.

Being an infantry tank, it had no German equivalent; since the Panzers were designed either as a compromise between armour and speed (Mk III to Mk V) or as a heavy mobile anti-tank gun carrier (Mk VI and Mk VI Type II).

The Churchill I, armed with a turret-mounted 2 pdr AT gun and hull-mounted 3 in howitzer was trialled at Dieppe and was found to be unsuitable, being phased out in 1942. The Churchill Mks III and IV were upgunned to a 6 pdr and were used in the Tunisian campaigns. One version of the Mk IV was retrofitted with 75mm guns recovered from battle-damaged Shermans.

The most numerous version was the Mk VII, which was improved again and used in the NW Europe campaign and postwar. In fact, the Churchill was the most numerous British tank in Normandy. Many were converted to specialist vehicles, including ARV, AVRE, bridging, flamethrower, mineclearer and demolition.

In conclusion, it can be seen that the Churchill was not phased out in 1942 and could be developed further. It had no German equivalent, but could be utilised to perform many tasks. Unfortunately, I haven't read the book in question, so I cannot state whether the reviewer or publication is at fault.

D.G. Waye

Warrant Officer Class Two

School of Signals

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**Decline of Military Professionalism**

Dear Sir,

Dr. Hugh Smith's thoughtful, wide ranging and provocative article on the decline of military professionalism in Australia (DFJ January/February 1989) deserves close study and consideration by all military professionals.

Of prime importance in considering the current state of military professionalism in Australia is to not loose sight of the raison d'être of the military, that is, to, if so required by the state, engage in military combat. In peacetime this involves preparation for war; prevention of war is not a role for the military. Deterrence, peacekeeping and surveillance are
not military tasks per se, even though they involve military forces. Deterrence is a political, not a military, strategy for preventing war; peacekeeping, with its emphasis on minimal use of military force, is a distortion of normal military practice; and surveillance can be carried out equally well by a civilian agency.

Dr Smith is quite correct in pointing to the difficulties for the military in maintaining a sense of purpose during a period of prolonged peace, such as we currently have the good fortune to be experiencing. Indeed, it is this lack of purpose that is at the heart of current dissatisfaction within the ADF, not conditions of service. What the military in Australia must do is to accept this situation and to learn to live with it. Thus the military needs to see its role as the maintenance of military skills, as a basis for expansion, rather than the maintenance of operational readiness.

At one point Dr Smith says: “Strategy and tactics, too, may cease to be the preserve of the military professional.” He then goes on to quote the case of the sinking of the Argentine warship, Belgrano in the recent Falklands War. Quite clearly, the decision to order the sinking of the Belgrano was an issue of grand strategy and very rightly one for the British Cabinet, involving as it did the scope and extent of the war. The tactical aspects of carrying out the order were, rightly, left to the submarine commander.

Dr Smith appears to see military professionalism as the exclusive preserve of the full time career soldier (sailor and airman). Yet there is no reason why the citizen soldier should not lay claim to being a military professional. Dr Smith also makes much of the civilianisation of the military as evidence of the decline of military professionalism. There is nothing new in having civilians within a military organisation. Here it could be argued that everybody in a military organisation is “of the military” whether wearing a uniform or not. Also, to date civilianisation has been restricted to the non-combatant support role. When we have infantrymen who are not in the military, then we certainly will have reached the end of the (military professional) line!

N.F. Ashworth
Air Commodore (Ret)

Exercises Kangaroo 89 Sketchbook
Australia’s biggest peacetime military exercise, Kangaroo 89, will take place across the ‘top end’ of the continent from July to September. Leading defence and combat illustrator Jeff Isaacs will join more than 24,000 Australian and United States defence personnel from Army, Navy and Air Force services to capture the action in a 48-page souvenir softcover book of the exercise to be produced by AGPS Press in association with the Department of Defence.

Exercises Kangaroo 89 Sketchbook will be dedicated to the servicemen and servicewomen participating in the exercise and will pay tribute to their commitment to the defence of Australia’s northern shores. It is scheduled for publication in November and will sell for $8.95 a copy.

In anticipation of this exciting project, the Australian Government Publishing Service is delighted to announce a special pre-publishing discounted price of $6.95 per copy including postage and handling for mail orders received with payment by 29 September, 1989.

AGPS Mail Order Sales, GPO Box 84, Canberra, ACT 2601 by 29 September, 1989.

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Desine and Its Place in Defence Computing

By Commodore D. S. Ferry, RAN

The DESINE project has been controversial within Defence, in the media and Commonwealth Parliament. This article describes the project and its Defence policy and planning surroundings.

The Scene
Picture Defence computing ten years ago. The difficult conversion from the Honeywell to Univac (now Unisys) mainframe systems had taken a lot of effort and time.

There were new proposals afoot to rationalise the different Services' supply and other Electronic Data Processing (EDP) systems, which were then supported in different ways by the Unisys mainframes and Perkin Elmer (now Concurrent) mini-computers.

There was a large Computer Services Division (CSD) which bought and operated the big systems computers and supported the committee which approved procurement of others.

There were different Defence management systems applied to "administrative" and "operational" computing, even though the boundary between these was blurred.

There were several Defence committees which settled computing, communications policy and purchasing issues.

Studies and Outcomes
Various Defence studies and overseas visits' in 1981, 1984 and 1986 led to a new approach to streamline management of the next generation of computers. The results mainly were these:

- there would be a rationalisation of future procurements to gain advantages of interoperability between computers, and standardisation;
- there would be a decentralisation of the development and operation within Defence of computing systems, to reduce bottlenecks and to improve responsiveness. However, central control of policy and planning would be retained;
- since computing was now becoming intertwined with some communications systems, the two would be managed together as information systems; and
- the distinction between operational and administrative computing would be removed and the two combined.

One outcome was the reformation of the CSD into the Information Systems Policy (ISP) Division in 1987. Policy included that for contingency planning and also the setting of technical standards for computing. The ISP Division was much smaller than the CSD since the CSD Logistics and Manpower Computing Centres had been decentralised to other parts of the Department.

The endorsement of policy and plans proposed by the ISP Division was the business of the new Information Systems Policy Committee, which replaced three earlier committees.

Another outcome of the studies was the Defence EDP Systems Integrated Network Environment (DESINE) project. When a proposal for this project was taken by the Joint Parliamentary Committee of Public Accounts (JPCPA) in 1986, the proposal foreshadowed a computing "environment" for future Defence administrative computing. The major project to lead was the new tri-service supply system (called the Supply Systems Redevelopment Project), with the similar manpower and financial support systems to follow the supply system.

The environment was to be achieved by adopting a set of common standards, matched by standardised hardware, software and communications products.

The proposal, at that time, suggested that acquisition of smaller scale computing might be separate to these big systems. The JPCPA, however, recommended that the smaller scale requirements be added in, and Defence agreed.

The JPCPA recommended also that the DESINE project be split into two phases. In the first phase Defence would engage a contractor to establish and test a contractor "network" (communications and control) architecture. Thence in the second, the hardware, software and so on would be acquired to flesh out the skeleton, utilising products from various contractors. The JPCPA saw this approach as enhancing the prospects for local industry.

But Defence demurred on the grounds that there would be a risk that the integration of
products in the second phase would prove unsuccessful and that the second phase would take more technical capacity than Defence had. The Government accepted the Defence recommendation that the project should have a single phase.

The DESINE Tender

There was thence in Defence a wide deliberation as to what should be the precise scope and nature of the tender. The result was that in March 1987, tenders were called for a 5-year contract for the supply of a proven network architecture with a suitable, proven range of products to cover all Defence requirements except “embedded” (principally weapons) and other specialist systems.

There was also to be commitment by the successful tenderer to Australian and New Zealand content, to tendered discounts, to offer his Open System Interconnection (OSI) (discussed later) products as they were developed and to the supply of technological improvements.

The aim remained to improve the interoperability of computers, so that information in one could be transferred to others efficiently, minimising the need for computer capacity, terminals, communications and other equipment. There were also to be gains from the scale of purchases, common training and mutual computer back-up. The project was to help Defence in its adoption in the longer term of developing international standards for OSI, thereby improving communication between the selected tenderer’s computer networks and those ISO networks of other vendors.

OSI

What is OSI? OSI is the implementation of a set of international standards and vendor products still under development, allowing the computers of one vendor to interoperate successfully with other’s. Defence is committed to OSI, in part so that interoperability of its computers with those of other Australian organisations and its allies (which are also committed to OSI) will be guaranteed; but also so that, after the current contract, prospects of efficient interoperability with other suppliers’ products will be enhanced. This will lead to opening up the Defence “market” later. The standards needed for network management are a few years away yet.

Defence is a participant in selecting which OSI standards are to be utilised in Australia under the Government OSI Profile (GOSIP) campaign, which is led by the Department of Finance.

Master Planning

Defence instituted master planning to parallel DESINE. Information systems master planning aims centrally to identify “corporate” objectives, to analyse what shared information is needed to realise them, where that information should be stored and to where it should be distributed.

The information structure for Defence might identify compatibilities needed between command systems so that battle commanders can exchange information efficiently up and down the line and across the Services. Likewise other interfaces might be needed to allow access by these commanders to information gathered in support systems, such as logistics and intelligence systems. Operational staffs and administrators need efficiently planned computing support to reduce the size of the support tail and its cost, and to improve access to vital information.

Master Planning includes analysis of information requirements and is the basis for assessing the best hardware, software and communications mix for meeting these. Also, it provides a rationale for the assessment of priorities between competing needs for funds.

There needs to be integration of the master planning process with that for implementing programme management and budgeting concepts. It is a complex process for a conglomerate such as Defence, but necessary.

In summary, the master plan should be the basis on which to determine the scope and priority of the Defence computing hardware, software and association communications needs, and should be consistent with the Department’s approach to management of its programmes.

The DESINE Contract and UNIX

There were differing views on how long it would take to get the DESINE concept into place. It transpired that the interval from the time the tenders closed in July 1987 to the date of contract with IBM in February 1989 was longer than had been hoped.

The evaluation was exhaustive. It reduced 62 part-tenderers and 12 full-tenderers (that is, those which offered a full product range) to a short list of three full-tenderers, then later to
the choice of IBM and 21 subcontractors, 13 of these being Australian owned. It was based on a formal methodology established before evaluation commenced. Many interdepartmental discussions (including those with Departments of Industry, Technology and Commerce, Administrative Services and Finance) were needed before the final selection of IBM could be announced. There were some late revised bids which also contributed to delay.

In the meantime, although instructions were issued to minimise purchases pending selection of a contractor, some urgent needs couldn't wait. Amongst these were the Services' needs for extra equipment for support of offices and bases. Hence various ICL, Prime and NCR equipment was bought, quite a lot utilising the emerging operating system called UNIX. The UNIX has some features of simplicity, adaptability and utility which make it well suited for purposes such as office automation (word processing, spread sheets, for example) and some engineering work.

Remember though, that Defence sought a proven and widely-embracing network architecture. It was left to full-tenderers as to whether they offered the UNIX operating system as part of their proven architecture. After elimination of those full-tenderers which did not meet basic requirements of the tender, none of the three remaining offered UNIX as part of its preferred approach to supply the proven network architecture. There were difficulties with internal management of networks which included UNIX, and good network management was fundamental. Hence the inclusion of UNIX would have lowered the overall technical merit of a tender which included it and would have reduced its prospects of being selected. Since none of the full-tenderers offered UNIX as part of its preferred solution, UNIX was not part of the tender outcome and contract.

The evaluation concluded that IBM was a clear winner. Based on estimated quantities of the products and support that it and its subcontractors were expected to supply, together with the technical merits of the products, it had the best cost-effectiveness. It offered a full solution to the range of Defence requirements within its network architecture. It offered the highest potential ANZ content and also it offered more overall in meeting general requirements, such as system security, and commitment to development and supply of Open System Interconnection (OSI) products.

The results of the evaluation were scrutinised within Defence. What resulted was endorsement of the selection and a requirement for a standing offer type of arrangement, whereby Defence could buy as it chose from IBM and its subcontractors. There was also a requirement for some commitments by IBM, principally those mentioned earlier.

The contract was drafted by the Australian Government Solicitor, who advised that it was impractical to have both the purchasing flexibility sought and also to bind IBM and its subcontractors to meet the identified commitments. Binding was needed for Defence to be assured of access to the products it had assessed it required for the whole contract period and for these to be supplied at a contracted discount and with contracted ANZ content.

The prospect of IBM declining to supply products when Defence was partway towards implementing its network could not be accepted. The Commonwealth reportedly has had such an experience with another contractor.

Binding was necessary also for access to IBM technical improvements, including its OSI products, as they were developed.

The end result is a recognised type of period contract but one which is not the "standing offer" type of arrangement normally associated with a period contract.

**SAA/SNA**

In accepting the IBM tender Defence also selected the IBM Systems Network Architecture (SNA) as the proven means of allowing communication between the products listed in the contract and of providing for internal management of the network. In choosing SNA and suitable items from the range of IBM products and at the same time electing to update with the new IBM OSI products, Defence in effect opted for the IBM Systems Application Architecture (SAA) concept, of which SNA is part.

IBM is using this concept to improve transportability of software uses ("applications") across the range of its products from microcomputer to mainframe. At the same time SAA simplifies programming. Defence would be forgoing such advantages were it to stand aloof from SAA developments.

Utilisation of SAA will help, not hinder, Defence realising its OSI objectives.
Contract Implementation

Returning now to the implementation of the contract, what had to be done immediately after contract signature was for IBM to organise its sub-contractors; and for Defence meanwhile to finalise its examination of sub-contractors and to refine the contract product list. This listed products from IBM and sub-contractors which met Defence network architecture requirements. At the same time the instructions on how the contract was to be operated by Defence needed to be formulated, agreed and issued.

The ISP Division, in concentrating earlier on the evaluation, achieved less than it would have liked in master planning and policy development. Likewise, the demands of the Commonwealth commitment to probity, demonstrable objectively and fairness in the evaluation led to a lower emphasis, in comparison, being placed on the plan for the implementation of the contract.

Unfortunately, many of the 40 or so personnel engaged on the DESINE evaluation, some of whom had been contractors or had been borrowed from within Defence, had diminished to eight at the evaluation's end.

It has transpired that the scale of the product list refinement task, involving further technical assessment of some products, subcontractors, prices and ANZ content, has meant that it has taken much longer than expected. Similarly, settling the broad Defence implementation instructions took until 13 June.

The contract, in binding IBM to Defence, similarly bound Defence to IBM. Post-contract, discussions with IBM were necessary to refine how the contract was to be operated, consistent with tender requirements. At the same time these discussions sought to clarify exemptions to apply to purchasing from the contract.

In concluding these discussions there was an exchange of letters between IBM and Defence on 11 April 1989, the Defence letter outlining the circumstances under which Defence may not buy products from the contract even though in some cases these products may be able to meet the technical requirement, or part of it.

Thereafter, there was extensive discussion within the Department to resolve what some thought had been the Department's intentions at the time of the tender with what they perceived was a different result.

It transpired that even though there had been considerable consultation during the period prior to the issue of the request for tender and during the evaluation process, there had been a less than full comprehension in all quarters of the direction the Department was taking, its constraints and implications. The comprehension in some instances was reduced by insufficient expertise being available to some parts of Defence, and also by staff turnover. There was some misunderstanding over technical issues. Also, there had been some lack of definition in the tender, which contributed to differing interpretations later as to what had been intended. The result was that some Services and Defence Offices became troubled about their new perceptions of the implications of the contract.

There is extraordinary diversity of computing requirements and of current computer installations within the Defence conglomerate. Reconciling misunderstandings and resolving residual differences of opinion had their part to play in the delays in issuing the Defence instructions. Since there were contractual overtones to an instruction on acquisition under the contract, settlement of this instruction also involved consultation with the Department of Administrative Services and the Australian Government Solicitor.

The outcome as of mid-June is that the implementation of the contract within Defence has now been settled and the contract product list refinement mainly is complete.

Non-IBM Purchases

Careful control of purchases from other than the DESINE contract, except those for weapons and weapons platform systems, will remain essential to ensure Defence long-term interoperability and standardisation objectives, gains and savings are realised. Solutions to requirements which might be expedient, or cost less in the short-term, or just convenient, need critical examination under the control mechanism.

Defence recognises that on occasion it will pay more under the contract to meet its requirements, partly because of premiums for Australian and New Zealand products (although this is a small element) but also because the contracted range of products, while offering overall cost-effectiveness, does include
products which may be in some instances more expensive than alternatives.

Control is to be exercised by detached and informed review of candidates for exemption from the contract. Those which meet criteria for contract exemption will be examined further to confirm that they are in the broader Defence interest; and especially its intention of early and efficient interoperability of its computer network.

Even where such exemptions are authorised, and the aim is to minimise them, interest will be taken into which of the alternatives on offer comes closest to meeting Defence longer-term standardisation objectives. These include those for OSI.

With experience, the implementation instructions will be adjusted as needed.

Contrary to some reports, Defence will itself decide on exemptions from the contract. Should these decisions be challenged later by IBM there is provision for arbitration.

Defence has provided for intelligence information exchange with allies under the contract by noting in the 11 April 1989 exchange of letters with IBM the special exemption which can be applied to this need. As mentioned earlier, interoperability with allies in the longer-term will be gained through their, and Australian, adoption of OSI standards.

UNIX Further Study
A working party study into UNIX will report in September this year on what should be Defence’s future utilisation of that evolving system and what should happen with existing investments which utilise UNIX.

Were Defence to decide to acquire more UNIX products, further assessment of the relative merits of the various UNIX products probably would be needed. The contract with IBM lists just the UNIX products which allow some interoperability between the non-UNIX network and current UNIX systems. These were sought and evaluated under the tender.

Summary
Our general Defence intention to standardise computing is innovative. The DESINE contract aims for savings and advantages, mainly from interoperability of computers, in advance of implementing OSI standards and products as these become available later. The contract will ease the introduction of OSI standards and suitable IBM products, leading to full interoperability with OSI compliant products from other suppliers.

The contract with IBM places obligations on both Defence and IBM (and its subcontractors) and is consistent with what Defence sought when it went to tender. A primary aim then was to break from previous experience, which had demonstrated the waste of effort and technical difficulties inherent in developing and maintaining special purpose software for networking of equipment from different sources.

The success of the contract depends now though not on the past but on the way Defence manages the implementation of DESINE henceforward.

Given a clear and widespread understanding of the project within Defence, sound DESINE management and some acceleration of master planning, the concept will prove successful and the contract will provide the benefits sought at the time of tender.

Commodore Ferry joined the Information Systems Policy Division in December 1988 and has been its Acting First Assistant Secretary since March 1989. Much of his previous career since joining the Navy in 1953 has been in aircraft engineering. He holds a Master of Science degree and is a fellow of the Institute of Engineers and the Royal Aeronautical Society.
Collectivism in the Australian Defence Force: Military Anathema or Natural Progression?

By Captain G. P. Hogan, Aust Int Corps.

"By the common law no engagement between the Crown and any member of the Forces in respect of services past, present or future can be enforced in any court of law. He holds his position at the pleasure of the Sovereign; he can be dismissed at any time; he can bring no action for damages for wrongful dismissal; nor can he claim to be discharged from his obligations by reason of any alleged breach of duty on the part of the Crown."

- Defence Act 1903

"Serving personnel should have the right to form and be members of associations in respect to their pay and conditions."

- Australian Labor Party Platform 1982

Introduction

The requirement for and feasibility of group representation within the Australian Defence Force (ADF) first became an issue in 1974, when Defence Minister Lance Barnard proposed a Services association along the lines of the West German Forces Association, to provide representation on Service conditions matters. The emergence a decade later of the Armed Forces Federation of Australia (ArFFA), established to represent the interests of all members of the ADF, has generated considerable interest in the question of collectivism in the Services and has evoked a wide range of reactions both within and outside the Defence Force. While many have greeted ArFFA as a positive attempt to gain a measure of collective representation similar to the lobbying powers available through trade unionism in the civil industrial relations arena, others regard the idea of a Services "trade union" as an anathema to the military ethos. Military sociology theory sees ArFFA as a natural progression, an inevitable evolutionary stage in the increasing tendency for the military to take on features of the society within which it operates and of which is a part. This article examines the emergence and significance of military collectivism in the Australian Defence environment within both a national and international sociological context. It also looks at the range of opinions on and reactions to the concept of collectivism in the ADF in an attempt to determine the extent to which ArFFA is a military anathema and/or a natural progression.

Like its trade union counterparts in the civilian context, collectivism in the ADF operates within a military industrial relations system which includes machinery and processes for arbitration on disputes and wage fixation. The current system of Defence Force industrial relations is a relatively recent development and is similar in many respects to the Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission. The establishment of a Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal (DFRT) has provided an open adversarial forum for debate and decision on pay issues, with the ADF as "employee" and the Commonwealth as "employer" arguing their cases in a court-like environment before a Tribunal which makes its decisions based on existing industrial relations guidelines. While a detailed discussion of the features of the current military industrial relations machinery is outside the scope of this article, it is important to place developments in Defence Force group representation against a backdrop of roughly synchronous changes in industrial relations. The establishment of an independent tribunal for dispute settling and salary fixing, and the emergence of a representational body purporting to herald the dawning of "a new era in defence industrial relations" must be considered as interrelated developments. Although this article concentrates on the emergence and significance of collectivism in the ADF, this is by no means seen as exclusive from the burgeoning milieu of defence industrial relations and, where appropriate, reference has been made to the features and machinery of that system.

The term "collectivism" is used throughout this article in preference to "trade unionism." As Graham Pratt has pointed out, "Collectivism embraces all types of employee group-
ings formed to protect the interests of their members and ranges from organizations with very restricted rights to industrial unions with legal protection to undertake industrial action.”

Collectivism is appropriate on more than merely semantic grounds, as the executive and members of ArFFA discourage reference to the Federation as a union, due to its inherent connotations of strident militancy and withholding of labour. Nevertheless, R.K. Lawrence may be correct in stating that: “Federation, association, organisation or under any other name ArFFA represents the traditional aims of trade and professional unions.”

The Australian Military Industrial Experience

The Australian military tradition has its roots in “the Digger image” of the Australian soldier, typified in the qualities of toughness, independence, resourcefulness and egalitarianism. As Pratt points out, “This image of military life involving loyalty, devotion to duty and national service, does not lead itself to military employment being readily perceived as coming within the ambit of industrial relations.” The ADF has traditionally been a conservative element within the Australian community, with industrial relations in the past being typified by a paternalistic employer-employee relationship devoid of any direct participation by employees in the industrial arena. The prosecution of service conditions matters was seen as the responsibility of management and servicemen accepted that management would see to their interests.

In the initial post-war period, management, in the guise of the Treasurer acting on advice from an inter-departmental committee, failed to keep pace with developments in industry. The pattern of service conditions throughout the post-war period was one of deprivation until a national scandal was caused by excessive wastage. A commission such as Dedman, Allison, Kerr, Woodward and Coldham was then set up, producing a major palliative before a restart to the cycle of neglect. Representation of servicemen’s interests up to the 1960s was “essentially based on requests for financial improvements being processed through the military chain of command to the senior staff at the departmental headquarters who in turn took the proposal to the appropriate Committee representative for consideration.”

By the late 1960s, however, the growing industrial sophistication and emerging tendency of ADF personnel to actively pursue their interests dictated the need to appoint a number of independent expert tribunals to examine and adjust conditions of service relativities. This period, then, marked the beginning of a growing disenchantment with the efficacy of the paternalistic system. The establishment of ArFFA and an open adversarial forum for debate and decision in pay issues constitutes an unequivocal repudiation of paternalism, although it is a measure of the conservatism of the ADF that membership is still relatively low. In a article of this scope, it is possible to give only a thumb-nail sketch of the Australian military industrial relations experience and environment which has created the character of collectivism in the ADF. Some mention, albeit equally brief, should also be made of the theories which attempt to explain and predict developments in military sociology.

Military Sociological Theory

Following the Korean war, the academic field of military sociology began to flourish in the US. In general terms, sociologists have belonged to one of two schools concerning the way the military functions — the Huntington school, which sees a military set apart from society, and the Janowitz school, which sees a military not only integrated into society but also incorporating many of its managerial methods. The theories of Samuel P. Huntington are contained in his 1957 text, *The Soldier and the State*, which perceives the military as a state-within-a-state, pursuing the profession of arms in isolation from major societal influences, politically neutral and largely oblivious to the mainstream of social development. Morris Janowitz founded the second school with the publication of his *The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait* in 1960. His military was a politically aware profession, wholly integrated with the society in whose interests it practiced the use of force. As part of society, the Janowitz military contributed much more to the decision-making process, was less passive and more sensitive to social influences than its Huntington counterpart.

While the ADF has traditionally reflected Huntington’s model, it has shown incremental
change towards the Janowitz model since the end of the Vietnam war, when the issue of conscription disappeared from public discussion and the ADF became an all volunteer force. The emergence of collectivism in the Australian industrial relations environment has been seen as a natural progression under Janowitz’s so-called “convergence theory”, which propounded that armies and large civilian organisations were becoming more and more alike, leading to a “narrowing skill differential” between military and civilian elites. As military institutions have become “civilianized” so military managerial practice has moved away from autocratic domination and more toward negotiation and consensus.

Another military sociologist, Charles Moskos, published a refinement of the convergence theory in the late 1970s, in which he described the conceptions of military social organization in terms of two models — institution and occupation. According to Moskos, “An institution is legitimated in terms of values and norms, i.e., a purpose transcending individual self-interest in favor of a presumed higher good. Members of an institution are often viewed as following a calling; they generally regard themselves as being different or apart from the broader society and are so regarded by others . . . When grievances are felt, members of an institution do not organize themselves into interest groups.” Moskos contends that in the calling setting, redress of grievances takes the form of recourse to superiors, with its implications of trust in the paternalism of the institution to take care of its own. He considers that features of the military such as fixed terms of enlistment, non-cash benefits and the liability for 24 hour duty without additional remuneration exemplify the calling format.

Moskos’ alternative to an institutional orientation to military service is the occupational model, which emphasizes priority of self-interest rather than that of the employing organization. N.A. Jans explains the natural progression of this model: “Consistent with the primacy of self-interest is a belief in collectivism as a means of achieving personal goals in conditions of service matters. This is exemplified by the representation of interests by professional or craft associations or by trade unions.” In an extension of this calling and occupation model, Moskos claims that changes in

Collectivism in European and US Armed Forces

The central factor which has influenced the nature of military collective representation in Western European countries has been the predominance of governments of a social democratic nature in these nations since World War II. K.D. Morgan has claimed that “The Social Democratic influence in Western European countries has had a profound effect on the structure of their society and the armed forces.” While basic cultural and historical differences within Western European industrialized societies make it difficult to define a single universal model of a trade union in either the general area of economic activity or the specific example of the armed forces, the theme of “equality” permeates the literature on European personnel representation practices. Harries-Jenkins uses the concept of equality to refer to the idea that the freedoms and privileges of the democratic way of life which the armed forces are tasked with defending should be extended to all citizens regardless of occupational type. Following from this basic premise, it “is seen to be illogical that the rights and obligations of the citizen are not extended to members of those services.” It is argued that civil control and military effectiveness are enhanced by giving the military the same rights as other citizens, with the military being more highly motivated towards the defence of the democratic state.
The Armed Forces of Austria, Belgium, Denmark, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden have some form of collectivism, which might be appropriately termed unionization, for their members. It is not the intention of this article to provide a detailed analysis of military union organization and activity in those European nations which have them. Suffice to say that the impact of military unions has been significant in the relevant countries. In general terms, the unions operate within armed forces which have significant numbers of conscripts who are required to serve for periods ranging from eight to 24 months followed by a period in the reserve forces. Moreover, members are often represented by more than one union, usually split according to rank or political persuasion. The Belgian Defence Force has six unions, the Dutch 11, the Norwegian 12 and there are over 50 unions in the Danish Defence Force. Most union activities are limited to negotiations on wages, benefits and privileges, with union activity being suspended during national emergencies. Examples of achievements attained through union efforts are a forty-hour week with pay and compensation for overtime, the abolition of the requirement to salute officers, relaxation of hair length regulations, abolition of brass shining and voluntary reveille. The exact effect of such developments on military preparedness and effectiveness is difficult to determine. Lawrence points out that while “It is not immediately clear that the lowering of military standards in appearance and decorum necessarily detract from readiness... officials admit that budgetary factors associated with overtime compensations have produced reductions in the desired level of military training.”

France and Italy have prohibitions on military unionism. Similarly, the Defence Force of the United Kingdom, upon which the ADF is modelled, has no form of military collectivism at all. Queens Regulations are explicit on the point: “All combinations of officers and men formed for the purpose of bringing about alterations in the existing regulations or customs of the Service, whether affecting their interests individually or collectively are prohibited.” While not official party policy, certain elements within the Labour Party have pressured for service trade unions to be allowed in the United Kingdom. In 1976, 30 Labour Members of Parliament proposed an amendment to the Armed Forces Bill to allow the formation of unions within the military. This was opposed by 54 members of their own party.

Graham Pratt considers that “As far as Australia is concerned, the current debate on military unionism in the United States is likely to have a greater degree of relevance than the developments in Europe. Both armies represent an English speaking military tradition and both adopted an all volunteer basis of recruitment following a period of conscription.” G.A. Nelson points to “a certain like thinking” amongst the U.S. Armed Forces and the ADF claiming that “it is probable that most attitudinal surveys conducted with U.S. military personnel if applied to ADF personnel would elicit similar responses.” In September 1976 the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) voted to allow armed forces personnel as members, initiating significant political debate. Senator John Stennis, chairman of the Armed Services Committee said he was totally opposed to the idea of a military union. The stated policy of the U.S. Department of Defense forbids commanders to recognize or bargain with military unions.

American writers are quick to point to the questionable relevance of European collectivism for military unionism in the U.S. C.K. Sime warns “those who would tout the European experience as a model for the United States to copy” that “the social and political characteristics of the countries and the sizes and missions of the armed forces within those countries are different from those in the United States and those of the US Armed Forces.” Likewise, William J. Taylor does not doubt that European military unions serve both their constituents and their societies well. He makes the point, however, that the societal context of such unions is simply different to that of the U.S., stating that “the nature of civil-military relations in Western Europe is far different from the American setting.”

Concern expressed by the majority of U.S. servicemen over a perceived erosion in recent years of their compensation package, which includes pay, pensions, fringe benefits and housing allowances, has been described as “the most predominant theme in the American literature on military unionism.” Thomas P. Easum sees this as the catalyst for the first serious consideration of unionization of the U.S. Armed Forces in the early 1970s, “when military per-
sonnel became increasingly aware of serious erosion of their career benefits." 

This situation was largely reflected in the background to and the appearance of a body for group representation of the financial interests of members of the ADF. A review of the background to ArFFA will highlight the opinions and perceptions which facilitated its eventual emergence.

**Pre-ArFFA Opinion**

The issue of military collectivism arose for the first time in Australia during 1973-75, resulting from a proposal by the Defence Minister, Lance Barnard, that a Services association, along the lines of the West German Forces Association, be established to provide representation on Service conditions matters. The association was to be voluntary, open to all ranks and have no grounds for utilizing industrial action. Barnard emphasized that the impetus for such an association had to come from serving members. Despite an attempt by a retired Army officer to form an “Australian Armed Forces Association” in mid 1974, there was an absence of widespread response from servicemen expressing their support.

During this period, a number of papers written by officers on the relevance of collectivism to the Australian military appeared in Service journals. In one, M.G. Langley recommended that, in view of social changes, the machinery of industrial relations representation should be established in the Australian Army, lamenting that “in the Australian Army there is no industrial relations system.”

Inherent barriers to this were pointed out by a writer in the *Pacific Defence Reporter* of the day, who pointed out that: “The very mention of the term ‘industrial relations’ in respect of armed services personnel creates a vision amongst many serving officers and NCOs of servicemen defying authority and walking off the job in response to a strike order called by union officials. Such a reaction is largely a consequence of their narrow and conventional understanding of industrial relations.”

Such perceptions of the relevance of a system of industrial relations to the military changed over the remaining half of that decade, the climate of which period Pratt has described as one of financial restraint, which “provided a stark contrast to the changes and gains made for servicemen in the first half of the decade.” The threat to the commutation provisions of the ADF pension scheme, its most attractive feature, caused the greatest degree of concern and was viewed as a potentially severe breach of the implied contract of military service. The apparent ease with which the federal bureaucracy was able to press for a review of some of the conditions of the pension scheme created an economic threat issue of sufficient potential to cause a considerable change in attitudes towards collectivism.

A survey of the values and attitudes of Regular Australian Army officers towards different types of employee representation embraced by the term “collectivism” was conducted by Lieutenant Colonel G.J. Pratt during 1979-80. The results of this study revealed that “almost the total officer sample was opposed to the idea of conventional unionism with the right to strike. However, over a third of officers saw a need for some type of mild collectivism to represent their views as an alternative to the internal chain of command.”

One major’s comments reflected the development of a general acceptance of a limited form of collectivism: “At one time I would have said no to such a proposal. But it appears to be the case in modern times that unless we have a representative point of view we get nothing. I don’t mean a trade union but some form of representation. Today there is a need for everybody to have power groups and we need to develop one ourselves. Yes, we need to make things public.”

Some officers expressed the need for an association in stronger terms without qualification, such as the captain who put it this way: “I favour it strongly as we need a voice. We need it because we are being outstripped by militant civilians and we need it to protect our conditions.”

Support within the military for some kind of collective representation grew steadily throughout the early part of this decade. One naval officer claimed that attitudes which supported the formation of a formal union or association “should be encouraged as a form of increased professionalism and an effort of some to improve the present situation of Australian armed forces personnel.” Some writers even predicted the emergence of formal group representation as a natural evolutionary progression. J.R. Jauncey saw the similarity of the ADF’s developing industrial relations machinery and the characteristics of the civil
system as proof of Janowitz's "Convergence Theory" in the Australian military. He concluded that "should the military converge to the extent where a civil trilateral system is adopted then military unions will also emerge." Likewise, I.J. Ballantyne, writing at the same time, considered it doubtful that "the issue of independent industrial representation for members of the Australian Armed Forces can be avoided during this decade." In the same year, calls for "some form of professional association to put the case for defence and for those who serve the profession of arms "came from outside the military as well, with A.W. Grazebrook claiming that "the time has come for a departure from the 'silent services' code of conduct." Given such observations, changes in the social and industrial relations environment, and the tenets of military sociological theory, the establishment of ArFFA a year later should not have met with much surprise.

"The Burr Under the Saddle"

Despite the achievements of a number of independent committees established to inquire into and make recommendations on pay and conditions in the ADF, the early 1980s was not a good period for servicemen. Dissatisfaction arose over such things as the pay freeze, poor housing, abolition of home loans, tax on DFRDB commutation and tax on Army Reserve pay, to mention a few. In 1984 a number of RAAF officers who were concerned about the loss of wage relativities in the fourth year of a wages pause and who lacked confidence in the ability of the senior officers of the ADF to redress the situation, formed ArFFA. Its constitution is dated 28 November 1984.

The conditions which drove the ADF away from Moskos' institutional model and into the embrace of the occupational model have been described by P.T.F. Gowans: "There was a generally-perceived degradation of conditions of service and a belief that there was continuing disregard for the unique features of service life . . . More importantly it was widely believed that the convention of the Government's faithful protection of the service-members' interests had been set aside." The aim of ArFFA is "... to foster, protect and promote the welfare of the members of the Federation in their capacity as members of the Australian Defence Force, whatever their rank, category, branch, sex, employment, Service or geographic location." Its constitution also contains provisions to forbid Federation members confronting their commanders and to suspend activities of the Federation in the event of national defence emergency or war. It abjures any right-to-strike in all circumstances. The Federation sees its role as "the Burr under the saddle, a spur to conscience and an independent voice for serving members on matters of conditions of service and employment affecting their welfare." Using avenues closed to the ADF and the Department where necessary, the Federation is committed to act with speed and force on issues where the bureaucratic system is unable, or unwilling, to achieve results. Behind such stated aims of the Federation lies an implicit criticism of the military hierarchy's ability to look after its troops. It was this implied criticism which coloured much of the reaction to the establishment of ArFFA.

Post-ArFFA Reaction

The frequent use of the term "the military" does much to obscure the divergences and disparities which exist within military organizations. Such variations are manifest in the differences between Service and Service, combat and logistic unit, generalist and specialist, officer and NCO, NCO and soldier. This partly explains the nature of reaction to ArFFA which has ranged, according to R.K. Lawrence, "from animosity to enthusiastic approval," The formation of ArFFA gave rise to the ADF policy that members could join the Federation and not be in breach of military law. Nevertheless, Service heads expressed concern that ArFFA would become an alternative to the chain of command for representation on improvements to conditions of service. While the right of servicemen to join an organization such as ArFFA was recognised within certain limitations, the Defence Department does not accord the same facilities to members and the executives of ArFFA as are accorded to organizations such as the ACOA. All ArFFA activities must be conducted outside working hours, the use of service facilities to hold meetings is restricted, and no paid leave is available for members of the executive to attend to Federation business. Reasons given for this are that ArFFA is not affiliated with the ACTU and that organizations such as the ACOA have ob-
tained such concessions only as a result of long negotiations over many years.  

Following the announcement of the establishment of ArFFA, the Chiefs of Staff Committee reaffirmed three leading principles governing the formation of such associations:

- They must be voluntary, non-industrial, without political affiliation, self-supporting to the maximum extent practicable and must accord with the wishes of the members;
- There should be no obstruction to the government's lawful direction to the Services or the execution of such direction within the Services; and
- There should be no interference in the normal functions of the command chain or in the disciplinary process.

While the Rules and Constitution of the Federation met these criteria, some perceived that there was nevertheless “grounds for anxiety that the Federation may exceed its stated aims and breach the principles laid down by the Chiefs of Staff.”  

ArFFA's record over the first three years of its existence has shown such fears to be unfounded. Attitude survey data since the establishment of ArFFA suggests that around 70 per cent of officers from all three Services are positively disposed towards the idea of a representative association. While ArFFA may be seen by industrial relations scholars as a mild form of collectivism, Pratt points out that “the establishment of a type of representative association represents the critical step in the development of an industrial outlook that may provide an organizational platform for a more highly developed approach in the future.”

The Future

Military sociologists have viewed the establishment of ArFFA as a step in the Janowitzian process of evolution, but by no means the final step. The next phase, according to Pratt, will see the Defence Force Advocate replaced by ArFFA as the employee representative before the DFRT. He concludes that “The developments of recent times suggest that such a move to a ‘more natural’ employee voice cannot be dismissed as a possibility.”  

This view is shared by the current President of ArFFA, who views present arrangements as “an evolutionary step leading eventually to a conventional system in which ArFFA and not the CDF advocates increased conditions to the Tribunal.”

The foundation of ArFFA and the establishment of the DFRT herald a new era in Australia military industrial relations. For the first time, ADF personnel can be aware of the details of debate in an adversarial forum with employer and employee publicly arguing the pros and cons of conditions of service issues. It could be expected that the disintegration of the paternalistic system will extend from pay issues into the non-pay areas, with a more active, confrontationalist era unfolding. ArFFA’s place in such developments will depend on a number of things. Its growth will be affected by the way it is perceived as a body that can achieve results through unfettered advocacy, publicity and lobbying. Its membership will depend on the extent to which issues arise which are perceived by servicemen as having deleterious effects on their wage relativity and service conditions package. The attitudes of senior management and the extent to which they heed the warnings of November 1984 will also play an important role. Recent figures from the Army’s Soldier Attitude Opinion Survey show that soldiers are still dissatisfied with the representation by senior officers on pay and conditions.  

The continued failure by senior management to demonstrate that positive efforts are being made on behalf of servicemen in these areas will ensure the growth of the Federation’s membership and influence.

Summary

The idea of a Defence Force union is largely an anathema to the military ethos, being considered not only incompatible with the strict hierarchical structure and roles of the military but also a slight upon the ability of Service officers to adequately protect and further the interests of their troops. However, in the light of societal trends and the gradual shift of responsibility for conditions of service and such industrial relations matters away from the paternalistic chain of command, the military sociologist would consider the emergence of military collectivism as a natural progression. In Australia, a feature of this move from the institutional to the occupational model was the emergence of ArFFA. Whatever the future significance and potential influence of the Federation, R.K. Lawrence has rightly com-
mented that "ArFFA is part of the make up of the ADF in the 1980s and should be accorded recognition — if only a grumbling acquiescence by those opposed to military unionism."

NOTES
11. Lawrence, op. cit., p. 33.
13. Pratt, Perceptions of Industrial Relations Amongst Australian Army Officers, pp. 53-54.
17. Pratt, Perceptions of Industrial Relations Amongst Australian Army Officers, p. 56.
23. Pratt, Perceptions of Industrial Relations Amongst Australian Army Officers, pp. 256-257.
30. Gowans, op. cit., p. 27.
31. Lawrence, op. cit., p. 31.
36. Ibid., p. 21.
37. Ibid., p. 22.
40. Lawrence, op. cit., p. 31.

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Female Lower Limb Injuries During Military Training

By Lieutenant Commander E.T. James, RAN

Abstract

With the introduction of common initial training for both male and female personnel entering the services, a significant morbidity in severe lower limb injuries has occurred. The causes of this increase have not been fully investigated and it is the intention of this article to explore possible causes and suggest actions that may be taken to alleviate the problem.

The incidence of shin soreness, shin splints, overuse syndrome and stress fractures is well documented especially in adolescent athletes. However, within the military the prevalence of Anterior and Posterior Compartment Syndrome in young females leading to the need for surgical intervention has reached an unacceptable level. Action requires to be taken either to reduce the level of activity, eliminate contributory factors or provide preparatory activities to strengthen the limbs to withstand the planned activities.

Specifically this article will explore such contributing factors as:

a. the change in gait necessary to march correctly;
b. the effect of regulation general purpose boots on lower limb mobility;
c. the intensity of the initial training period; and
d. other extraneous factors.

Although it may be possible to suggest action that may reduce the incidence of these injuries no claim is made as to providing the eventual solution to the problem.

Introduction

With the increasing numbers of females entering the services in all areas Officers, Apprentices and Adult general entry and as the trend is towards non-discriminatory common military training courses insufficient consideration has been given to gender, maturation levels or initial fitness in their planning. Initial investigation has revealed that a significant number of female initial entrants are experiencing severe and debilitating injuries to the musculoskeletal system which is causing an unacceptable reduction in the level of activity that can be undertaken during their initial phase of training.

As a majority of these injuries are sustained by the lower limb it is the intention of this article to concentrate on this area, in an effort to identify the major causes and then suggest remedial action that may be used to reduce both the severity and the incidence of these injuries. In particular, it is intended to address the situation at a recently opened military establishment where an excessive number of females have suffered chronic overuse syndrome injuries requiring surgical intervention to reduce extremely high increases in compartment pressures. (Rorabeck et al 1988)

This is not the only basic entry military establishment to experience these problems. However it is the only one where these injuries are occurring to Naval personnel and although there is an interest in eliminating or reducing the causes of these injuries for all three services insufficient detailed knowledge is available for presentation within this article.

Literature Review

In an attempt to establish whether similar events occur within other military populations an exhaustive literature search was undertaken. Only seven original research articles and one review were located. However, as marching, doubling, and physical training have a commonality with other physical activities such as sports training, dancing and athletics the search was expanded into these areas.

Further research was also carried out to locate articles on gait patterns, so that some form of baseline study of normal walking, marching and running patterns could be established. This would allow deviant movements to be easily identified as well as providing biomechanical principles to be explored. In all a total of thirty-four articles were considered relevant to this study.

Discussion

Anterior and posterior compartment syndrome has not been well researched and reported, however the less severe ‘shinsplints’
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have been the subject of diverse research articles and a plethora of information is available both on cause and treatment. It is not for the writer to attempt to diagnose or report on these matters suffice to comment on observation made by others that:

"... as an overuse injury the effects of submaximal forces exerted during training (be it marching, PT, sport or dancing) activities combined with inadequate recovery, biomechanical abnormalities, training errors and impaired flexibility can exceed the adaptive reparative capacity of the muscle or tendon units of the anterior tibial or deep posterior compartments resulting in symptomatic injuries." (Moore 1988)

These generally reported causes have also been included in research carried out at the:

a. United States Military Academy (USMA) by Protzman et al and Reinker et al
b. United States Army by Kowal;
c. South African Armed Forces by Gordon et al
d. Royal Marines Lymptone by Evans;
e. Israeli Army by Giladi et al and
f. New Zealand Army by Stacy.

several of their findings will be incorporated in latter parts of this article.

Compartment syndrome however features as an infrequent lower leg injury within the military literature and reliance on data obtained from dancers and athletes has had to occur. This extrapolation to military activities was also undertaken in the South African study (Gordon et al 1986)

Possibly the best explanation on compartment syndrome is provided by research conducted by the Medical Officer at the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) Dr Peter Fricker who summarises the injury as:

"Compartment syndrome is thought to be related to a tight or restraining muscle sheath (or fascial envelope) which surrounds and binds a particular group of muscles forming a muscle compartment. It is believed that exercise using a muscle produces swelling of the muscle's compartment and the subsequent compression by the compartment sheath that produces either a reduction in blood flow into the muscle (resulting in pain and further swelling of the muscle) or an effect whereby the sheath is drawn away from its attachment along the bone."

Research carried out in Sweden by Wallensten (1983) reports less positive findings to the AIS indicating that increased intramuscular pressure of unknown origin affects the microcirculation. However, without doubt, compartment syndrome necessitating fasciotomy is a result of chronic overuse and it is from this perception that the development of this article will proceed.

To establish a base line from which to evaluate a lower leg injury it is necessary to gain an understanding of normal gait patterns and whether there is any physiological or anatomical differences between male and female which may predispose females to a rate of injury between two (Reinker et al 1979) and twelve (Protzman et al 1977) times greater than the reported figures for males.

The major determinates to normal walking are listed as:
1. Pelvic rotation;
2. Pelvic tilt;
3. Knee motion during the support phase;
4. Foot and Ankle motion;
5. Knee motion during the swing phase; and

Gait analysis

In normal walking there is a balancing of factors such as posture, balance, the position of the centre of gravity, accuracy of movement patterns, rhythm and a general lack of tension. (Galley et al) Each foot makes a ten degree angle (Foot Angle FA) with the line of progression and the width between the ankles is three inches. (Merrifield 1971) (Figure 1), although Holden et al (1983) (Figure 2) reported that the foot angle of the right foot was significantly larger than the left foot angle and attributed this to the right leg dominance of 90% of his subjects.

Stride Length and Cadence

The normal walking speed of females is substantially lower than men caused exclusively from their shorter stride lengths calculated as approximately 42.2 percentage of the subject's structure (Rigas 1984) although their Cadence is higher. Soames et al (1983) calculated that the cadence of normal subject free walking was between 35 and 75 steps per minute, and there was general agreement that the military insistence of thirty inch paces in a major pathological factor in lower leg stress injuries in females.
Anatomical Variances

Leg length in relation to stride length has already been discussed. In addition the following list is a combination of items which affect stride as identified by Atwater (1988), Taunton et al (1988), Jones (1983) (Gehlsen et al 1980) and Carroll (1986):

a. The pelvis of an adult female is wider and shallower than a male;
b. Increased “Q” angle as a consequence of a wider pelvis placing the femur at a greater angle to the vertical (greater than 15 degrees) (Fig 3.);
c. patella alta, lateral instability and chondromalacia;
d. femoral neck anteversion;
e. knee hyperextension;
f. varus alignment;
g. malalignment between heel and forefoot;
h. narrower heels; and
i. high arches.

Prolonged pronation is common to many of the above anatomical variants, however it is intended to include this factor when discussing boot construction, fitting and fatigue.

Physiological Differences

In comparison with her male counterpart an average female joining the services usually has a greater percentage of body fat hence less lean body mass, limited strength, has a lack of condition and the increase in training may result in an alteration to her menstrual function. If the increase in training is severe she may experience a decrease in bone density due to lower circulating levels of estrogen resulting in amenorrhea (Myburgh et al 1988). All these factors may cause levels of fatigue which are out of proportion to the perceived effort (Hopkins 1987)

There may also be a correlation with the lowering of the calcium intake brought about by institutional catering and the inability to ob-
tain items such as milk drinks and cheese products previously readily available within the refrigerator in the home environment.

Changes to Gait by Marching

Having seen that women have shorter stride lengths at normal walking cadence of approximately 75 steps/min, how then does the regulation marching pace of thirty inches at a cadence of 120 steps/min affect them? The natural rhythm described by Galley et al. is disrupted and two new parameters have to be introduced:

a. Increased Stride length; and
b. Increased cadence

Increase in stride length is achieved by the bending of the front knee with hip flexion in an attempt to raise the centre of gravity from the normal pattern. This causes a backward rotation of the trunk which is compensated by an increase in the pressure applied to the rear foot at toe-off to provide additional propulsion. The raising of the centre of gravity also creates instability.

This action is best illustrated by the triple jumper who by a high knee lift combined with the momentum from the run up achieves an elongated step. The difference however is that in the jumping action the knee remains bent to provide a platform for the jump takeoff.

In marching, the female by the high knee lift experiences excessive pressures at heel strike on the tibialis anterior which controls the foot eccentrically, preventing it from slapping down too hard. (Luttgens et al.) The increased step also causes the heel to be tilted outwardly further than normal at the time of contact resulting in an increase in normal pronation as the foot tilts inwardly (eversion) when the foot is flat on the ground prior to the moving into the propulsion or toe-off phase.

This increase in pronation causes fatigue within the muscles of the lower leg reducing the muscles' ability for shock absorption causing the transference of forces to other structures such as the bones. However, consequences of wearing boots also increase pronation and it is intended to cover this aspect in the section related to footwear.

Within the walking action any increase in cadence also requires additional compensation in the walking pattern. Further increases in pressure at heel strike to those already experienced from increased stride length occur as velocity increases.

To increase the lateral movement and rotation of the pelvis speed of arm swing has to increase. This can be achieved by either increasing the muscle effort of the upper body or decreasing the length of the lever arm by bending the elbow. This latter action is unacceptable and incompatible with marching, and what has appeared to happen is that females instead of swinging their arms forward and back tend to swing them across the body towards the forward midline. This has the effect of reducing the lever arm and provides an additional lateral force which allows for a decrease in the force needed to achieve the required pelvic actions.

This marching pattern is not instinctive and therefore having disrupted the efficiency of motion, this skill has be perfected and, until new techniques are mastered excessive stress is placed on the lower limbs. Unless this overload factor is properly controlled the effects of fatigue will only amplify the stress factor leading to injury.

Effects on Gait When Wearing Shoes

The general effects of gait modification when wearing shoes surrounds the change in contact time surfaces of the foot experiences with the ground. There is a general consensus that there is a spreading of the load over a wider area; the heel remains in contact with the ground longer, there is a loading of the lateral side of the foot and, the time the toes are in contact increases shifting the centre of foot pressure forward
more rapidly. This subjects the forefront to an unnatural pattern of stress compared with walking barefoot. (Soames 1985)

Further research of a more specific nature identifies the following characteristics as necessary in good footwear:
- lightweight;
- flexibility;
- shock absorption (impact properties);
- a stable heel counter;
- supportive and cushioning inner sole; and
- flexes adequately in the area of the toe joints

**General Purpose Boots**

As the General Purpose Boot (GP) was designed to primarily give protection to the foot and ankle for a wide variety of surfaces and activities it is not surprising that it lacks a majority of the qualities listed above and these deficiencies are greatly increased when worn by females.

The availability of smaller narrower sizes to accommodate a smaller foot with a narrow heel and a higher arch has been limited and at present the standard response is to suggest that two pairs of socks be worn. (This factor and the application of 'band aids' are major causes of blister and 'hot spots' developed by constant rubbing.) However, what does happen is that the heel tends to spread, and where anatomical variants are also present there is an increased tendency for the foot to pronate.

In pronation the medial side of the foot is dropped positioning the heel bone laterally relative to the midline of the lower leg is shown in Figures 4a, 4b and 4c. Pronation occurs after the heel hits the ground and helps absorb the impact between foot and ground, the ankle rolls inward and the foot arch flattens.

Wischman ( ) suggests that four degrees of pronation is ideal however without correct support the inward roll continues and the arch collapses. This excessive movement strains supportive ligaments and tendons in the knee, leg and hip. Further, instability of the heel inherent in army boots used by women in the Kowal (1980) study aggravated existing ankle weakness and foot disorders.

Flexibility is also an area which causes concern. Unlike her male counterpart, the apparent lack of strength in the lower leg combined with the inflexibility of the rubber sole in relation to its length, width and thickness does not allow the boot to flex in the areas of the toe joint and in some cases this crease does not develop requiring action to be taken within the muscles to compensate. An attempt was made to drill horizontal holes through the soles to provide this flexibility without success. A further modification of this principle similar to the newer sports shoes may provide a solution to this problem.
The lack of arch support and force absorption inner soles in the GP boot may also be responsible for the increased number of lower leg injuries. Apart from the reason stated in the previous paragraphs on flexibility and fitting qualities the lack of contoured shock absorptive inner sole is a major contributor to pronation induced injuries, however as the pain from this type of injury tends to develop gradually trainees have a tendency not to seek treatment until the injury reaches a chronic state.

Although the fitting of absorptive inner soles and orthotics (which also balance the foot in a neutral position preventing excessive compensatory motion) have been prescribed after the injury it would appear more realistic to try to prevent these injuries occurring by providing these inner soles in the initial kit issue. The savings from the reduction of personnel injured and medical expenses would be greater than the initial outfit costs. Although inner soles would provide added weight within the already 'heavy' boot it does not increase the energy cost of the effort being undertaken (Taunton et al. 1988) and therefore can only be of benefit in the reduction of stress injuries.

The lack of overall physical condition, limited strength, and less lean body mass also restricts the wearer of GP boots. The added weight of each boot at the extremity of the lower limbs coupled with the added burden of having to increase stride length and cadence also places an additional stress on the muscles of the lower leg and as fatigue sets in compensatory actions by other muscles compounds the injury sustained.

In an attempt to reduce these overuse injuries caused by the GP boot Stacy et al (1984) reported a study undertaken in the New Zealand Army where during a recruit course boots were worn for an increasing duration over a five week period during which time no running in boots was allowed and both boots and feet was properly prepared for constant wear. Boots were worn for one hour per day during the first week; two hours during the second; three during the third; five during the fourth week and it then increased to eight hours per day after the sixth week. Injuries were reduced by 38.5 per cent with a 53.9 per cent reduction in time lost.

In 1989 the Defence Academy provided guidance for the fitting and wearing of GP boots for the first time and Officer Cadets were advised to wear their boots for a minimum of four hours per day during the first week in preparation for the commencement of common military training in the second week. This advice has helped reduce the incidence of lower extremity injury, however from the New Zealand experience this initial time may be too high and similar restrictions should be applied during the fourteen days of continuous common military training to provide a gradual increase as suggested by Stacy.

At the United States Military Academy female cadets are instructed on how to properly 'break in' their boots and how to prepare their feet with alcohol baths and massage. Added restrictions such as eliminating 'blousing rubbers' and kneeling during field training reduce construction to the lower leg. (Reinker et al 1979)

Intensity of Training

The tendency to increase the level of activity markedly during the first few weeks of initial military training has been cited by all researchers involved in military studies as one of the main precursors to injury. The sudden onset of activity without allowing supporting structures of the lower limbs sufficient time to adapt to the new increased work load and develop a level of tolerance to prevent further damage to tissues has to be fully appreciated by training departments (Taunton 1988; Geick et. al. 1987) In all reported cases a majority of stress related injuries occurred within these first few weeks and in one particular study 60 per cent of injuries had developed by the second week. A similar pattern of injury has been noticed in female athletes and dancers where rapid and aggressive training methods were introduced or when changes were made to shoes or running surfaces. (Thompson 1985) This pattern can also be applied to the military where the GP boot is introduced and long hours are spent on asphalt parade grounds.

Although most of the parade training and drill at the Defence Academy is carried out on a grass parade ground the unusual feature of the Academy being situated on the side of a hill presents other problems. Officer Cadets are faced with the prospects of having to traverse uneven or sloping surfaces for a majority of the time which adds to the stress being placed on the lower limbs.
In some cases it has been policy to accommodate female Officer Cadets on the top floor of the three storey blocks. The additional effort required to climb these stairs on an average of eight to ten times per day increases already high stress levels induced by training routines and the change in footwear.

**Distances Between Activities**

As in previous years one of the constraints placed on the planning staff was the distance squads had to travel between classes. With activities such as Field Craft undertaken in the vicinity of the Supply Squadron, Drill on either the main parade ground or the practice parade grounds, Physical Training in the Indoor Sports Centre or the main oval and lectures either at the Military building or the common lecture complex. With the necessity to change ‘rigs’, return rifles to their correct stowages within the blocks area and collect items for the next lecture, Officer Cadets may have to cover distances up to one kilometre between classes without adding changing time.

This added distance covered has not been fully appreciated however reference to Table 1 shows that during the first week of Common Military Training this situation arose on at least four occasions and therefore must be taken into account for assessing the work load during the initial training phase.

The need for a gradual build up in training intensity over the first weeks must be seen as a major component in reducing injuries at the Defence Academy. The present routine provides for a well balanced orientation programme during the first week. However, with the commencement of the Common Military Programme the intensity increases dramatically and for some that means having to complete all the requirements for drill and physical training in the first seven days. This requires between five and seven 40 minute periods a day on both these two subjects alone (Table 1 shows the complete routine for this group).

Common military training is followed by two weeks of single service training and then a concentrated week of parade training culminates in the CDF’s parade prior to commencement of the academic year in the seventh week.

Other military establishments have tried a variety of ways to reduce the incidence of stress injuries. The United States Army reported that, by separating physical training and drill and ceremonial sessions by eight hours, prohibiting PT sessions of greater than two hours and prohibiting running and marching during the third week of basic training injuries were significantly reduced. Others have banned wearing boots for physical training and have scheduled strenuous activities on alternate days to allow adequate physiological recovery to occur during the early phases of training.

**Sporting Activities**

As an addition to the already strenuous training regime placed on the Officer Cadets during their first six weeks it has been necessary for all to attend compulsory sports training in order that the Academy may field teams in the pre season build up to the local winter sports competitions.

Sport revolves around the major activities of football, (Rugby Union, Soccer and Australian Football) Hockey, Basketball and Netball. The training for these teams has to be concentrated as beginning training in mid-March, when other teams have had the normal two to three months of conditioning and team skills preparation requires Academy teams to undertake a higher level of training to be competitive with civilian counterparts.

Although the female officer cadets only play hockey, basketball and netball these extra activities increase the already high level of stress placed on muscles fatigued from the activities undertaken in the military training programme.

**Rehabilitation**

It is not the intention of this article to cover rehabilitation regimes, however what is important is to provide the climate whereby the injury can be recognised early and remedial exercises can begin sufficiently early to stop the injury reaching a chronic level. In several cases, rest to allow the inflamed muscle to heal was the main remedial modality and return to duty was not gradual, hence the initial improper techniques which caused the injury had not been corrected resulting in a recurrence of the injury especially in women.

In most cases the simple rehabilitative routine of ICE is the best first aid however further compression on compression present in a compartment injury is not recommended. Moore (1988) suggested that ice massage applied to the affected area on a regular basis helped reduce the inflammation. However in
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**TABLE 1 (Excerpt 1989 CMT Programme)**

conjunction with this routine, active stretching (within the pain threshold) is advocated. The need to increase leg strength and both plantar and dorsi flexion of the ankle should not be overlooked.

Conclusion
The presence initial training routine at the Defence Academy has most of the components that have been identified by other researchers as being responsible for the development of stress related injuries in the lower extremities of both male and females although this article has concentrated on the female injuries.

As the Academy is only in its fourth year of operation it is felt that it is now time to reassess the levels of activities undertaken by Officer Cadets on entry in preparation for their 'Liberal education within a military environment'; and in relation to:

a. Physical Activity:
   1. an in depth survey which includes initial fitness levels, distances covered during normal activities, and sports participation both before and after entry should be conducted;
   2. no physical activity should be undertaken without the supervision of qualified instructors. Activities such as mountain runs undertaken without correct conditions should not be permitted.

b. Boots:
   1. a comprehensive stock of smaller narrower GP boots be held in stores and if the correct size is not available the Officer Cadet be issued with a second pair of correct fitting shoes until the required size and width is available;
   2. blousing rubbers be not worn during the first six weeks of initial training;
   3. the routine of wearing boots during the first week for up to four hours per day should be evaluated in light of the New Zealand and United States Army;
   4. shock absorbing inner soles similar to 'Sorbothane or Conformable Formotics' be provided to each Officer Cadet on entry and replacements be available under the supervision of the Medical Officer;
   5. a positive programme be introduced to correctly inform Officer Cadets how to break-in boots and prepare the feet including treatment for minor foot problems such as hot spots and blisters;

c. the curriculum for both Common Military Training and each service's initial single service training should be evaluated and reviewed to allow a slower build up in initial activity to take place. If necessary activities may have to be moved to the following years activity.

d. signs, symptoms and treatment of stress related injuries be given wide exposure to all Officer Cadets on entry and that a climate be developed that is conducive with stopping these injuries without having psychological pressures exerted where the self esteem of the sufferer is reduced by the comments and actions of others.

Military training brings with it an element, in which injury and illness may occur, however, in weighing up the inconvenience and cost against the objectives of this training to the services it is important to eliminate all avoidable factors to obtain a true perspective of the problem.

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Lieutenant Commander E.T. James joined the RAN in 1956 and qualified as a Physical Training Instructor in 1961. He was commissioned in the United Kingdom in 1970 and returned to Australia to complete his Bridge Watchkeeping Certificate in HMAS SYDNEY.

In all his postings he has been involved in Physical Training and Sports Administration and completed a Diploma of Teaching in Physical Education at Kuring-gai College of Advanced Education in 1979.

In his last posting he was Officer Commanding the Physical and Recreational Section at the Australian Defence Force Academy for three years and was responsible for the development of the PT curriculum.

He is currently employed as the Secretary of the Visiting Ships Panel (Nuclear) within HQADF and has recently completed the requirements for the Bachelor of Education (Secondary), part time at the Canberra College of Advanced Education.

Papua New Guinea Receives Fourth Patrol Boat

Papua New Guinea received its fourth $3 million Australian designed and built Pacific Patrol Boat during a ceremony near Perth on Saturday, July 1, 1989.

The Minister for Defence, Mr Kim Beazley, handed over the 31.5 metre-long HMPNGS Basilisk to his PNG counterpart, Mr Ben Sabumei, at the Australian Shipbuilding Industries (ASI) wharf south of Fremantle.

The fourth vessel will further enhance PNG’s maritime surveillance capability. The new vessels are being built at Australian Shipbuilding Industries (ASI) under the largest Defence Co-operation project undertaken by Australia.

The vessel is the eighth Pacific Patrol Boat brought into service in Pacific Island countries to assist them in policing their important 200 nautical mile Exclusive Economic Zones.
The Impact of the 1968 Tet Offensive on American and North Vietnamese Strategy

By Colonel John Jackson, RAInf

(This article is based on a paper submitted for the ADFA Master of Defence Studies program.)

Introduction

TWENTY years on, a review of American and Communist sources demonstrates the crucial impact of the 1968 Tet Offensive on the later conduct and eventual outcome of the Vietnam War. Against the background of Communist and American strategies in the Vietnam War, this article surveys the aims and objectives of the Communist leadership in North Vietnam, and the plans and conduct of operations by the Communists in the South, during the Tet Offensive of 1968. It examines the immediate effects of the Offensive, on the Republic of (South) Vietnam (RVN), America and the Communists. Based on the official evaluations of both the Americans and the Communists, it attempts to assess the impact of Tet on the later conduct of the war, and in particular, on the strategies of the belligerent parties.

The Tet Offensive

Vietnamese Communist leaders had been planning a major offensive since mid-1967. Army units of the Democratic Republic of (North) Vietnam (DRV) and political cadres of the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam (NLF) prepared to liberate villages, towns, major cities and, hopefully, all of South Vietnam. On the night of Tet — the lunar new year, 30/31 January 1968, about 70,000 Communist troops including some of North Vietnam's Army (VPA) and all of the NLF's Viet Cong launched a carefully co-ordinated series of attacks on more than 100 cities and towns, including Saigon and Hue. The plan initially involved local forces assaulting the cities for up to five days. Extensive use was made of sapper units, duc cong, intensively commando trained to use explosives and to lead infantry assaults. Regular forces were positioned to enter and widen the scope of the fighting, in the event of a popular uprising or the total collapse of the South Vietnamese Army (ARVN).¹

The main attacks were on Saigon and Hue, but more than thirty provincial capitals were among the Communist objectives. The ARVN, depleted by absences on Tet leave, was pulled back urgently into the towns, and savage urban fighting occurred. Nothing like an urban uprising eventuated, however, and most inhabitants remained passive to the NLF.² Except for Hue, most towns were cleared within a week, although, according to Kolko, 1,000 Communists in parts of Saigon held off 11,000 U.S. and ARVN troops for three weeks.³

In Hue, Vietnam's most historic city, eight battalions of Viet Cong (VC) and VPA (about 3,000 men) infiltrated beforehand, seized much of the city including the citadel) early on 31 January and held it for 25 days. During the occupation, political officers with prepared lists of names and addresses arrested and executed about 3,000 government, military and religious officials, politicians, traders, doctors, students and American and German civilians.⁴ Hue was recaptured after three weeks of bitter street fighting, by marines and airborne troops, supported by heavy artillery, tanks, naval gunfire and aerial bombing. Much of the city was flattened, over 3,000 civilians were killed and over 100,000 became refugees. The citadel was retaken on 25 February, and 8,000 VPA were claimed as killed.⁵

Immediate Effects

The impact of the Tet Offensive on the RVN and its army was damaging, both politically and militarily. With the withdrawal of U.S. and ARVN forces to the cities, the pacification program was dealt a severe set-back, and the NLF, though unsuccessful in the cities, was able to replenish its manpower losses in the rural areas. In spite of the crisis, the RVN politicians remained, in the American view, self-serving and corrupt, the politicized nature of the ARVN high command made operational co-ordination difficult, and President Thieu's lack of leadership and his machinations to consolidate his
Tet Offensive, 1968

Map 1

* Major Battles
power further alienated both his own people and the Americans.6

Militarily, the ARVN desertion rate reached its peak in 1968. In early February infantry battalions were at half-strength and half the airborne units were assessed as ineffective for battle. In addition, ARVN morale was badly affected by the minor roles often assigned to them by American commanders, particularly during the reaction to the Tet offensive. The Washington assessment in March, that another serious challenge to the RVN might cause its collapse, reflected the CIA view that there was no “rallying to the government side... further military defeats could cause a sudden swing away from the government... its ability to provide energetic leadership throughout the country... is in serious doubt”.7

The major immediate effect of the Tet Offensive on the U.S. Government was to sharply divide its members on the question of continuing involvement in the war. While a vigorous and indeterminate strategic debate had divided Johnson’s administration in early 1967, into factions simplistically referred to as “hawks” and “doves”, there had been no serious suggestion, public or private, that bombing should stop, or that U.S. forces should be withdrawn if the Communists made appropriate concessions. The division had been between those who wanted to intensify the military effort, and those who would proceed less aggressively. After Tet, domestic political pressure became so intense that an element emerged in the administration advocating withdrawal.8

The impact of Tet on the military and political capacity of the Communists in the South was disastrous. The NLF who surfaced in or entered the cities, trying to arouse the population against the RVN, were easily neutralised. A large proportion of the urban infrastructure was killed or arrested, and the VC received virtually no popular support. Kolko claims that their failure was due not only to American firepower but because the political preconditions for support were lacking, and marginal sympathizers would not risk their lives. Nevertheless, Tet laid the foundations for later popular support of the NLF and guaranteed it a role in the future direction of the war in South Vietnam.9

A preliminary assessment by COSVN of the situation at the end of the first day of Tet, shows the Communist leadership realising that they might not achieve all of the possible outcomes, which ranged from the collapse of the RVN, to discrediting U.S. claims of inevitable victory. It exhorted troops and cadres in the South to continue the sacrifice, but warned that it would not necessarily end the war immediately. The Offensive was part of a long-term process.10

The second phase of the offensive, in May 1968, concentrated on Saigon. It was anticipated by the U.S. and RVN, and major losses were inflicted on the Communist forces. The Communists conceded the failure of surprise and, again, lack of permanent gains among the urban population. However, they assessed their demonstration as a significant success, in that they retained the initiative to penetrate Saigon for a week and hit over 100 other urban targets (principally with mortars and rockets).11

The third and final phase of Tet, in August and September, gave up attempting to mobilize popular uprisings, and conserved manpower by using small local forces, and mortars and rockets. It aimed at keeping the ARVN off balance and demonstrating American vulnerability, and the Communists’ capacity to pursue a protracted war.12

U.S. Strategy Post-Tet

From the outset, U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War had its basis not in economic or geographic national interests but in politics and moral principles. At the level of national strategy it was founded on the Truman Doctrine, of containing the spread of communism, and it was coloured by the limited war experience of Korea, rather than the French Indo-China experience of revolutionary total war.13

What attention was given to the necessity of establishing a stable government and society in the South to counter the nationalist revolutionary nature of the NLF was ineffective.14

The commitment to a total struggle of the Vietnamese Communists in Hanoi, whose primary national policy objective was the reunification of all Vietnam under Communist control, was overlooked.15

At the operational level, the premise during the early years (1965-1968) was that American firepower and materiel would prevail over Communist numerical strength. By mid-1967, the ineffectiveness of the American military strategy of attrition was becoming apparent, in
the face of a flexible Communist strategy combining guerrilla warfare with selective use of main force operations, and a secure logistics system based on nearby sanctuaries.16

Influenced by the growing split in American society, and increasing misgivings among some of his colleagues, McNamara, the Secretary of Defense, perceived that neither moderation nor escalation would influence the Communists to negotiate before the U.S. elections in late 1968. He proposed a holding operation: limiting air strikes to staging areas and infiltration routes in the south of North Vietnam, more vigorous promotion of pacification programs in South Vietnam, and reducing domestic controversy by avoiding casualties and a call-up of the army reserve.17

Senator Stennis' Senate Armed Services Committee, however, urged on by the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) and the field commanders (Admiral Sharp and General Westmoreland), recommended increased bombing and troop commitments. In Vietnam the strategy of attrition was maintained through 1967.18 Johnson decided to replace McNamara, and mounted a major public relations campaign to prove that the war was being won and raise confidence. Westmoreland proclaimed that VC ranks were being thinned, and that the end was in sight. He publicly defied the Communists to mount a major attack.19

The diplomatic hard line of the U.S. on Vietnam up to the end of 1967 is revealed in the talks between Rusk, the Secretary of State, and Kuznetsov, the Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister, in November. There was a simple solution to the problem in Vietnam, said Rusk, if the North Vietnamese would agree to remain north of the 17th parallel. The U.S. was not prepared to deal with the NLF. U.S. bombing would stop if North Vietnamese infiltration did. Likewise the U.S. would never accept that a country directing a war of liberation against a U.S. ally should be treated as a sanctuary.20

The American attitude took into account their current intelligence assessments that assumed the Communists were also following a strategy of attrition, and judged that the VPA would require an increased infiltration rate to maintain their force levels in the South in 1968. Intelligence indicated increasing VC reliance on VPA replacements, and problems in maintaining morale and quality, but did not consider a major offensive as a Communist solution to their problems.21

In February, after the Offensive, U Thant, the UN Secretary General, told the President that North Vietnam was willing to negotiate if the U.S. would stop bombing. However, General Wheeler, Chairman of the JCS, reported, after visiting Westmoreland in late February, that the Communists controlled the countryside, were probably recruiting heavily, and had the resources to attack again. ARVN was on the defensive, and pacification had been set back severely. More U.S. forces would be needed to get ARVN units back into rural areas. Westmoreland wanted 200,000 more troops for the Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV) during 1968.22

By March, public knowledge of moves for huge increases in troop commitments raised the opposition to the war. Clark Clifford, the new Defense Secretary, recommended deploying only 22,000 extra troops and calling up some reserves. Further deployments should depend on a review of U.S. global strategic requirements. He advocated no diplomatic change because the Communists would use it for propaganda purposes, and it would further demoralize the RVN. Secret negotiations with the NLF were suggested.23 At the same time, Rusk asked Bunker whether he thought Hanoi would refrain from taking advantage of a halt in U.S. bombing and the opening of negotiations, and whether these proposals would be acceptable to the RVN.24

The period of the Tet Offensive thus saw a major change in the U.S. Government's approach to the war. General Westmoreland's military reaction to Tet, to request a further 200,000 troops, seemed incredible to an American public, who had been told only a few months earlier that the war was being won. Even Rusk now contemplated negotiations, unaware of the part they would play in Communist strategy as a major psychological instrument. For the Communists, "fighting while negotiating" would open another front. Stepped up attacks were seen as a means to compel a negotiating U.S. to accept the Communists' conditions.25

On 31 March 1968, President Johnson surprised America by announcing that he had decided not to run for re-election to the presidency. Recent events in Vietnam, in particular Tet, seemed to have defeated him,
although he had actually been considering the decision since late 1967. In addition, other major problems were confronting Johnson's administration in the foreign policy area. One was the outcome of the Senate investigation into the 1964 Gulf of Tonkin incidents, which had been part of the pretext for U.S. involvement in Vietnam. Now the U.S. part in the affair was being revealed as far from blameless.

Johnson himself says that he did not want to be preoccupied with the coming presidential elections, when he wanted to concentrate on his job and in particular the half million soldiers then serving in Vietnam.

On 31 May 1968 peace talks commenced in Paris between the North Vietnamese and an American delegation under Averell Harriman. General C.W. Abrams replaced Westmoreland as COMACV in July and bombing of North Vietnam was halted in November. In January 1969, as Nixon took over the Presidency, the Paris peace talks were widened to include the RVN Government and NLF representatives. That month the U.S. troop level reached its wartime peak of 542,400. The first troop withdrawal was effected in June, and by December 1969 troop levels had dropped to 474,000. On 10 June 1969, the Communists announced the formation of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam (PRG), thus claiming equal legitimacy with the RVN Government.

The Nixon Doctrine of 25 July 1969 confirmed the new U.S. strategy of Vietnamization, under RVN control. All U.S. combat troops were to be withdrawn over the next three years, leaving only advisory, technical and air support personnel. Operationally, Abrams ended the division of missions between U.S. and ARVN forces, to concentrate on the strategy of pacification. The military objectives now were: to increase ARVN capabilities; to manage the withdrawal of U.S. combat forces; and to maintain pressure on the NLF insurgency. Again, U.S. strategy failed to focus on the dominant involvement of the DRV, and the primary aim of the Vietnamese Communists.

Summers has analysed the strategic failure of the U.S. in Vietnam in the light of standard definitions of strategy and Clausewitz's fundamentals of war. Given that military strategy is defined as "the art and science of employing the armed forces of a nation to secure the objectives of national policy by the application of force, or the threat of force", his strategic appraisal of the Vietnam War applies strategic theory to both the military means employed and the political ends to be achieved. This process determines the "military planning . . . questions (to be) considered if military strategy is to serve the national interest".

Clausewitz's first strategic question is the judgement of political leaders "to establish the kind of war on which they are embarking". The U.S. soon after their involvement perceived the revolutionary nature of the war in (South) Vietnam, and applied the definition of Thompson, that revolutionary war is designed to reach a decisive result on its own. They missed Thompson's comparison with guerrilla warfare, waged in conjunction with conventional war, to harass and divert the enemy, in order to assist regular forces to reach a decision in conventional battle. The perceived appropriate strategy was counter insurgency, using techniques like resettlement, pacification, "good" administration and propaganda, to deprive the enemy of popular support.

Counter-insurgency thus focussed U.S. attention on the internal affairs of RVN and away from the external threat. The characteristics of revolutionary war do not fit the events of the Vietnam War. The VC did not achieve decisive results on their own. Rather, they harassed, diverted and wore down ARVN and U.S. forces, in co-ordination with the regular forces of the VPA, which by 1975 had sufficient superiority to fight decisive conventional battles. It is noteworthy that in describing their "great Spring victory", Giap and Dung make little reference to the role of local guerrilla forces in the final outcome.

In retrospect, the revolutionary war was used by the DRV to achieve strategic surprise. The NLF was established in 1960 to conduct armed revolt against the RVN, and portrayed, then, as an indigenous South Vietnamese revolutionary force, on a decision taken by the Communist Party in Hanoi in 1959. Similarly, General Vo Bam was ordered in May 1959 to establish the infiltration route to th South, for Southern "regruppees", before President Kennedy sent the main Military Advisory Group to the RVN. Summers concludes that, unlike the French Indochina War, which was a nationalist revolutionary war, the Vietnam War was more a conventional war, requiring conventional application of strategic principles.
The first strategic principle of war, the Objective, involves the application of that degree of force necessary to attain the political purpose of the war. Definition of the political purpose, by the President and Congress in the U.S. case, allows the identification of strategic and tactical objectives, which require constant review to ensure that they reflect the political aim and any political constraints on the use of force. Having failed to determine the nature of the war in Vietnam, the U.S. also was unable to identify precisely and consistently the military objective. Professor Arnold, for example, identified 22 different official rationales for American involvement in Indochina, between the Chinese Civil War and the Tet Offensive. Similarly, Clark Clifford, when he became Defense Secretary just after Tet, complained that his Department had no defined political aim and no plan to win the war.

The U.S. theory of limited war in Vietnam also deliberately excluded the American people from strategy. Apart from being quite contrary to the American heritage and the Constitution, this ignored another fundamental of war. Clausewitz referred to modern war's dependence on the unity of the people, the army and the government as essential for its prosecution. In Vietnam, it was assumed, falsely, that the people would bear a cost which the government had neither fixed nor justified. Clausewitz had warned that the value of the political objective of war determines the sacrifices to be made in both magnitude and duration: "Once the expenditure of effort exceeds the value of the political objective, the objective must be renounced".

At the operational level, the faults in U.S. strategic thinking flowed on to affect operations through faulty application of other principles. The main combat principles are concentration of force (at the decisive place and time), economy of effort (minimum diversion to secondary missions), and manoeuvre (flexible application of combat power). Under these principles all military effort should be applied against what Clausewitz called the enemy's centre of gravity.

Summers points out that US failure to identify the nature of the war led to failure to identify the enemy's centre of gravity. Instead of focussing on the VC, with pacification and search-and-destroy operations, and applying economy of force against the VPA regular forces, the VPA should have been recognised as the true centre of gravity. Operations against the NLF bore considerable success, especially during the 1968 Tet Offensive, when the VC were almost completely destroyed, yet the Vietnam War went on under DRV direction for another seven years, and was won eventually by an overwhelming conventional force of the VPA. "The results of the war clearly demonstrate that the primary enemy was the North Vietnamese regular army; the Viet Cong were never more than secondary force".

In the fifteen years since America's involvement in the Vietnam War, many have asked whether the outcome could have been different. Certainly an earlier U.S. realisation of the "total" nature of Hanoi's nationalist-revolutionary war may have influenced their strategy in the middle 1960s. A more timely and effective offensive against the Communist lines of communication in Laos and Cambodia, or against the North Vietnam base area might, for example, have destroyed the Communists' capacity to continue the war, or at least removed their initiative. But whether the U.S. could have pursued these courses, given the international constraints of the Geneva Accords, and the ever-present reluctance of its people for costly foreign intervention, is problematic.

Such a course would not have taken account of the fundamental inability, with or without American assistance, of the RVN to establish itself as a viable, stable government, economy and society. This, in the long-term, was the fundamental prerequisite for a non-Communist South Vietnam, and its achievement now seems to have been unlikely under most scenarios, given the nature of the RVN's successive regimes.

By the time of the Tet Offensive, when the U.S. realised more fully the nature of the struggle, or at least its own limitations in the domestic and global context, and the difficulty of creating a stable RVN, it was probably too late. The Communists by then were convinced of an eventual successful outcome. Had Westmoreland been given his 200,000 extra men in 1968, for example, he could not have prevented the NLF from dispersing, re-establishing its political and military infrastructure in the South and protracting the timeframe for victory. Similarly, had the U.S. continued with more popular support, with greater mobilization of the reserves and extensive use
of the draft, it seems highly unlikely that such a commitment in Indo-China could have been enlarged either in scope or duration, without seriously reducing political and strategic capacity in Europe and the Middle East, areas that are fundamental to the U.S. global position. Tet was the turning point for the U.S. to the extent that American leaders realised they could not, forever, prop up the Republic of Vietnam.

Communist Strategy

Communist strategy in the Vietnam War has been debated from a number of viewpoints, including its formulation and consistency, the relationship between political objectives and military strategy, its degree of acceptance among Vietnamese Communist leaders, and the effect on it of major events, such as U.S. intervention and the 1968 Tet Offensive. It has also faced the constant constraints of geography. First, the weather pattern divides the year into a dry winter-spring “offensive” season west of South Vietnam’s coastal plains (November to May), and a wet season in most of South Vietnam, characterised by reduced military activity (from May to October).

Second, South Vietnam consists of several topographically distinct areas, including the mountains and jungles of the Central Highlands, the long coastal strip from Quang Tri to Vung Tau (including most of the cities), and the Southern lowlands area of Saigon and the Mekong delta. Map 2 shows the military and political divisions of South Vietnam used by the RVN and the Communists.

From 1959-1964, Communist strategy in South Vietnam generally appeared to follow the Maoist concept of revolutionary guerrilla war, through its three phases of organization and political mobilization, protracted guerrilla warfare, and the counter-offensive when main force units seek a decision through conventional operations. It was based on the fundamental revolutionary guerrilla war concepts of time, space and cost: time through protracted war to exhaust the established government’s will to resist; space not to hold ground in the conventional warfare sense but to pose a constant threat to the government over a wide area; and cost imposed on the government, to protect its vital interests, and which would ultimately become unacceptable. In South Vietnam this strategy could succeed through any or all of: the inability of the RVN to establish a viable government and nation; a collapse of RVN or (after 1965 American) resolution; or a failure of counter-strategy.

With the introduction of U.S. ground forces in 1965, and American bombing of North Vietnam, there was a substantial departure from the Maoist model. From 1965-1975 large-scale conventional battles and small-scale guerrilla attacks were mounted simultaneously. While the Americans tended to see this as a double war — the “big war” with its strategy of attrition, and the “other war” for control of the population based on the strategy of pacification, Communist strategy emphasised the combination and interrelationship of operations in all strategic areas (jungles and mountains, lowlands and cities), using all types of forces (main, local and guerrilla).

The continuity of Communist strategy lay in its adherence to the combination of military, political and diplomatic activities, to achieve the national objective of reunification (of one Vietnam) under Communist control. In the words of Vo Nguyen Giap, in his essay People’s War, People’s Army in December 1959, “. . . the struggle is . . . to achieve the democratic national revolution throughout the country, and to reunify the fatherland on the basis of independence and democracy”. Giap’s overall strategic view was: “The enemy will be caught in a dilemma: he has to drag out the war in order to win it and does not possess, on the other hand, the psychological and political means to fight a long drawn out war”. The DRV’s major strategic liabilities were its dependence on foreign (Russian and Chinese) aid and its shortage of food.

Higher direction of strategy was in the hands of the Central/Committee of the Vietnamese Workers’ Party, with Giap, the Defence Minister, as Secretary. Operational control was exercised through military regions covering both northern and southern Vietnam. After 1965, Hanoi reorganised Communist forces in South Vietnam into four commands (see Map 2), three of which it controlled directly: Tri-Thien (the two northern provinces, south of the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ)), the Central Highlands, and Military Region 5 (the central coastal lowlands from Da Nang to Cam Ranh Bay). The fourth, the Central Office for South Vietnam (COSVN), comprised Military Regions 6, 7, 8 and 9 (the southern half of South Vietnam, also known as the B2 Theatre).
Map 2. Communist and South Vietnamese Military Regions.
and retained considerable independence in planning and operations. During 1965 and 1966 a high level debate ensued among Vietnamese Communist leaders on the military strategy required to defeat the U.S. in South Vietnam. Among the participants were Giap and other unidentified military leaders who advocated a shift away from main force operations and the attrition strategy to guerrilla tactics, in order to hold areas already won from the RVN, to shield the VPA regular units from increasingly heavy losses to American firepower, and to allow time to plan a counter to the U.S. forces and raise additional VPA units for the South. An opposing view was put by General Nguyen Chi Thanh, a Politburo member, chairman of the Central Military-Party Committee, and commander of COSVN forces until his death in 1967. Thanh advocated maintaining an offensive strategy and the large-unit actions of his insurgent forces, supported by regular VPA units, to maintain the psychological momentum of recent successes against the ARVN. Thanh’s plans prevailed until 1966.

That the Central Committee of the Communist Party in the DRV was responsible for the planning and conduct of the Tet Offensive is clear from the evidence of captured documents and interrogation reports, which show that they had directed and controlled the war in South Vietnam from 1959 on, and that the NLF was established (1960) to give the external appearance of opposition to RVN as well as to provide for indigenous Southern leadership. Secondly, Hanoi was responsible for committing regular units of the VPA to South Vietnam from 1964 (as opposed to southern returnees for the VC during 1959-63), probably through dissatisfaction with the NLF’s failure to take the South on its own, and to ensure that re-unification resulting from victory was under Politburo control.

When the U.S. intervened in 1965, to prevent the collapse of South Vietnam, the number of VPA battalions in the Communist main force in South Vietnam rose from only six in 1964, to 69 by December 1967. Over the same period VC battalions expanded from 60 to 83. Major clashes between U.S. and VPA units increased from 1965 to 1967. By Tet, VPA personnel made up about 50% of the main force in the South. The large VPA presence was justified to the Southern rural population by the cadres thus: “North Vietnam... a large and stable rear area... is providing us everything we need including soldiers... assigned to South Vietnam to liberate this part of the country”.

The strategy behind the Tet Offensive was based on the recognition, by both Giap and Thanh, that a military victory by itself was not possible in the South. Political advances were necessary, especially the disruption of U.S. support for the RVN, and of pacification. Giap’s actions in the DMZ in the 1966-67 dry season can be seen as experiments in effecting large U.S. deployments away from the coastal towns. Their success in thus setting back the pacification program was followed up in late 1967 with Dak To, Loc Ninh and Khe Sanh.

Although Tet’s series of lightning raids appeared to some to renounce the strategy of protracted war, their real aim was to intensify military pressure on the RVN. Giap never advocated specific tactics, but rather focussed on those combinations of forces and tactics appropriate to the situation. Tet itself was not intended to achieve final victory, in spite of the rhetoric of effort and sacrifice that permeated the NLF, but to create conditions that might lead to the next stage of the war, the opening of negotiations with the U.S.

The NLF had a narrower perspective of Tet and its outcomes, and acknowledged that it was a very difficult time. General Tran Van Tra noted that they had failed to assess their enemy’s capabilities, and plans had exceeded their strength to implement them. Tet had been a strategic turning point but at the cost of heavy losses in manpower and material, especially among the cadres. Better planning, a mass organization and more uprisings were needed, but “fear of reprisals” had limited the extent to which the population was prepared to commit itself to the NLF. As General Tran Do deputy commander of the Communist forces in the south, told Karnow: In all honesty, we didn’t achieve our main objective, which was to spur uprisings throughout the south. Still, we inflicted heavy casualties on the Americans and their puppets, and that was a big gain for us. As for making a big impact in the United States, it had not been our intention — but it turned out to be a fortunate result.

But while the decimated Southern cadres had begun to question why they were sustaining all the casualties, General Van Tien Dung, VPA
Chief of Staff, and others in the DRV, recognised that a bombing halt was essential, to strengthen the North’s role, as the “great rear area” for the Revolution in the South. Thus when the U.S. agreed to an unconditional bombing halt (November), and to NLF participation in widened four-party peace talks (January 1969), the Communists were able to claim for Tet a satisfactory outcome. The U.S. had been forced to de-escalate the war, and to join Hanoi at the conference table. The final victory was yet to come, but the limited war strategy of the U.S. had been discredited. Plans to escalate the war, by operations against the Communist lines of communication in Laos and Cambodia, or by an invasion of the North, had been preempted. The war was now in its penultimate phase of “fighting while negotiating”.

Negotiation became a major psychological instrument. “Fighting while negotiating” opened another front. General Vinh, the VPA Chief of Staff, had indicated to COSVN in April 1966 the relative roles of negotiation and combat in DRV strategy:

“The future situation may lead to negotiations . . . while negotiating, we will continue fighting the enemy more vigorously . . . We must fight to win great victories with which to compel the enemy to accept our conditions . . . we will take advantage of the opportunity offered by the negotiations to step up further our military attacks, political struggle and military proselyting”.

For the RVN, on the other hand, negotiations conducted between the Communists and the U.S. always implied the possibility that the U.S. might make concessions to their detriment. For the U.S. their continuation, always suggesting the possibility of a settlement, contributed to the growing lack of resolution. No real Communist concessions were required until after the failure of the 1972 Easter invasion when American mining of Haiphong finally threatened one of their food supply routes.

Communist strategy after Tet encompassed several dimensions. Internationally, it effectively set out to combine the use of negotiations with internal political and military activity. Internally, in addition to protracted military action, the need to win over the population of the South politically was recognised. A “united-front” strategy was adopted, designed to capitalise on the diverse forms of opposition to the RVN government. Religions were considered important, for example, and “People’s Liberation Councils” were created in the villages to mobilise non-Communist opposition. Similarly, in April 1968, urban elements that might co-operate with, but not join, the NLF were organized into the Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces.

This political approach to reunification had been commenced during the Offensive itself. Some VC launched a coordinated psychological offensive through radio broadcasts, to plant the idea of alternative political solutions in the minds of the South Vietnamese. “Alliances” and “non-Communist” coalitions for peace were mooted, but the essential theme was coalition with the NLF. Other themes included the notion of a revolutionary administration filling the gap left by the “destroyed” Saigon regime, and encouragement to desertion or neutrality.

The NLF itself operated outside the major cities, to avoid further losses. Major responsibility for urban political opposition was left with the united-front “Third Force” – a broad category of elements opposed to the government, which emphasised the social and economic failings of the RVN. To achieve their long-term aims of “unification”, therefore, the Communists effectively entered a transitional power-sharing “national democratic” phase.

By July 1969 COSVN claimed that their continued offensive had forced the U.S. to de-escalate its ground force efforts, halt bombing of the DRV and open negotiations with the Communists, including the NLF and PRG. It indicated some internal confusion about the shift in tactical emphasis from large-unit attacks on populated areas to guerrilla warfare designed to conserve manpower. Uncertain about the speed of U.S. withdrawal, it advocated continued strong military attacks, in conjunction with political and diplomatic efforts. Within three months, continuing U.S./ARVN successes in pacification in the countryside saw most of the VPA main force
units withdrawing from RVN or avoiding contact. A renewed emphasis was put on guerrilla warfare, which was to be increased.67

Early in 1970, Le Duan analysed the strategic situation of the revolution, which was in a temporary defensive phase. The offensive strategy was to continue at the appropriate time. There is clear evidence at this stage that the Vietnamese Communist leaders were not divided on the issue of low-level guerrilla warfare as opposed to main force offensives — it was a question of combinations at appropriate times.68

By early 1971, the success of RVN and U.S. pacification operations led to a revision of strategic guidance. COSVN by this stage, however, was able to assume that RVN policies of conscription, manpower upgrading and increased expenditure would work in favour of their political struggle in urban areas. Combined with the likely effect on U.S. policy of the growing domestic opposition to the war, and with Communist operations in Laos and Cambodia, the assessment of the situation was more favourable. Guerrilla warfare strategy was to continue, to exploit dissension within the RVN and direct military and political effort against the Vietnamization program.69

As the Paris peace talks neared completion, the PRG seized the diplomatic initiative by making clear their view that the settlement in South Vietnam should be based on the "actual" existence of two separate administrations, each with its own armed forces. A tripartite government absorbing the existing administrations would not be practical.70 Concurrently, Communist cadres in the South were directed to prepare for a "general uprising" to secure maximum control of rural areas by the PRG. Military attacks and political activity were to be launched in the short period of time between the signing of the Paris Agreement and its date of effect.71

The Paris Agreement of 1973 brought a nominal ceasefire in the war. It was seen, however, by the Communists as a step in the "people's revolutionary struggle", opening the way to "complete the democratic revolution and reunite the country". Hanoi considered that it bound the U.S. to troop withdrawal and to respect Vietnam's rights to independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity, and in South Vietnam to end intervention, support self-determination and acknowledge two governments, armies and zones of control, and three political forces.72

The 21st Conference of the Party Central Committee resolved in October 1973 to coordinate the political and military struggle with diplomacy. "The revolutionary road for the South is the road of revolutionary violence" and "the strategic offensive is to guide the revolution", with the combined use of the three types of forces: main forces, regional forces and local guerrillas. Similarly, the March 1974 Resolution of the Central Military Committee (CMC) referred to the achievement of the Revolution by transitional stages to victory through revolutionary violence: uprisings and combined political and military forces.73

A good overall perspective of the Communist offensive strategy between the Tet Offensive of 1968 and the Final Offensive of 1975 is provided by General Tran Van Tra. Tra took over command of COSVN forces following the death of Thanh in 1967, and was responsible for the planning of the Tet Offensive and the action at An Loc during the 1972 Easter Invasion. Thus Tra was familiar with both the large-unit war in the Central Highlands and the guerrilla warfare of the Mekong Delta.74

Tra did not agree with the strategic division of revolutionary war into stages, nor with the separate approach to main force operations and pacification, but stressed the need for appropriate combinations of forces and tactics. Coordination between local guerrilla forces and main force operations was critical to success, and Tra's forces applied it to create uncertainty, and to tie down large numbers of ARN units on security tasks, to the detriment of pacification operations.75

When mutual support between forces was prevented, as it was in the Delta by the pacification campaigns from 1969 to 1972, Tra ensured the maintenance of the guerrilla bases around Saigon by forward deployment of local units against ARVN main forces. He also applied this strategic flexibility in reverse when, after the Tet Offensive, the VC were unable to protect their infrastructure in Long An province in the Mekong Delta. Tra deployed the main force 320 Regiment to operate as guerrillas to protect the infrastructure, on the grounds that, although the casualties were high, it was easier to retain bases than to regain and reconstruct them later.76
Tra also demonstrated the Communist offensive strategy in his argument on the question of classifications of area control. Normally both the NLF and RVN classified rural areas as (a) NLF controlled, where Communist main force units freely conducted military and political activities, (b) RVN areas, where guerrillas and party chapters sought secretly to organise the masses, or (c) contested areas, where both sides operated main forces, and where the situation constantly changed. After the Paris talks started, some leaders advocated only two areas. Tra argued that this was inappropriate, on the grounds that a “contested” area could only be lost, if the NLF gave up the struggle. NLF areas would then become “contested”.

Communist successes during 1974 in areas of South Vietnam were attributed to this strategy of revolutionary violence. The VPA general staff from the operations in Thuong Duc (Zone 5) concluded that their mobile main force units were now superior to those of ARVN. The balance of forces had changed, and the war was in its final stage. Not only would forces attack in the jungles and mountains, but new attack forces would operate in the border and lowland areas and towns, to liberate people and hold territory.

Dung describes the preparations for the final campaign. From October 1973, VPA divisions, hitherto the largest formations, were organised into “mobile commands” (corps) directly subordinate to VPA Command. Equipment sent to the front included tanks, AFV, missiles, heavy artillery and anti-aircraft weapons. 20,000 kilometres of strategic roads were constructed between 1973-1975, together with oil pipelines and a telecommunications link from Quang Tri through the Tay Nguyen to Loc Ninh.

In October 1974 the VPA general staff presented a plan for the offensive to the Politburo and CMC, based on an assessment of the situation which noted:

- The RVN was now weaker militarily, politically and economically, and the ARVN was passive and demoralized as a result of reductions in U.S. financial support;
- The U.S. was now unable to “jump back” into RVN;
- “Strategic linking” of the North with the South had been established;
- The movements for “peace, popular welfare, democracy and national independence” in the South were gaining momentum; and
- Diplomatic efforts for “world support” were working. In short, the strategy of combined military, political and diplomatic struggle was coming to fruition.

The plan was developed in December 1974 by a group including the Southern Communist leaders Pham Hung (Politburo member and secretary of the southern party branch COSVN), General Tran Van Tra (commander of COSVN forces), and other Southern Central Committee members and military commanders. The choice of battlefield was based on an assessment of ARVN’s position as one of “strength on two ends”, with the majority of its regular divisions in I Corps (the North) and III and IV Corps (Saigon and the Delta). Only two dispersed divisions were deployed in II Corps for the defence of the Tay Nguyen and the central coast. The selection of the initial objective was resolved when Le Duan directed the assault on Ban Me Thuot in the Tay Nguyen. General Van Tien Dung, as a representative of the Central Military Committee and the VPA Command, was directed to supervise the first phase for the Final Offensive, the Tay Nguyen campaign in the Central Highlands. He contrasts its success with the attacks of 1968 and 1972 which failed because the ARVN was supported by the U.S., and the Communists had not developed an adequate road system and logistics structure. As Commander-in-Chief of the final phase, against Saigon and the Delta (the Ho Chi Minh campaign) Dung decided to assault Saigon earlier than originally intended, firstly to take advantage of the unexpectedly swift success of the first two phases (in the Tay Nguyen and the Hue/Da Nang campaign), which altered the strategic balance of forces around Saigon and prevented the ARVN from reinforcing it. Secondly, he recognised the need to forestall any last attempt by the RVN to re-group in the Saigon/Mekong Delta area.

The period from 1973 to 1975 thus represents the culmination of the Communist strategy of the offensive, combining military, political and diplomatic efforts to produce overwhelming superiority at the selected time and place. The components of this strategy had largely been developed or improved as a result of the experience of the 1968 Tet Offensive, when the
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RVN had been sustained by large-scale U.S. support, and the Communists had assaulted without the necessary logistic framework, internal political support or diplomatic advantages.

Conclusion

The 1968 Tet Offensive proved to be a major turning point in the Vietnam War. It had traumatic effects both on the NLF and in the United States. The initial attempt to capture the towns and cities failed outright. All but Hue were cleared of VC within a week, although this process took longer when the Communists tried again in May, on a lesser scale, by infiltrating small units over a wider area. In August there was one more unsuccessful attempt. In all, Communist regular and regional forces lost an estimated 30,000 personnel, and the NLF urban infrastructure in South Vietnam was effectively destroyed.

Instead of the mass uprising in the south, for which the planners of the offensive had hoped, the NLF effort in the cities left them without the resources to maintain even their rural infrastructure. After the attempt to revive the offensive later in 1968, the first large-scale Communist defections occurred, especially in the Mekong Delta area. The RVN Government and armed forces, however, were so extended in defending the urban areas against the now more obvious involvement of the VPA, that they were unable to fully regain their control in the countryside, in the vacuum left by the VC. Also, the pacification program had suffered a major setback.

In the United States, however, the Tet Offensive inadvertently achieved for the Communists a remarkable psychological victory. Their capacity to mount attacks on such a scale, in contrast to the public estimates of the U.S. Government, so surprised the American people that growing popular opposition to involvement in an Asian war was boosted. It discredited the U.S. strategy of attrition, and seriously undermined the credibility of Johnson's administration. In addition, it influenced the U.S. to stop bombing North Vietnam and to negotiate from a much weaker position.

American resolution was shattered and the myth that the war could not be won became a self-fulfilling prophesy.

The post-Tet Nixon strategy of Vietnamization was a belated recognition, firstly, that U.S. military strategy was inconsistent with domestic and international priorities. It was the outcome of a more objective assessment of the strategic balance. The events of 1968 had made clear the costs of involvement, both domestic and global. The U.S. now recognised the limits of its social, economic and political capacity.

Secondly, the will and capacity of the RVN to stand alone were recognised as the crucial factors in the eventual outcome. The paradox of Vietnamization as the basis of American strategy, however, was that it left America "wholly dependent on its own dependents". The withdrawal of U.S. forces was commenced in 1969, and the task of those remaining was merely to prevent the VPA from intervening in the RVN program of improving its military performance and regaining control of the populated areas. The real aim, a "just peace" or "peace with honour", was to get out of Vietnam with the least possible additional cost.

NOTES

2. In planning the 1968 general offensive, the party organization had directed its cadres to prepare for uprisings in towns and villages. Rather than an expectation for spontaneous uprisings, however, the "Directive from Province Party Standing Committee to District & Local Party Organs on Forthcoming Offensive & Uprisings, 1 November 1967", in Gareth Porter (ed), Vietnam: The Definitive Documentation of Human Decisions, Stanfordville, N.Y.: Coleman, 1979, pp.477-479, suggests a recognition that such uprisings had to be planned in detail through organized political action, co-ordinated with military attacks. Political action was to include annihilating the enemy's political power by capturing and killing "tyrants and spies", using the populace in sabotage, encouraging the people to go on strike and defend their villages, making appeals to enemy personnel to surrender, and organizing insurrection committees in RVN controlled villages. Support was to be provided by Party Committees using "determined-to-die" teams to attack the district headquarters and destroy lines of communication and pacification workers. "The forces available in the local areas must positively participate in the uprising." 2
7. Ibid., p.311.
“Generally speaking, the attacks were fruitful at the outset... Where the offensive and uprising were closely co-ordinated... the attacks were more successful... paralyzing the puppet government... and confusing the U.S. command.

However, we still have the following shortcomings and weaknesses: We failed to seize a number of primary objectives and to completely destroy mobile and defensive units of the enemy... to hold the occupied areas... to motivate the people to stage uprisings... Troop-proselytising activities were not conducted on a broad front.

The enemy... was surprised strategically... (but) continued to resist and his units were not completely broken up.

It is imperative to be fully aware... that the general offensive... is a prolonged strategic offensive that includes many campaigns. (Our) victories at the outset show... we are fully able to successfully achieve our plan. However,... we cannot yet, therefore, achieve total victory in a short period.”

16. Karnow, op.cit., p.503: Air strikes had destroyed hundreds of bridges in North Vietnam since 1966. They were rebuilt or bypassed. Rail and road transport had been smashed, but traffic had been restored. The Communists suffered no fuel shortages, in spite of the destruction of 75% of their oil storage facilities.
17. Ibid., pp.505-507.
18. Ibid., pp.507-512: Major search-and-destroy operations like “Francis Marion” and “Kingfisher” raised the enemy “body-count” to a new high, and 1,500,000 tons of bombs were dropped. Over 9,000 U.S. soldiers were killed in action in 1967, and by December troop levels reached 485,000.
19. Ibid., pp.513-514.
33. Ibid., p.42: Thompson, the advocate of counterinsurgency, was ironically Diem's adviser. He seems to have missed the essential difference between the Malayan Emergency, and the War in South Vietnam with its external threat.
34. Ibid.
35. Ibid., P.43.
38. Also, Douglas Kinnard, The War Managers, Hanover: Univ. Press of New England, 1977, p.25, quoted in Summers, op.cit., found in his 1974 survey that most U.S. Army generals who served in Vietnam were uncertain of the war's objectives, and concluded that this was a deep-seated strategic failure: the inability of policy-makers to frame tangible, obtainable goals.
40. Summer, op.cit., p.45.
42. Ibid., pp.5-6.
44. Ibid., p.5.
45. Thompson, op.cit., p.190.
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60. Turley, op.cit., p.113.
64. Kolko, op.cit., pp.322-333.
76. Ibid., p.39; on the Communist strategy of combination, or synthesis, of different types of forces, in differing terrain, see also Buchanan, op.cit., and Nguyen, op.cit.
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79. Ibid., pp.13-14.
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Colonel Jackson joined Sydney University Regiment in 1960 and left as 2IC in 1975. He was CO of both 1/19 RNSWR and 3 RNSWR, and subsequently served at HQ 2 DIV and 2 Trg Gp and as Colonel (Projects) Reserve Staff Group, Army Office, where he drafted policy on recruiting and enlistment for the Army Reserve. From 1983 to 1988 he was Chief Instructor, RCSC 2 Trg Gp. Colonel Jackson is a graduate of Sydney University (BA, Dip.Ed) and Joint Services Staff College, and in 1988 was awarded the degree of Master of Defence Studies at ADFA.
Battlefield Stress: Can We Continue to Ignore it

By Major K. Hartman, RA, Inf.

Introduction

'THE art of war is subjected to many modifications by industrial and scientific progress. But one thing does not change, the heart of man... in all matters which pertain to an army, organisation, discipline and tactics, the human heart in the supreme moment of battle is the basic factor.'

Ardant du Picq

The Human Dimension

Battlefield stress is an element of the human dimension of war. With the current preoccupation with technology, the physical dimension of war, the human aspect often takes second place. The impact of modern technology has transformed the battlefield into a highly mobile arena where fast reactions and no-fault performance are required merely to survive. Whether the human machine will survive on the future battlefield is directly related to the ability of the individual to sustain the stress of combat in such a setting. Battlefield stress varies markedly from the physical wounds resulting from combat. It cannot be seen, touched or even smelled. It is a mental, internal injury which throughout history has been much maligned and often related to mental instability or cowardice. The impact that combat stress will have on the modern battlefield has already been gauged during recent conflicts in the Middle East where significant losses were suffered through stress casualties. As a result, considerable research is now being conducted to ascertain whether the human machine can cope with the intensity of future combat. Current overseas studies indicate that extensive education and training is required to sustain the human dimension on the modern battlefield.

Historical Perspective

Battlefield stress was first recognised as a combat related psychiatric disorder during World War I where the diagnosis of 'Shell Shock' was applied. 'After intense shelling, some soldiers were dazed, tremulous, confused, or blind, deaf or paralysed with no neuro-surgical reason.' The problem, although largely forgotten during the intervening years, once again surfaced during World War II where, in North Africa, psychiatric casualties... showed dramatic and bizarre reactions, including terror states with gross tremors, marked startle reactions, tearing at the ground to gain cover, frozen states and withdrawal... It was then labelled as 'Exhaustion' and it was considered that 'every man has his breaking point.' The exhaustion label became inappropriate during the 1973 war in the Middle East, when the Israelis suffered numerous stress casualties in the first two days of fighting. It was realised that the intensity of the battle had an impact on the incidence of stress casualties. As a result of experiences in the Middle East, and a growing awareness of the frailty of the human machine under combat conditions, most modern armies are directing considerable attention to the impact that battlefield stress will have on future conflicts. History indicates that as the intensity and lethality of combat increases, the human machine will need to be adequately prepared if he is to sustain the expected levels of stress.

Current Policy

To state that the Australian Army has a policy on battlefield stress should be erroneous to say the least. Most training institutions pay lip-service to the study by including short stress or combat leadership modules in training programmes. The courses are largely directed at officers or officer cadets and do not comprehensively cover what is an extremely complex subject. Training directives do not include the requirement for education on stress, nor do they address the aspect of integrating stress training with field training. There are no existing Australian Army publications on the subject, with the exception of a short chapter in the Handbook on Leadership 1973, a publication which has a limited readership. In short, the Australian Army does not have a realistic policy on battlefield stress. The question remains as to whether the Australian Army can realistically take its place on the future battlefield without addressing a problem that will almost certainly have a major impact on man-
power resources. Accordingly, it is the aim of this article to determine the approach that the Australian Army should take to reduce the effects of battlefield stress in future conflicts.

Scope

In conducting research on this topic, it became clear that a broad understanding of the subject would be required in order to determine what approach should be taken to the problem. It is necessary to be able to grasp the meaning of battlefield stress and its various elements, as well as having a knowledge of current management techniques. To achieve the aim, the discussion will be developed under four separate headings. The first will define battlefield stress and the factors which contribute to the condition. This will be followed by a short section which details the current principles governing the treatment of combat stress. The third will focus on the management techniques which can be used to relieve its effects. Finally, the last section will offer suggestions as to how the Australian Army should approach the problem.

Battlefield Stress and its Component Factors

General

In order to determine how to approach the problems associated with battlefield stress it is important to have an understanding of the condition and its causes. Accordingly this section will define combat stress and describe some of the more common symptoms, followed by an explanation of the factors which cause the condition. The factors affecting combat stress will be grouped into three categories; fear, morale factors and physical aspects of combat. In describing the factors affecting battlefield stress it is important to understand that all the factors are interrelated, and although some have a greater impact than others, they cannot be considered in isolation. The combination of factors which will cause a stress casualty will be largely dependent on the individual and although some studies in this field have been carried out, stress-prone individuals are extremely difficult to isolate. The following section will provide an insight into the complex inter-relationships of the factors which contribute to stress casualties.

Battlefield Stress

The very nature of battlefield stress makes it somewhat difficult to define. It has been described as "the result of physical and psychological factors which adversely affect the soldiers ability to fight in battle." This definition indicates that stress can be physical or psychological and that it can have a detrimental effect on the soldiers performance in terms of ineffective combat behaviour. Another definition describes it as 'a soldiers psychological and physical reaction to the fear and fatigue that are part of all combat.' A past Director General of Army Health Services, Major General James, believes there is no doubt as to the nature of stress. He describes it as:

"... any stimulus or succession of stimuli of such magnitude that tends to disrupt the normal functions of the person. When the mechanisms of adjustment fail or become disproportionate, the stress can result in disability or a total breakdown."

Having put forward these definitions of the condition, it is important that a number of concepts are clear. Firstly, everyone taking part in combat will be affected in some way by combat stress. Secondly, how that stress is handled is very much up to the individual. Finally, when the individual fails to make the appropriate adjustments to this stress, he will become non-effective as a combatant. Essentially combat stress is a mental condition resulting from physical and psychological factors which make a soldier combat ineffective, although he suffers no apparent physical damage.

Symptoms

The symptoms of combat stress are varied and diverse. "A soldier may become increasingly emotional — crying easily, becoming irritable, using excessive profanity. Or he may experience sleep disturbances (have difficulty going to sleep or have nightmares), and exaggerated responses to sudden nearby noises and movements. Because these symptoms are common in combat situations, they usually require no medical intervention, but the more severe forms of BF (Battle Fatigue) can render the infantryman ineffective, and medical intervention may then become necessary."

The diversity of symptoms is accentuated by the fact that combat stress affects two groups of combatants quite differently. The two most common groups affected by combat stress are those who enter combat for the first time and those who have been engaged in combat over an
extended period. Individuals entering combat for the first time will exhibit:

‘severe tremors and shaking, hallucinations, uncontrollable panic, crying or stupor, and hysterical muteness, blindness or paralysis (without actual physical injury).”

Those who have been in combat for extended periods may acquire what is described as ‘Old Sergeants Syndrome’, his group will display the following symptoms:

‘Apathy; slowness in thinking, responding, or moving; a lack of concern about their survival; dependence on others; confusion; mild tremors; vomiting or diarrhoea; failure to eat; hypersensitivity to sounds or movements; sleep disturbances; open fearfulness; excessive smoking or noticeable reclusiveness; and depression or social withdrawal.”

Both sets of symptoms are common to all combat situations and it is only when a soldier fails to adjust to the stress that he becomes a casualty. The difference between a normal response, and that of a soldier approaching stress casualty status, is one of severity of reaction. A commander must learn to recognise the point at which a subordinate’s reactions become exaggerated so that appropriate action can be taken to restore his fighting capability.

**Fear**

‘The primary stress of the battlefield is the fear of disfigurement, mutilation, intense pain, death . . .’" Man is unique in his response to fear in that ‘all animals have life preservation reactions; but probably it is only man that fears death, for it is only man that knows — or thinks he knows — enough about death to feel it the terror of the unfathomed and unknown.” Fear is basically a reaction to danger, a commodity of which there is no shortage on the battlefield. Fear is a natural reaction to the rigors of combat provided that it is kept under control. Uncontrolled fear is destructive and if allowed to spread will have a detrimental effect on the outcome of battle. S. L. A. Marshall in his book Men Against Fire states: ‘. . . nothing is more likely to collapse a line of infantry in combat than the sight of a few of its members in full and unexplained flight to the rear.” Fear is the most important element of stress on the battlefield and if not kept under control, will not only result in a stress casualty, but will almost certainly have an impact on the outcome of battle.

The control of fear on the battlefield is often associated with what is called the fight or flight syndrome which creates an internal conflict in the soldier. ‘The fear of injury or death is pushing him to flight, whilst the fear of losing face with his friends if he runs is pushing him to remain in place and fight.’14 The decision to fight or to flee is related to the concept of courage, a concept more than adequately summarised by Lord Moran in his book The Anatomy of Courage, he states:

‘Courage is a moral quality, it is not a chance gift of nature like an aptitude for games. It is a cold choice between two alternatives, the fixed resolve not to quit; an act of renunciation which must be made not once but many times by the power of the will. Courage is will-power.”

‘Courage is will-power, whereof no man has an unlimited stock; and when in war it is used up, he is finished. A man’s courage is his capital and he is always spending. The call on the bank may be only the daily drain of the front line or it may be a sudden draft which threatens to close the account.”

It is evident that fear is controlled by a soldier’s will or courage to fight on. It is also evident that the will to resist is not in endless supply and when that will is lost the soldier becomes a psychological casualty. It should be noted this drain on will power is not only affected by fear but is depleted in combination with all other factors related to combat fatigue.

**Morale Factors**

The morale of a unit can have a significant effect on the incidence of combat stress casualties and in itself can help overcome the uncertainties of the battlefield. An outstanding example of the effects of morale occurred during World War II in the defence of Calais by the British 30th Brigade:

‘Battalions were moved at literally a few hours notice . . . They left most of their transport and much of their ammunition in the United Kingdom. The staff work of their move was a shambles. Once in combat, they faced continuing adversities such as the unexpected, the unknown, fear, exhaustion, and the normal noise and unpleasant sites of battle. Yet, the Brigade fought well and held for four days against a determined enemy and
overwhelming hardships. It was the unit's collective morale that allowed this feat — morale that was fostered over time by most men having served together for many years, by excessive pride in the Regiment, and by exceptional leadership."

The interrelationship between morale, unit cohesion and leadership and their subsequent effects on the battlefield are self-evident. However, the absence of these factors will reduce the will of the individual to resist the stresses found on the battlefield and will ultimately result in breakdown.

Physical Aspects of Combat

The physical aspects of combat which affect the level of battlefield stress are many and varied. They include noise and weapon effect, duration, type of action, climate and terrain, fatigue, isolation and many others. As not all can be covered the discussion will be limited to what are considered two of the more important factors; fatigue and noise and weapon effect.

Fatigue

Hunger, thirst, climatic conditions, protracted operations and the resulting loss of sleep, all place demands upon the soldier on the battlefield and cumulatively contribute to the factor of fatigue. Fatigue makes it even more difficult for the soldier to mentally adjust to the rigors of the battlefield and in certain circumstances will sap his will to the point where he will become a stress casualty.

By far the most important factor contributing to fatigue is that of sleep loss. A recent experiment in England (Exercise Early Call) detailed the effects of fatigue due to sleep loss. In this experiment, three platoons were tested over a nine day period under simulated battlefield conditions. The first platoon received three hours sleep per day; a second platoon received one and a-half-hours sleep; and, the third platoon was deprived of any sleep. The platoon receiving three hours sleep remained effective for the full nine days. The second platoon lost 50 percent of their personnel on the fifth day due to extreme fatigue and exposure. The third platoon became an ineffective combat force after 72 hours of wakefulness. These experiments highlight the importance of a laid down work-sleep schedule and dramatically show the results of total sleep deprivation. It should be remembered that the experiment was conducted under simulated conditions which cannot hope to portray the actual battlefield conditions where the soldier is subjected to many other stresses. Under combat conditions, fatigue due to sleep loss will be one of the many factors which contribute to the breakdown of the individual.

Extremes of climate can also significantly contribute to the fatigue of a soldier on the battlefield. Extremes of temperature require the body to work harder to maintain normal functions. ‘Exposure to cold for 2 to 3 hours reduces hand strength 20 to 30 percent.’ As a result normal tasks will take up to 33 percent longer to complete. Heat is of greater concern than cold. Cold can be countered by warm clothing, however, heat is difficult to counter on the battlefield and will systematically sap the strength of an individual over a period of time. The effect of climatic conditions on fatigue, and hence stress, requires constant attention by commanders at all levels if combat effectiveness is to be maintained.

Noise and Weapon Effect

‘Weapons do not have to kill or wound to make soldiers less effective for combat.’ Soldiers will very quickly approach the limits of their emotional resources when subjected to continuous bombardment. As a result of continuous bombardment soldiers will become less combat effective, and, depending on intensity and duration, could become psychological casualties. A number of examples of the effects of continuous bombardment exist in history: ‘... in order to support the crossing of the Rhine at Wessel in 1945, the British put down a barrage on the German front line defensives. As a result of the barrage the Germans offered no resistance at all and caused no casualties. Similar effects were found during the 1944 Normandy landings of British and American troops. The British were required to pin down a number of German tank divisions so that the American troops could advance from another direction. In order to do this the British employed heavy indirect artillery. After approximately two hours bombardment, the Germans were reported to be in a complete state of shock or disorientation, and incapable of offering resistance.’ Under such conditions it is not difficult to visualise the failure of the mechanisms of adjustment and the resultant breakdown of the individual.
Treatment of Battlefield Stress

Principle of Treatment

'There is a paradox in treating psychiatric battle casualties: The more they are treated like hospital patients, the worse they get. . . . Chances for recovery are greatest when they are treated like soldiers who are temporarily disabled but expected to return to duty.' This paradox has given rise to a method of treatment based on the principles of immediacy, proximity and expectancy. These principles can be interpreted as saying that the casualties should be treated as soon as possible, in close proximity to the front, with the expectancy of being returned to active duty when cured. The principle of immediacy allows the soldier to be treated before he becomes a chronic problem and depends largely on the early identification of stress casualties. Proximity requires the patient to be treated in the battle zone and not in the rear or hospitals where he would be surrounded by physically wounded casualties, causing his symptoms to be escalated. Expectancy dictates that the soldier will be rehabilitated and returned to his unit in the battle zone. This last principle is extremely important as it sets the precedent that psychiatric casualties, once rehabilitated are capable of returning to their units. Acceptance of this last principle will not only give the soldier the expectancy of an early return to active duty but his unit will anticipate his return without the prejudice normally attached to stress cases. Adherence to the above principles will create an environment where stress casualties represent recoverable manpower on the battlefield.

The Israeli Experience

One of the few armies that has successfully employed these principles is the Israeli Defence Force (IDF). As a result of 'post-mortems' of the October 1973 War, the IDF realised that a significant percentage of their casualties was due to psychiatric causes. Teams of psychologists were subsequently assigned to IDF units and during the invasion of Lebanon treated stress casualties in accordance with the above principles. The results were so successful that 'over 80 percent of the battle shock cases were salvaged and returned to their units within 24 hours with almost no recurrence of battle shock among those returned as long as they were allowed to remain with their units.' By contrast, of those evacuated to the rear, none were ever returned. It is worth noting that psychologists are now a permanent part of the establishment of IDF units and that all psychologists have served time in the ranks, some under combat conditions, and therefore have an intimate knowledge of battlefield conditions. The empathy with the combat soldier by psychiatric teams was considered an important factor in the success of the project.

The Management of Battlefield Stress

Education

The most far reaching solution to battlefield stress is the widespread education of combatants to the cause and effect. Firstly, the stigma associated with combat stress casualties must be eliminated. All levels of a military organisation must be made aware of the fact that psychological breakdown is a natural reaction to the conditions which prevail on the battlefield.

'Commanders in future conflicts will need to realize that most psychiatric dysfunctions in combat are not the result of cowardice or personality deficiencies, but, rather, the inevitable result of high-technology high-intensity warfare in which every soldier is a potential victim. Educating commanders on the topic of stress will increase the chance that recovered casualties will be accepted back into their units, that unit personnel will be more likely to monitor and report personal and unit stress, and that commanders themselves will avoid a stress reaction.'

In addition to reducing the stigma associated with psychiatric casualties, an education programme will make all combatants aware of the contributing factors and the resultant symptoms. With this knowledge the individual will be better able to monitor his own stress levels as well as being able to detect potential breakdown victims around him. Accordingly, the principle of immediacy will be applied, with the appropriate early treatment and early return to the battlefield. Education is the first step, without which further action cannot be contemplated.

Training

In terms of prevention of battlefield stress, training should be as realistic as peacetime conditions allow and include specific stress creation exercises. In this way, soldiers will have an expectation of actual battle conditions and will
become familiar with their own reaction under stress.

"Peacetime manoeuvres are a feeble substitute for the real thing; but even they can give an army an advantage over others whose training is confined to routine, mechanical drill . . . It is immensely important that no soldier, whatever his rank, should wait for war to expose him to those aspects of active service that amaze and confuse him when he first comes across them. If he has met them even once before, they will begin to be familiar to him." 25

The injection of realism is important from the point of view of the creation of fear. During actual combat an individual must learn to control fear rather than allowing it to overcome him. It is appreciated that the creation of fear is difficult during peacetime training, but every effort must be made to give a soldier an expectation of actual battlefield conditions. Stress-related training in terms of fatigue and sleep deprivation gives the soldier an insight into his reactions under such conditions and, during subsequent training or battle conditions, will afford him a measure of control over his reactions. Accordingly, realistic training, with the integration of stress factors, will give soldiers an insight into their reactions under combat conditions.

Unit Morale

Unit morale is a most important preventative measure against battlefield stress.

"With the improvement in weapons, the power of destruction increases, the moral effect of such weapons increases, and the courage to face them becomes rarer. Man does not, cannot change. What should increase with the power of material is the strength of organization, the unity of the fighting machine. Yet these are most neglected." 26

Colonel Ardant du Picq’s wise words are still very relevant today and although he was not referring to the problems of combat stress, they can easily be applied to the subject. Studies conducted by the Israeli Defence Force during recent wars indicate that elite units with high unit cohesion suffer significantly less stress related casualties during combat. The promotion of unit morale by effective leadership is not an unfamiliar topic to Australian officers and will not be pursued in detail, however, commanders will do well to remember the negative effects of poor unit cohesion on their fighting force.

Reduction of Fatigue

An effort must be made at all levels to reduce the effects of fatigue, thereby allowing the individual to better cope with the stress of combat. A soldier overcome with fatigue is less likely to maintain his will to continue under extreme combat conditions. The requirement for rest is obvious but is often overlooked by commanders. Commanders in future conflicts may need to institute a strictly enforced sleep schedule to ensure that their soldiers are fit to continue. It should be noted that the effects of sleep loss are cumulative and that recovery time increases accordingly.

"After an operation of 36 to 48 hours of continuous wakefulness, 12 hours of sleep or rest is required to return personnel to normal functioning; however, subjective fatigue may linger for 3 days. If a high level of activity, such as combat, is undertaken during this period, personnel may need two 12-hour rest periods to attain complete recovery. After 72 or more hours of continuous wakefulness, personnel may need as much as 2 or 3 days of rest for recovery of normal performance." 27

A commander who neglects the requirement for rest will soon have an ineffective force with which to conduct operations.

In addition to enforced sleep schedules at unit or sub-unit level, another solution to the fatigue problem will be the rotation of whole units out of immediate combat. Such rotation not only serves to reduce the effects of fatigue, but also takes soldiers away from the other stresses which are present during combat, thereby allowing the individual to make some deposits in Moran’s account of courage. In future conflicts the rotation of units may have to be a preplanned operation to reduce the degradation of a fighting force.

Extremes of climate significantly increase the effects of fatigue and commanders will need to be aware of the requirement for acclimatisation when conducting operations under extreme conditions where the requirement for sleep and rest increase dramatically. Ignorance of these effects will soon reduce the efficiency of a fighting force not only through fatigue, but also through an accompanying increase in stress related casualties. The effects of climate on
fatigue, and hence on battlefield stress, are particularly pertinent when operating in the north of Australia.

The Australian Army Approach to Battlefield Stress

Policy Requirement

The lack of a firm policy by the ADF is understandable in view of the nature of recent conflicts. Since Korea, the Australian Army has been involved almost exclusively in low-level operations and has not experienced battlefield casualty rates to any significant degree. Current policy in The Defence of Australia 1987 outlines the expectancy of being involved only in low or escalated low-level conflict. If viewed from this perspective the need for extensive training and education in battlefield stress would, and does, attract a very low priority.

Although the ADF’s current policy is directed towards low-level conflict, it would be foolish to dismiss the prospect of becoming involved in higher levels of conflict. The Defence of Australia 1987 recognises this requirement in stating: ‘... the need to recognise that at some time in the future there could be a serious deterioration in our strategic circumstances means the ADF should contain a level of skills from which expansion to meet the threat could occur.’ The majority of western armies with an expectancy of being involved at that level of warfare have recognised the fact that the intensity of warfare on the modern battlefield requires greater attention to the survivability of the individual. Weapons and weapon systems have evolved incredibly over the past quarter century, but the human machine has remained relatively unchanged. The British, Americans and in particular, the Israelis, have recognised the vulnerability of the human machine on the modern battlefield and have taken extensive steps to guard their most valuable asset. They have recognised that the proportion of battlefield stress casualty rates on the modern battlefield will increase markedly in future conflicts. Accordingly, they have conducted extensive training on the subject, including the issue of comprehensive training publications: If the Australian Army wishes to take its place on the modern battlefield, similar steps need to be taken to ensure our success, particularly when the human resource is likely to be a scarce asset.

Having recognised the need for a policy on battlefield stress, any measures taken by the Australian Army must be capable of implementation within current budgetary constraints. In addition, it is recognised that involvement in mid to high level conflicts by the Australian Army is not imminent and that some time will be available to comprehensively prepare for such a situation. For instance, the Israeli Army has a team of combat psychiatrists on the permanent establishment of all combat formations. Such increases to establishment are unlikely in the current environment, however, recognition of the requirement in expansion and mobilisation plans would be more than prudent. Accordingly, any policy adopted by the Army must recognise that there will be no marked increase in establishments nor can it draw too greatly from the limited training time available to formations. What is required is an extensive education programme combined with sensible integration of stress related training into existing training programmes. A policy which does not recognise the limitations of the current defence budget is unlikely to be implemented.

Education

The first step in an education programme is to radically change the attitudes towards battlefield stress throughout the armed forces. The majority of the members of the Army still consider that stress casualties are related to weakness or cowardice. While this attitude persists the problem will defy resolution. Commanders and soldiers alike must recognise that battlefield stress is an unavoidable consequence of combat and that susceptibility to combat stress is not entirely reserved for the abject coward. Once the stigma associated with stress casualties has been removed, a firm basis for further education can be developed.

The basis for any education programme is the requirement for a comprehensive publication on the subject. Both the British and US forces have developed more than adequate manuals on the management of battlefield stress. These manuals could be readily adapted to the Australian Army without the requirement for expensive and time-consuming research. A project team drawn from the Psychology Corps, with the appropriate arms advisors, could develop the basic doctrine and produce a manual appropriate to the Australian Army environment. The completion of such a manual would allow the commencement of an
education programme within the existing training cycle.

Implementation of an education programme will need to be introduced at all levels of training. Battlefield stress modules will need to be included in the curriculum of all basic and officer training establishments where an understanding of the problem can be developed. The level of understanding can then be increased during promotion courses and all arms officer courses. Formation training directives should reflect the requirement to develop this knowledge in unit training programmes. The successful introduction of comprehensive and structured programmes would create the basis for an understanding of battlefield stress, and in itself, reduce the incidence of future stress casualties.

Training

Although realism is an essential part of any training conducted by Australian forces, little effort is made to include specific stress related training into field exercises. The essential aspects of stress training require the inclusion of the elements of fear and fatigue into field training exercises as both these elements have a major impact on the incidence of stress casualties on the battlefield. Under peacetime conditions, the inclusion of these elements in training is often difficult and can result in unacceptable casualty rates. However, if an ADF is to be adequately prepared to engage in mid to high level conflicts, a greater effort must be made in his regard. The conditions that can be expected in future conflicts must be realistically portrayed to the soldier to allow him an insight to his reactions under combat conditions.

The only means of producing the element of fear in exercise participants is to simulate as closely as possible the actual battlefield conditions. A most effective means of achieving realism is the conduct of live firing exercises. Unfortunately, peacetime safety regulations have significantly reduced the training of live firing exercises. Safety distances for supporting fire have been increased to the point where much of the realism is lost. The large number of safety staff required not only detracts from the realism, but make unit level exercises almost impossible to conduct due to the manpower restrictions. The widespread opinion of field force officers is that safety regulations have become unnecessarily restrictive. In the Australian context a major overhaul of the safety regulations is required in order to gain the appropriate training value. Realistic live firing exercises are a key to reproducing battlefield conditions and will not only subject soldiers to stress, but are also outstanding training value.

Another method of achieving realism in training would be the introduction of an Individual Weapons Effect Simulation System (IWESS), a project currently under consideration by Army Office. The US Army claims outstanding results from the introduction of their Multiple Integrated Laser Engagement System (MILES). The introduction of MILES led to the creation, in 1979, of the National Training Centre (NTC) which was designed to create a stressful near combat environment that would refine the war fighting skills of already well trained battalion task forces for operations in a mid to high intensity scenario. US Army units attending the NTC are subjected to a rigorous month long programme which is said to produce ‘a quantum leap in their combat readiness.’ It is worthy of note that the training at NTC culminates in 10 days of live firing at the battalion task force level. The benefits of weapons effect simulation systems are well established and provide a most effective method of simulating the battlefield and the stresses which are found in that environment. In a time of ever decreasing resources, the introduction of a similar system to the Australian Army may well be considered cost effective in terms of training value, despite the quite substantial initial outlays.

Having determined the most effective means of providing realistic training for our combat forces, the question of how and where to conduct that training remains. The answer lies in the establishment of a school similar to the US Army’s National Training Centre. A school whose charter it would be to conduct live firing and weapons effect exercises. An ideal location for such an establishment would be the Shoalwater Bay Training Area which contains one of the few remaining live firing ranges and has sufficient area in which to conduct unit level weapons effect simulation exercises. It is appreciated that the formation of a new school is not within the guidelines of budgetary constraint, however, it is suggested that an appropriate compensator might be the Field Force Battle School, whose charter could be easily ab-
sorbed by Battle Wing at the Land Warfare Centre. The formation of a dedicated live firing and weapons effects simulation school for the field force is a project worthy of detailed consideration as it has many advantages beyond those related to battlefield stress.

Training for continuous mid to high level conflict needs to be urgently introduced into field force training programmes. The prospect of having no delineation between day and night on the future battlefield is very real. To date this problem has not been officially addressed and the requirement to conduct continuous operations during exercises needs to be included in formation training directives. Short sub-unit exercises conducted on a continuous basis would allow commanders and soldiers to see at first hand the effects of fatigue and sleep deprivation and would prepare them well for the future battlefield. Subsequently, continuous operations could be inserted into unit exercises to test the requirement for rotation of sub-units. If this aspect of training is not included in training directives the prospects of entering on to the modern battlefield attains considerable risk.

**Battlefield Psychiatric Teams**

Under the present strategic circumstances the formation and allocation of psychiatric teams to formations is not considered necessary. The planning process for this eventuality should, however, commence immediately. In doing so, the Psychology Corps would do well to take note of the Israeli doctrine on combat psychology. The success of their battlefield psychologists during the war in Lebanon was in part due to the combat experience of their teams.

> ‘In the IDF all officers, including battle psychologists, serve at least two years in the ranks before becoming officers and thus are well accepted as fellow soldiers by troops and officers. As with most officers in the IDF, the psychologist’s claim to authority rest in having been soldiers first and a technician second.’

There is no suggestion that all psychologists should spend two years in combat units, but an effort must be made to make psychologists familiar with the battlefield and the soldiers who fight in that environment. This problem will no doubt have to be addressed by the Corps in planning for their role in future conflicts.

**Conclusion**

In a world of continuing uncertainty, the prospect of nations resolving their differences on the battlefield is very real. Nations faced with this prospect are continually striving to devise weapons systems that make the lethality and intensity of the future battlefield difficult to imagine even by the military mind. Yet, with all the advances in weaponry, scant attention is being paid to the human element of the battlefield. Advanced medical techniques ensure greater survivability from physical wounds, but the same technology cannot be applied to mental wounds. The ability of the human machine to keep pace with the stress of the modern battlefield is only now being questioned. The realisation is being made that the human mind may have reached a barrier beyond which it cannot rationalise the combat conditions of the future. In order to pass through that barrier the mind has to be trained to make the adjustment to the ever increasing intensity of battle. Without significant training and education the limits of endurance of the human machine cannot be extended to cope with the conditions expected in future conflicts. An Army which disregards the human frailty of its own forces cannot hope for success on the battlefield of the future.

Having recognised the limitations of the human element in warfare, the measures required to extend the mental endurance of the soldier on the battlefield are in fact quite simple. The inherent flexibility of the human mind allow it to make the necessary adjustments by a simple process of education and training. A broad based education programme designed to give the soldier an expectation of his likely reactions under combat conditions will aid the adjustment process. More importantly, education will put an end to the stigma normally attached to stress casualties. Realistic training, particularly that which induces fear, familiarises the mind with potentially high stress situations, thereby fostering a more graduated response and preventing complete breakdown. The promotion of morals and unit cohesion significantly reduce the impact of stress on the battlefield. A sense of belonging and belief in a cause serves to prevent the individual from giving in to the many stresses of combat. All the measures described do not have a singular relationship with battlefield stress. They also collectively
promote the formation of an efficient fighting force, so necessary in future conflicts.

The question as to whether the Australian Army, or any modern army, can continue to ignore the impact of battlefield stress in future conflicts must be answered in the negative. Australia is a large and vulnerable nation with a limited manpower resource. In any future scenario the protection of that resource will be most vital. The loss of our combat forces as stress casualties will be unacceptable as replacements will be scarce. Such losses would seriously endanger our viability as a fighting force and under protracted conditions would have a detrimental effect on the outcome. When the nation is called upon to defend itself or support an ally, the Army must be prepared for the uncertainties of the future battlefield. Failure to do so may not allow the Australian Army to acquit itself with the distinction it has enjoyed in past conflicts.

The measures suggested to overcome the problem are reasonable and consistent with the Army's ability to implement them. Education on the subject is a major step towards resolution and could easily be included across the training spectrum. A greater emphasis on realistic training and inclusion of stress related training on exercises would significantly reduce the impact of stress in combat. This emphasis on realism has a dual purpose. Not only does it reduce stress casualties but also serves to increase the preparedness of soldiers for battle. The Psychology Corps will need to prepare for their vital role in future conflicts. Preparations for this role should be commenced immediately so that upon mobilisation they can produce the necessary service in maintaining our manpower resources. In order to survive future conflicts, every step must be taken to protect the most vital human resource. Hindsight cannot compensate for failure. The thoughts of Major General 'Digger' James adequately summarise the need for the Australian Army to prepare for the future:

"In our next war, as in every war in the past, man is both the target and the weapon, subject to physical and psychological damage — testimony that war is and will continue to be, horrific, fear-inducing and mentally and physically destructive.

'While man has long been the measure of all things, he is nevertheless a fairly fragile creature, prone to fear, doubts, weaknesses and, at times great courage and strength. It behoves leaders at all levels to understand the genuine limits of endurance, to husband the human resource and direct their energies now to its long term conservation.'

NOTES

4. Ibid.
5. Graco, Major W. Precis of Men in Battle, Infantry Centre, Singleton.
10. Ibid.
18. Frank, Captain G. R. op cit, p19.
27. Frank, Captain G. R. op cit, p20.
30. Ibid.
32. James, Brigadier W. B. and Hall, Lieutenant Colonel R. J. op cit, p16.
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Major Karl Hartman graduated from OCS in 1973. He has held several appointments since then including overseas posting to Rhodesia in 1979. He was Observer with the UN in Egypt/Beirut in 1984 and a Coy. Cmdr. in Butterworth, Malaysia in 1985. Major Hartman is currently an Instructor Tac. Wing, Land Warfare Centre.
The 1987 Defence White Paper — Does It Go Far Enough?

By Major W. G. Horne, RA Sigs

When first tabled in March 1987 the Defence White Paper was well received by a broad section of the Australian defence community. Reporting on the paper (actually named The Defence of Australia 1987) was factual while criticism seemed conspicuous in its absence. Defence Force personnel themselves also appeared supportive, looking forward to challenges such as the integration of the Army’s Regular and Reserve forces. During the period since then some criticisms have emerged so perhaps now is the time to take stock of the real effect of the paper. Has it just been rhetoric, or have some real changes started to occur? Before answering this a more basic question needs to be answered — why was the 1987 Defence White Paper needed in the first place?

The first reason is purely one of financial accountability. In FY 1986/87 Defence expenditure totalled over $7,500 million dollars. This equates to some three per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). This figure also represents some ten per cent of all Commonwealth Budget outlays. Defence has the third largest budget after Social Security (27.5%) and Payments to the States (19.3%). Despite pressure from other competing needs such as health and education, the total slice of GDP spent on Defence has actually risen since the end of the Vietnam War. As the 1987 Defence White Paper states, given this situation “... any sustained increase ... could be justified only in the event of marked deterioration in our strategic circumstances.” Nonetheless the present government seems determined to push ahead with the present policy. The major thrust of the 1987 Paper was Capital Equipment and Facilities programmes on which $25 billion is to be spent over the next fifteen years. To individuals these are incredible sums of money. If it is necessary that such sums be spent on Defence, then at the very latest that money must be seen in the most effective manner possible. The expenditure of such sums cannot be kept to within the Department of Defence itself. With such large sums being spent on equipment local Australian industries are benefiting from a government policy which dictates that work to the value of 30 per cent of large scale imported projects must be placed with Australian Industry. With such large cost projects such as F-18 fighters, submarines and frigates, it is essential that Defence policy includes clear long term rational direction upon which local industries can plan. If industry is to positively assist in increased self-reliance for Australia, then guidance is essential.

A secondary need for rational Defence planning is that any wrong decisions could cost Australia its very existence. During peacetime it is impossible to test the effectiveness of a Defence Policy. Only war can test the effectiveness of our Defence Force. In addition a policy of deterrence provides only a negative test where in the event of being attacked, a policy of deterrence is deemed to have failed. Nevertheless the Defence Force has a role to ensure that the Australian people can expect to achieve their aspirations. To take this further, Political Scientists such as Joseph Frankel have stated that a nation is recognised by its people, the territory which it controls, a recognised government and a sovereignty which is recognised in the international arena. Even today when there is no clearly recognisable threat to Australia the world is seen to be a violent arena which needs our constant vigilance. It is unlikely that Australia could maintain her sovereignty without a Defence Force.

A third aspect which requires Australia to look at its own defence problems is that our defence needs are unique. While we continue to be isolated from our traditional allies much has changed over the last two decades. We no longer totally rely on the United States for assistance. Australia’s mainland territory is larger than Western Europe while our maritime approaches are massive and largely uncharted. These problems, coupled with rapid changes in military technology, place uncertainties on our security. Australia cannot afford to rely on the defence needs, experiences and research of other nations.
The large sums of money spent on our Defence, and the uncertainties of our security in an ever changing strategic and technological world, both lead to a fourth reason why the 1987 Defence White Paper was needed. In 1984 the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence noted "... that in spite of an annual defence budget (then) of over $5 billion and combined forces totalling some 72,000 service personnel, Australia ..." was limited in the force it could field, while some basic defence requirements such as reserve stocks of ammunition, were inadequate.  

With factors such as these it is essential that Australia take an absolutely rational study at what it is trying to achieve with Defence. Certainly it becomes easy to justify expenditure on comprehensive studies into defence matters. The 1987 Defence White Paper was not the first defence policy document.

The previous policy paper was tabled in 1976. Prior to this Australia viewed national security in almost wholly military terms. During the 1950s and 1960s areas such as foreign policy and economic and trade matters were not seen to have much bearing on national security. Clearly such a narrow policy could not have coped with 1980s problems such as national resources, refugees and human rights. Despite this narrow perspective it is curious that the Department of Defence had very limited impact on Defence policy; a policy which depended heavily on powerful allies such as Britain and (more recently) the United States.

Such reliance was to change. In July 1969 President Nixon announced his "Guam Doctrine" which stated that US forces were unlikely to be committed to South-East Asia again — allies had to learn to become more self-reliant. Despite the imprecise nature of the Guam Doctrine Australia was forced to reassess its policy. The result was the 1976 Defence White Paper. This paper declared a policy of increased self-reliance in defence matters. The military were to maintain a "core force" which could be built on to meet any threat. Indeed no threat could be identified nor was one seen as being likely to arise for at least another decade. In any event the 1976 policy was a failure. This White Paper depended on a sustained and substantial real increase in defence spending in order to meet the capital equipments procurement programme. This did not eventuate.

Since then there have been numerous studies by both academics and the government.

In 1980 Ross Babbage's Rethinking Australia's Defence was published. He identified six basic weaknesses in Australia's Defence posture, some longstanding, other resulting from our changed strategic circumstances. He cited not only inadequate strategic guidance, mobilization capacity and support capacity of local industry; but also an over dependence on allied intelligence, an inappropriate command, control and communications framework, and an unrecognised need for involvement by the civil community in defence matters.

In 1981 the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence reported on the threat to Australia's security. The committee identified three levels of threat (termed low, middle and high level) and how Australia could react to each one. It also made an assessment on the likely threat from a wide variety of nations. In 1982 both the then Coalition Government and Labor Party opposition agreed that Australia needed to be more self-reliant. Again in December 1983 the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence tasked a sub-committee to report on the structure and capabilities of the Australian Defence Force. The report, published in October 1984, identified many deficiencies. These included such aspects as an inappropriate command and control structure, and force capabilities lacking in areas such as helicopters, long-range fighters and a mine warfare capability. Although comprehensive, such studies appear to have had little effect with recommendations being largely ignored.

In February 1985 Paul Dibb was tasked by the now Labor Federal Government to not only review Australia's Defence capability but to advise on a rationale for strategic defence planning and the capability required to respond to various threats. He Minister tabled the report in March 1986, and it is directly from this that the 1987 Defence White Paper was derived. In his Review of Australia's Defence Capabilities Dibb identified the threat. This is reflected in the 1987 White Paper which states that the capability to mount low-level military action against Australia already exists in our region. However not only does Australia need a capacity to react to such events now, but also a base upon which to build our forces in the
event of higher level threats. In either event we must possess, or have access to sound intelligence with which to identify possible threats at the earliest stage. This differs from the 1976 White Paper which stated that Australia (at that time) faced no probable threat.\textsuperscript{25} Herein lies another criticism of the 1976 White Paper, that being a lack of correlation between national strategy and force structure. Critics described the paper as a Defence Force "wish list". On the other hand Dibb firstly identified the threat, linked it to our military strategy, and the proposed a force structure which took due cognizance of national resources. The 1987 White Paper got rid of the wish list.\textsuperscript{26} So the 1987 Paper appears to be based on rational planning: but to what degree is this so?

Dibb was chosen for the defence review as the government wanted an analysis made which was independent from the Department of Defence (which no matter how good its proposals, could always be accused of partiality towards its own ends). In fact at the time Dibb was part of the Joint Intelligence Organization.\textsuperscript{27} It is here that perhaps he could be accused of injecting his own prejudices into the review. Although he stated intelligence is a key aspect of national security, intelligence and surveillance are detailed in only ten pages of the 176 page review.\textsuperscript{28} So his own interest seem balanced, but what of the methods he employed during his study? Dibb had to tackle not only the massive Department of Defence itself, but also the wider defence community. His consultation with all the actors in defence was wide, ranging from department heads to senior service officers to private individuals.\textsuperscript{29}

The Department itself has (under the Minister for Defence) the Chief of the Defence Force (CDF) who is in command of all three services (Navy, Army, Air Force) each of which has its own service chief. On the other side of the organisation from the CDF is the Department Secretary who heads three Deputy Secretaries and four other office chiefs. Their responsibilities cover such aspects as manpower, finances, force development and procurement, and includes organizations such as the Defence Science and Technology Organization.\textsuperscript{30} Although the civilian side of the Department appears to be the policy side of Defence there are over 100 committees involved in Defence policy making.\textsuperscript{31} In any organisation there is a definite relationship between policy making and the machinery in which it is made. However, it is only recently that the Department of Defence has become involved in government policy making.\textsuperscript{32} In Australia today the bureaucracy is central to the policy making process.\textsuperscript{33} However, within the Department of Defence Dibb identified animosity between the civilian and military sides of the organization. In fact his review was necessary as both sides could not "... agree even on basic force structure concepts . . .", and that "... scope for improving working habits and relationships" was considerable, . . . .\textsuperscript{34} Of course there will always be differences of opinion, and these can be healthy. However it is interesting to note that the present Secretary of Defence, Tony Ayers, is Chairman of the Defence Force Development Committee which has as members, the CDF and the three service chiefs. Although this structure could lead to various personality conflicts, it would appear that Ayers is sensitive in dealing with the military.\textsuperscript{35} So the Department itself is a complex one where policy from within can only be a product of the competing ideas and needs of its numerous committees and civilian and military staffs. However other parties involved with defence lay outside of the Department.

Referring again to the sums to be spent on equipment procurement for the Defence Force, there is a strong interest in Defence from manufacturers who are competing for contracts. This may occur on a domestic level but when large cost overseas purchases are being considered not only are overseas companies involved, but most likely their governments as well. Both could lobby for the Australian Government's acceptance of their own nation's products.\textsuperscript{36} Governments and companies will do their best to ensure profits are made and jobs retained.

In addition other domestic government departments have overlapping responsibilities with Defence. Another aspect which Dibb identified was the need for surveillance of our extensive coastline, particularly in the north.\textsuperscript{37} At present there are 14 separate Federal Government departments or agencies which have an interest in northern surveillance. The Deputy head of the Australian National University's Strategic and Defence Studies Centre has described the existing system as "... a product of clumsy bureaucratic and political compromise".\textsuperscript{38} Although coastal surveillance
would appear to be a Defence responsibility. There are conservation and refugees problems with which the Departments of Fisheries and Immigration respectively are interested. At one stage the Defence services urged that smuggling was a political function — their main concern being that surveillance equipment not be procured from out of the Defence financial vote.39

Thus it can be seen that in his consultation Dibb would have listened to many conflicting points of view. Was Dibb able to arrive at a rational policy recommendation, or does the resultant 1987 Defence White Paper merely reflect a consensus view, one which appeased all the actors, and so drew little criticism? With such varied and many points of view it is considered that this is unlikely. So perhaps now is the time to answer the question asked earlier in this paper — have some real changes started to occur? A starting point is to analyse one of the main thrusts of the 1987 White Paper, that of capital equipment procurement.

Just as the entire Department of Defence competes for budget funds with other sectors such as Welfare, there is competition for funds from within the Department. Besides the traditional Navy/Army/Air Force vying for money the Department as a whole has four main competing areas. These are personnel costs (such as wages), operating costs (exercises, steaming costs and the like), capital facilities (for example building construction) and lastly capital equipment. The government has a deliberate policy of constraining personnel levels and training costs in order to make long term investments in capital equipment and facilities. Between FY 1982/83 and FY 1986/87 the slice of the Defence budget spent on personnel has been cut by ten percent, while a similar increase has occurred in the allocation to capital equipment. The government intention is to continue this trend so that a further drift of some five percent (from personnel to equipment) will occur between FY 1986/87 and FY 1991/92.40 So it seems that the government (through Dibb and the 1987 White Paper) has changed the direction of defence, at least in monetary terms. However therein lies a further dilemma for the policy planners involved in this process. If the only test of defence productivity is maintaining the security of Australia's interests (if not deterrence) or if not then at least “success” in war, how can we judge in peace how to provide the best security for our dollar? In purely military terms what gives our defence force the most efficient capability: Will more equipment provide it, or rather a lesser number of advanced weapons in preference to larger quantities of more mundane weapons? More ships or more armour or more aircraft: Or to hit home at the present policy, does equipment offer Australia better security or are service personnel more fundamental? It is intended to look at this question later, but to return to Dibb: although his review has been instrumental in changing the direction of defence, did he go far enough?

Dibb himself saw “... no need for precipitate change ...” with any adjustments being made “... over the next five years and more”.41 Dibb has gone further than any policy before, he being conscious that most of the documents given him were intent on justifying the existing force structure (the status quo) rather than assessing the real strategic need.42 Nonetheless there are practical constraints on change. Dr Babbage in his Rethinking Australia's Defence identified five such constraints. The first is the limit of our domestic industry. To be more self reliant Australia needs the capacity to produce a wide range of defence items locally. These range from vehicles to communications equipment, to ships, aircraft and ammunition. However it is not economically justifiable to produce all our own needs, particularly as this would require more money being spent on defence related matters. A second limit is our manpower. Outside conscription, population growth has declined in Australia. This, coupled with more young people attending tertiary institutions and the competition for the asset from civilian employers, means the available manpower cannot meet the need. This is linked to the third factor of limited public support, where young people's aspirations are likely to clash with the discipline required in military life. Thus society's support for military service is likely to decline. A fourth factor is external constraints. One nation's security is another's insecurity, and certainly to adopt any policy which increases capabilities could offend neighbouring nations who would see our moves as a threat. The final factor returns us to budgetary limits. Although the Australian public can accept increases in defence spending during times of serious threat, during peace is it generally accepted that any significant increase over three percent of GDP would not be tolerated?43
Both Dibb’s review, and the 1987 White Paper seem to state that the present three percent of GDP spending must be maintained in order to meet the needs of the identified capability.\textsuperscript{44}  \textsuperscript{45} So although there has been change in direction in Defence spending, Government policy has merely reinforced the status quo of three percent. One must then question the rationality of the 1987 White Paper.

Remembering that Dibb stated fundamental changes were not required, and that he consulted many defence associated personnel in his review, one can only assume that Dibb viewed defence as basically being on the right track prior to his review. Relating this again to equipment there is longstanding criticism that the military have a “replacement syndrome”; that because an equipment becomes obsolete it must be replaced by the same type of equipment, \textit{albeit} more advanced. Examples of this are the Mirage to F-18 fighter, and the attempted aircraft carrier replacement. Modern weapons are increasing in real cost and basically one can argue that the Navy lost a replacement carrier because Australia could not afford such a high cost (one off) weapon at the same time as the F-18.\textsuperscript{46} Such hardline decisions will have to be increasingly made in the future. If we could not afford an aircraft carrier in the 1980s it is unlikely Australia will be able to afford the cost (and technology) associated with an F-18 replacement in the 2020s. I believe we will have to accept a different solution. What our Defence Force must have “. . . is not the best, but the most effective” . . . weapons.\textsuperscript{47} Certainly there is a need for technology for our nation with its small population and large territory. “There will always be a dilemma, for example, over the relative merits of high performance weapons systems that are so costly that only a few may be acquired versus moderate performance, moderate cost weapons systems which may be acquired in greater numbers.”\textsuperscript{48} As Dr Babbage has argued, Australia not only has to decide on the right mix of new technology systems to buy, but we must devise tactics and structures to suit our own needs.\textsuperscript{49}

In the 1987 White Paper the Minister for Defence stated that the 1976 Paper supported a policy of self-reliance, but the then government failed to give substance to the concept.\textsuperscript{50} However the 1987 Paper supports Dibb in that only small incremental changes to the structure of our Defence Forces are required. If the 1987 Paper has given substance to a policy change, then why does the same type of equipment continue to be purchased? One good reason for this is that although Australia has withdrawn from a policy of forward defence (assisting powerful allies on foreign soil) we have accepted an area of direct interest which constitutes about ten percent of the earth’s surface.\textsuperscript{51} If we are to protect our sovereign interests within such an area then certainly Australia needs to be able to project a force \textit{(albeit} perhaps of small size anywhere within the area. Therefore the 1987 White Paper is just as much a message to any of our neighbours with “low-level” capabilities that we intend to protect our sovereign interests, as a statement to ourselves as a nation. But some feel we cannot meet such a capability.

Lieutenant Colonel Crawshaw in his paper \textit{Low-Level Conflict — a Closer Scrutiny} believes that low-level threats against Australia are unlikely, except as a starting point for a much larger operation. What he was attempting in his paper was to question the wisdom of a force structure based only on a low-level threat.\textsuperscript{52} To look at more specific aspects of the 1987 White Paper, the previously identified problems of lack of adequate surveillance in the north appear not to have been addressed.\textsuperscript{53} In addition if we have a priority to project forces to islands within our far flung area of interest, then we do not have the maritime capability to do so.\textsuperscript{54} To go further some even see a case for the creation of an Australian Marine Corps.\textsuperscript{55}

Such criticisms seem accurate in at least pointing to flaws in the rationality of the 1987 Defence White Paper. At the least such arguments point to the need for a continuing evaluation of our total security needs, not just a review once every ten years or so.

The Dibb review has given a direction and purpose to defence in Australia. It was timely. Despite this it made no astonishing revelations, being merely a continuation in the direction that academics and previous governments were already heading. Dibb himself acknowledged this.\textsuperscript{56} For his review to succeed Dibb needed general consensus from the many consulted. In this he succeeded. However in doing so his review could not be truly rational. The basis of the review’s success is that the changes it recommended were incremental. The 1987 Defence White Paper does not constitute rational Defence planning — it does not go far enough.
 Nonetheless it is an acceptable political solution for today.

 In its present form the 1987 Paper appears to be working. It is receiving the government’s support. They are determined to press ahead with the capital equipment programme.57 Ironically this very aspect may threaten the effectiveness of the government’s Defence policy. Many see the well publicized personnel drain from the Defence Force being a direct result of the superficial consideration given to manpower in the Dibb review.58 Although the government is attempting to address this problem it may already be too late: “... failure to retain trained personnel in the Services for operations would inevitably deny the nation its proper defence capability...” 59, no matter how good our equipment.

 As for the future we need to recognize that the 1987 Defence White Paper was not the pinnacle of defence thinking or policy, but rather a milestone in the continuing growth and maturing of Australia as a nation. What is now required is a nation which is more inclined to accept changes which will lead to the increased security of our nation. Self interest must be pushed aside. As part of our growth we must recognise that we are a secure nation.60 (It is interesting to note that even after their initial successes during World War II, the Japanese in March 1942 assessed that a successful invasion of Australia was not possible).61 Only by recognising our “inbuilt security” can we properly assess our priorities, and therefore accept future proposals which will make Australia more secure, even though we do not have “the best” equipment, and perhaps cannot exert our influence over a tenth of the earth’s surface.

 NOTES

 6. The Defence of Australia, op. cit., p 100.
 8. The Defence of Australia, op. cit., p 80.
 25. Ibid., p 15.
 29. Ibid., p VIII.
 40. The Defence of Australia, op. cit., pp 104-5.
 41. Dibb, op. cit., p V.
 42. Ibid., p VI.
 44. Dibb, op. cit., p 42.
 45. The Defence of Australia, op. cit., p 100.
 49. Ibid., p 88.
 52. Hamilton, op. cit., p 17.
 55. Schott, op. cit., p 176.
57. Australian Foreign Affairs Record, February 1988, p 49, Australia’s Regional Defence Policy, p 49.
59. Ibid., p 7.
60. Dibb, op. cit., pp 174-76.

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Cheesman, Dr G.L. Interest Groups and Australian Defence Decision Making, Defence Force Journal No. 35, July/August 1982.

Most servicemen at some stage during training contemplate just how well they will perform in combat. Will they live up to expectations, be brave and even heroic? Or will fear, ineptitude, or worse still, cowardice, overtake them?

Perhaps as a defence mechanism, few reflect on how they might conduct themselves if captured. The physical and mental demands, the mind-numbing deprivation, protracted separation from loved ones and the probability of ill treatment do not bear thinking about.

In Gull Force, Dr Joan Beaumont of Deakin University recounts the story of the 2/21st Battalion, particularly the fate in captivity of survivors of the debacle in February 1942 that was the defence of Ambon. The book makes sad and depressing reading on a number of counts.

One can only wonder at the incompetent strategic thinking that consigned an ill-equipped, and unbalanced force of little over 1,000 men to oblivion in a futile gesture to stem the southwards thrust of the Japanese. Not that it was worth stating the obvious back to Army HQ. As the persistent messenger of unpalatable news, the original CO, LTCOL L.N. Roach, was branded as “defeatist” and replaced shortly before the invasion by a staff officer from Army HQ, LTCOL L.N. Roach. After a few days it was all over: only a few lucky ones escaped back to Australia.
Scott's association with the Battalion was tragic. A gallant World War I soldier, and an activist in para-military politics between the Wars, Scott was totally unable to maintain the military order, discipline and social structure so necessary for the survivors to cope with captivity. Aloof and lacking empathy with his men, Scott's inadequacy as a leader is a case study in itself.

The author examines in some detail social interaction during captivity. Some survivors claimed that the traditional ANZAC qualities of mateship came to the fore. Others believed captivity brought out the worst as well as the best in men. Mateship did not extend to the officers unless they were "one of the boys". As captivity continued, most officers lost their relevance, and NCOs were looked to for leadership.

Captivity for Gull Force was unusually harsh even by Japanese standards. 71 percent of those who remained on Ambon died. As the author points out, even on the Burma railway, commonly regarded as the quintessence of Japanese brutality, 60 percent survived. On Ambon malnutrition and overwork enforced by callous Japanese captors inexorably led to disease and death. Beatings and executions were not uncommon. After 3 1/2 years of captivity only 123 Australians remained to greet the ships sent to rescue them.

Gull Force is not a book for light reading. But it is an excellent chronicle of the bitter consequences of flawed strategic thinking, of personal tragedy when leadership is lacking, and of the strains and tensions placed on men in captivity. Overriding all is the inhumanity of the captors. No small wonder that some Australians were offended recently by the National Flag being at half-mast for Emperor Hirohito's funeral.

IN PURSUIT OF NATIONAL INTERESTS
edited by F.A. Mediansky and A.C. Palfreeman
Pergamon Press 1988 R.R.P.
$29.95

Reviewed by Rilka Macainash, Department of Defence.

AUSTRALIA'S foreign policy has not been a neglected field by academics. A regular feature of conferences and publications reflect the strong scholarly interest in the outside world and Australia's place in it. All the more surprising that until the arrival of this book, there was no single volume which provided a comprehensive and up to date overview of Australia's foreign policy. The editors have spent time well-laboured structuring this collection of essays — from some of the foremost writers of Australia's foreign policy — to present a series of well-documented articles that prove to be a valuable reference point for any student/observer of international relations.

The book is organised around three integrated themes: the first explores the historic experience which has shaped Australia's values and its outlook on the world. Historical, social, cultural and political experiences — beginning with the influx of British migrants to Australia during the 1850s gold rush — illustrate the development of domestic attitudes and values peculiarly Australian. Translated into the decision-making process these attitudes have both constrained and developed matters of international policy. Nancy Vivani in her essay, "The Official Formulation of Foreign Policy" highlights the dichotomy with particular reference to the Departments of Foreign Affairs, Trade (now merged) and Defence.

The second theme, building on from the first, examines international issues which have impacted on the making of a domestic foreign policy. Defined by Coral Bell as the cost/benefit ratio Australia's policy makers have been, and are, faced with the dilemma of objectives developed for the national interest appearing to/or conflicting with international opinion. Political, economic and security issues are discussed within this context with the point being that Australia's more-often-than-not reactive stance to the international agenda creates an added burden to the development of a foreign policy essentially for local consumption. For example, Australia's contribution to the western alliance (illustrated by the joint facilities), it can be argued, does more to undermine our national security than augment it.

The final chapters of "In Pursuit of National Interests" discuss the implementation of Australia's foreign policy. This theme is divided into two subsections. The first, concentrates on Australia's relations with the major economic and political powers of the current international order. An historical basis is provided with each chapter and in so doing illustrates
the diverse and everchanging nature of the relationships. This in turn highlights the complexities and distinctions — relations with the Japanese are economically-based whereas with the United States strategic political and defence matters take priority — of a country undertaking foreign initiatives in which often it is the more tenuous partner.

In the second subsection, discussion centres upon Australia's regional role. While economic and political issues are on the agenda it is the geographic and culturally diverse characteristics of the nearby regions which require Australia to take a very different approach to issues of foreign policy. As a nation located in a largely underdeveloped political and economic arena a regional sensitivity is needed which is not required when dealing with major powers. This distinction serves to identify the demands placed upon policy makers and, hence, the difficulty of implementing and constructing a foreign policy suitable for a variety of audiences.

*In Pursuit of National Interests* has clearly defined the major themes which have shaped Australia's foreign policy of the 1980s. In doing so this book provides a valuable basis for anticipating the development of foreign policy in the 1990s.

In my opinion the book is an indispensable reference for all book lovers and learned institutions. The great and sometimes the not so great commanders are included in this volume. A few are unlucky not to be included, for example: Admiral of the Fleet Sir Doveton Sturdee, who won the only decisive naval victory in World War I at the Falklands Islands; Field Marshal Sir Thomas Blamey, longest serving C. in C. of them all in World War II; General Sir Harry Chauvel, the greatest Cavalry Commander of WWI; Field Marshal Earl Alexander of WWII, and Admiral of the Fleet, Earl Mountbatten.

I note that several not so good Army Commanders are included, for example, General Sir Ian Hamilton. Nevertheless this is a first-class publication filled with a brilliant narrative, photographs, maps and illustrations. It should take very high priority for inclusion on any bookshelf where the owner requires a ready reference to all the great battles and commanders from B.C. to the Vietnam War.

Priced at $39.95 it is a cheap book for what it has to give. I strongly recommend it. It is another example of the high quality military history books made available in Australia by Allen & Unwin.

*COMMAND — THE GREATEST COMMANDERS OF WORLD HISTORY* Published by Bloomsbury.

Review copy made available by Allen & Unwin.

General editor — James Lucas.

Price $39.95.

Reviewed by John Buckley.

*ARMY AUSTRALIA: AN ILLUSTRATED HISTORY* by George Odgers; Child and Associates, 280 pp, 370 colour and black and white photographs and paintings, hardcover, $39.95

Reviewed by Ian McNeill.

The publication of this volume completes a trilogy for George Odgers, following on histories of the Australian Navy and Air Force. Commissioned by the Army for the bicentennial year, the book begins with the arrival of the first fleet and their escort of 213 Royal Marines. Remote from the centre of the British Empire, Australian colonists felt vulnerable and feared attack from alien forces. They demanded protection from a force ‘in residence’. A succession of British regiments continued until 1870, when the last of the British withdrew and Australia’s immediate defence rested on forces raised in the colonies. Feelings of vulnerability have helped to shape
Australian attitudes towards military service and the military tradition ever since.

Big-power rivalries of the 19th century gave rise to invasion scares from the Russians, the French, the Germans, and even the Americans. A growing unease developed towards the populations not far to the north. Not that these fears were always baseless. Odgers points out the little-known order by Napoleon in 1810 to General Charles Decaen, French Governor of Mauritius, to send a squadron 'to take over the English colony of Port Jackson'. He was, however, hemmed in by a British naval blockade and subsequently overwhelmed by British troops from India. Again in 1826, under orders from Britain, soldiers and convicts from Sydney established a station in what is now Albany in response to French preparations to colonise the west coast. Australia is now the only single-nation continent on the globe — but how easily might our history have been different. The colonies' obvious need for a united defence force was one of the strongest reasons for Federation.

The recurrent problem of the provision of manpower to defend so vast a continent has frequently resulted in conscription which began as early as 1910 with the call-up of twelve-year-olds for training as cadets. Australia was then the only country in the world to compell military service from boys so young. When war broke out in 1914 Australia had a home-based Army of 45,000 but legislation rendered the force useless for overseas service and another had to be raised. Between the wars conscription for the militia was suspended because of the economic depression and the permanent army fell to below its pre-Federation figures. Efforts to increase the strength in the 1930s had some success, but Odgers leaves no doubt as to the ill-prepared nature of the army in 1939. It was still a defensive force manning coastal forts and awaiting the arrival of an invader just as in 1914. 'History has proved' writes Odgers quoting Gavin Long the official historian, 'and was to prove again the futility of such a military policy'. The irony is that when Australia applied the lessons of history and adopted a policy of forward defence after 1945, in Vietnam — fighting for the first time in her own rather than in British interests — more controversy was aroused than in any previous war.

Six chapters deal with the post-1945 era in which Odgers covers the Cold War, the Malayan Emergency, Korea and Vietnam. As in his earlier treatments, Odgers deals with the strategic setting, outstanding battles and their effects, and the experiences of individuals. He is sharply critical of those Vietnam protesters who chanted enemy slogans, marched behind enemy flags, and collected money for the enemy's support while Australian soldiers fought and died overseas. 'Those Australians who fought in the Vietnam War and won all their battles helped to buy time for larger and more populous and significant areas of South-East Asia, closer to Australia, to achieve stability.' The argument enjoys the support of recent historians as well as leaders of the countries in the region such as Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew. It provides a refreshing alternative to the more extremist claims of colonial revival made by those who view the past through Marxist glasses.

The army's colourful story is told in the clear, succinct, and authoritative style for which Odgers is well-known. Supporting photographs and artwork are extensive and well-chosen. Many new photographs have been included and the publishers have been generous with colour for the many paintings and sketches. Maps are adequate, although I would have liked to see a better coverage of the 19th century.

But there is no doubt that Odgers is a master of the genre and that Army Australia will find favour with students, servicemen and the military researcher, as well as the general reader.

Editor's Note:

Ian McNeill is a military historian with the Australian War Memorial working on the official history of the Australian involvement in Vietnam.