

# defender

The National Journal of the Australia Defence Association

Price (rrp)  
\$A7.00

VOL XX No. 1  
Autumn 2003

Print Post Approved No: PP331387/00013

[www.ada.asn.au](http://www.ada.asn.au)

● North Korea's nukes

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● Corruption in  
Defence?

● Maritime  
strategy

● Spin doctors  
and Defence

● A reflection  
on 22 years

● Iraq's lies



● ADI's patrol boat bid

● China and nuclear proliferation

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THE NATIONAL JOURNAL  
OF THE  
AUSTRALIA DEFENCE ASSOCIATION

Print Post Approved No. PP331387/00013

Published quarterly by the  
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Pre-press by

**PARKSIDE BUSINESS SERVICES**

E-mail: parkside@optusnet.com.au

Telephone: (613) 9317 0015

Printed by

**INDUSTRIAL STATIONERS**

43-51 Queen St., Melbourne 3000.

Telephone: (613) 9629 9299

## SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Annual A\$30.00 post paid

(Overseas) A\$35.00 air post

Single copies A\$7.00 post paid

Advertising A\$800 full page or pro rata

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ISSN 0811-6407

## OUR COVER

RAAF ground crews battle a dust storm while servicing F/A-18 fighters in the Middle East.

*Photo courtesy DoD.*

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## Ministerial leadership and control

Australia has had a number of ‘Sir Humphreys’ as heads of federal departments. But just like romance it takes two to tango. The ability of a head of department (HoD) to snuff, white ant or disobey the minister’s directions, requests and reforms is a joint process. The minister and HoD both contribute to the failure.

The HoD may have ‘higher reasons’ to ignore the minister’s directives or allow subordinates to do so. The minister may fail to ensure that directions are carried out, or be so naïve that he relies on reports from his subordinates. In some cases the minister, HoD and staff may be complicit in the failure of government policy.

In past decades, senior members of governments and Defence did not know or purposely disregarded their clearly defined powers, roles and responsibilities. Very few MPs have any interest in

or knowledge of defence issues, while most of those who become involved do so on their way to ‘more important’ portfolios.

Defence has had a famous, indeed infamous, history of the ‘all powerful’ HoD, and few ministers have made real attempts to direct, control or reform the department. Defence has long been handicapped by the divide and conquer games played by departmental or service tribes who have been able to obstruct development or reform of Defence.

### **Budget-driven strategy**

Since 1945, the analysis of our regional security dangers has been used to justify strategic policy; however, policy has been driven by financial considerations rather than by reality. Budget-driven strategy was the department’s view of what should be done and what it felt government wanted to hear.

**(cont’d p. 4)**

## **AUSTRALIA DEFENCE ASSOCIATION**

The Australia Defence Association is a company (ABN 16 083 007 390) limited by guarantee and registered under the Corporations Law. It seeks to promote, foster and encourage the best form of defence for Australia.

The Association seeks the development and implementation of a deterrent national security policy directed at:

- ◆ a security strategy based on the protection of identifiable national interests, including the security of our region;
- ◆ the development of adequate forces-in-being capable of supporting that policy; and
- ◆ the development of an Australian manufacturing industry capable of sustaining defence force operations.

The Association seeks the support by subscription of all Australians. The Association has a number of local chapters throughout Australia. It publishes a quarterly journal, a monthly briefing and a site on the Internet’s World Wide Web, as well as occasional papers. It makes regular submissions to the Parliamentary Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, as well as to other parliamentary and external inquiries.

The Association corresponds and co-operates with a number of individuals and institutes in 12 allied and friendly nations in the Pacific Basin.

The need for reform is well known, but the media still focuses on 'yet another defence scandal' about improper sexual behaviour, sexism or a cost overrun on new equipment. What they do not expose is that Defence has little chance of being reformed, especially so when the guilty parties will be involved in the proposed 'reforms'.

Since the 1990s the pressure of real strategic threats in our region and the demands of military deployments forced the government and DoD to make improvements to the ADF's capabilities. Crisis management is not, however, the best or surest way to manage the defence of national interests, especially given the waste of time and resources, leaving the ADF with huge gaps in the quality and quantity of weapons systems and war stores.

### Switching off the funds

The government has tried to bring about change by switching the funds off or on. Unfortunately the reduction of funds in real terms has become, until very recently, a systemic process. Compounding the error is the fact that the past reductions cannot be caught up, and too rapid an increase in funding cannot make up for lost time and excess funds will be poorly invested.

The financial management of Defence and the appalling performance in the acquisition of equipment demands radical and systemic reform. How is reform to take place?

The parliamentary committee system is not able to investigate issues unless the minister is prepared

to sign off on the issue. Unlike the US Congressional committees, there is no real power to fully expose problems and give oversight to reform. New ways must be developed to assess performance and, more importantly, to find ways to have reform carried out.

### Dysfunctional bureaucracy

The coalition governments' dependence on the public service and Labor governments' ideological demand for 'things' has been swallowed in the maw of an unnecessarily complex and dysfunctional bureaucracy. Thus restructuring the department, manipulating budgets, giving responsibilities to current abusers of the system, adopting guru strategic theories and being paralysed by the we-have-always-done-it-this-way mantra leave defence and the security of the nation at grave risk.

Much of past 'reform' has been little more than the endless manipulation of existing military and defence assets. Amazingly committed personnel have managed to bring some valuable equipment and weapons platforms into service, however, these efforts are in danger of being negated because there is little integration of the total equipment needs.

The current paradigm is flawed and existing mechanisms are not capable of systemic reform and functional restructuring.

Reform must be given to daring people with a vision for a new security paradigm. They must be equipped with the power to break the barriers to reform and create a paradigm that will respond to future change. †

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# LOOKING BACK

for a change

Michael O'Connor

There is something sublime about Australia's history of involvement in war. Without exception, every commitment of forces to what some have derided as 'other peoples' wars' has been a commitment to restoring peace. We have never gone to war for any other purpose.

To be sure, we have not done much to build peace after the shooting ended but there is a growing realisation that comes with national maturity that Australia does have a role to play once the fighting ends. One of the tests of Australia as a nation will come when we, as a community, recognise and accept that challenge.

On the other hand, there is something obnoxious about the way in which some prate about our military achievements. Without diminishing those achievements in any way, we need to admit that many thousands of our best young men, the greater proportion of our casualties, were killed early in our wars because we had failed to prepare. Those young men were inadequately trained and ill equipped for the cauldron into which they were thrust. We readily celebrate and justifiably commemorate the back-to-the-wall struggles of Gallipoli, Tobruk, Kokoda, Kapyong and Long Tan. On the other hand, we tend to ignore the high professionalism that won Hamel, Lae and Finschafen, Maryang San and many other important battles.

In World War I, the AIF did not achieve their high degree of professionalism until perhaps mid-1917, three years after the war began. In World War II, the 2nd AIF similarly struggled against heavy odds with largely obsolete (and mainly British-supplied) equipment while the conscript AMF was in an even worse state when thrust into combat against a veteran army in New Guinea. It was not until perhaps late 1942, again three years after the war commenced, that our armed forces began to achieve the unbroken series of victories that came from solid training, leadership and adequate logistics.

At the very least, too many of those who talk big about our past are unable to draw the proper conclusions because their knowledge of their own history is so superficial. They mouth the right words but don't understand their true meaning. They fail to understand that a prudent preparation for war does not translate into

an intention to wage aggressive war. They fail to understand the essence of deterrence, that aggression becomes pointless if the victim is able to resist effectively.

## The Australia Defence Association

Shortly after the fall of Saigon in April 1975, three Western Australians recognised that this, our first strategic defeat in war, marked a sea change in Australia's strategic circumstances. Air Marshal Sir Valston Hancock, a former Chief of the Air Staff, Peter Firkins, the director of the Perth Chamber of Commerce, and Jim Harding, then Assistant State Secretary of the Federated Clerks Union, established the Australia Defence Association with the objective of raising the level of awareness of defence issues not only in the community but at all levels of government.

Their vision was for an organisation that would reflect the views of thoughtful Australians and not merely ex-military personnel. The Association's task would be educative but based upon a sound understanding of the critical issues that would affect Australian security for the future. The Association became a national body in 1981 and I accepted an invitation to become the national executive director. After 22 years of working to implement that vision, it is time to hand on the task to a younger and more vigorous successor.

## The challenge

Throughout those years, I have watched with dismay the reduction of human and financial resources devoted to defence and the failure to modernise basic elements of the defence force. The Association has confronted a parade of nine ministers not only with the evidence of incompetent and wasteful management in the defence organisation but with specific proposals for reform. With few exceptions, the uncounted but more numerous shadow ministers have fiddled with essentially inconsequential matters because their governments-in-

waiting refuse to commit to genuine reform or to providing adequate resources. Their primary interest has been in scoring political points off their opponents rather than preparing for government. There is bipartisanship in defence but it is the bipartisanship of neglect and indifference. Even when incoming governments have committed themselves to reform, that reform has failed because responsibility for its implementation has been given to the culprits. When confronted with this reality, ministers retreat into silence or obfuscation because they are intimidated by a department that all too often appears to be a law unto itself.

We have seen governments use academics and senior public servants to rationalise cutbacks or to stymie proposals that would produce an adequate defence force, all in the name of saving money to be spent elsewhere.

Despite the fulsome self-congratulation indulged in by governments and the department whenever they produce a new program or policy, any improvements are at best marginal. The Australian Defence Force is not capable of more than token operational commitments, which are themselves not sustainable. At the same time, strategic policy documents published since the end of the Cold War have repeatedly referred to a growing strategic uncertainty for Australia. The evidence for that uncertainty is not difficult to perceive; there is nothing secret about it. But in a remarkable example of confused thinking, those same documents rationalise what has been in effect a reduction of military capability, extraordinary strategic confusion and a growth in self-congratulation.

It seems almost impossible to engage at any level in any sort of open debate on defence and take it to some conclusion. At one level, the discussion is characterised by superficiality and ignorance. At another, debate is esoteric and replete with jargon that excludes all but the cognoscenti. It is also invariably incomplete and inconclusive.

## The politics of defence

There is nothing particularly wrong with a partisan debate on defence issues. When Peter Reith became defence minister in 2001, he quickly circulated a paper that drew attention to key differences between the government and the opposition on defence policy. As always with Reith, the arguments were direct but they were not necessarily wrong. Some senior officers in Defence were alarmed, seeing the paper as an attempt to stir up political strife in defence. Unfortunately, that is precisely what happened. The opposition's response was crude and Reith's own campaign lost focus, turning quickly into a partisan slanging match that ignored the issues in favour of gain for the party. It was an opportunity sadly lost.

More recently, in the discussion of conflict with

Iraq (an operational rather than strategic issue for Australia's defence), a reasonably sensible debate collapsed into one based on partisanship. Initially, Labor produced a sensible and balanced policy, especially when compared with the government's greater militancy. But because of the perceived advantage to the party in pursuing a policy based on fear, hostility, superficiality and crude anti-Americanism, Labor moved to a more isolationist and unhelpful policy just as the government virtually adopted Labor's original ideas.

The tendency is not helped by the media's preoccupation with political squabbling. Devoting some two thirds of its Opinion page to two former political staffers claiming the electoral benefits or otherwise of the Middle East troop deployment for their respective leaders represented poor taste by the national daily concerned.

Who cares about their very temporary prospects? One of the great strengths of our system is that John Howard and Simon Crean, both reputable men, could disappear tomorrow and the system would replace them with reputable and experienced people. After an initial flurry, no one would notice the change.

National security ought to be discussed in national rather than party terms. Politics is a means to the end of good government; it is not the end in itself. That is not to say that bipartisanship should be the objective. Democracy envisages and tolerates fearless political debate. But it should be debate about policy rather than electoral advantage.

The political groupies, whose manipulation of our political discourse not only generates unnecessary divisiveness but is all too often based upon a lack of understanding, would be better advised to leave their pontificating to the party back room, otherwise we in Australia will face a serious risk that government by and for the people will become government by and for increasingly unrepresentative political parties.

Even on the day-to-day political level, defence debates tend to have a tactical rather than strategic approach. In Parliament—and outside—the tendency is to score political points. A sensible policy such as Labor's coastguard policy, although it can be legitimately questioned, should not be dismissed out of hand in brutal terms by a government minister simply because the policy came from the other side of the political divide. Most of the extraordinarily rare discussions of defence are little more than crude and useless attempts to capture some minister's scalp or cause some mild and temporary embarrassment. It is all utterly meaningless in strategic terms and pretty useless even in tactical terms.

I have lost count of the members of the national parliament, even of Cabinet, from both sides of politics who have told me frankly that they are not interested in national security. A large majority of the members of the national parliament admit to being uninterested in the security of the nation whose government is entrusted to them! Yet defence issues do capture a tiny minority of politicians when they are brought face to face with the

realities. Over many years, the all party Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade has done very constructive work with a high level of commitment and co-operation from its members. Dealing with the Committee over the years has been a privilege. Yet, when its reports are tabled in Parliament, it is virtually impossible to generate a debate because non-members of the Committee are simply not interested. Even the issues taken up by the Committee tend to be the result of references by the government rather than from a motion by the parliament or even the Committee itself. This is just another example of how the parliament has become a tool of the executive government rather than the government being answerable to the parliament.

## Managing defence

One of the great conundrums in defence is that the community generally has great respect for and faith in its defence force. Even the occasional scandal, real or perceived, does not blunt that faith. To some considerable degree, however, that reputation is based on historical and tactical factors. People know that the ADF performs well whenever it is committed to operations either at home in direct support of the civilian community or overseas on whatever mission is assigned. It should be—and is—a matter of deep national pride that we have such a professional, reliable and politically neutral defence force.

There are danger signs though. On the one hand, the strategic view should tell us—as *Defender* has been trying to do for two decades—that the ADF is under-manned, under-equipped and under-funded. Even for relatively small commitments, we cannot provide adequate forces and these only for a very limited time.

On the other hand, there is a growing tendency in governments (of both parties) to boost their political fortunes by an excessively rigid control and direction of Defence public affairs. The process not only diminishes the value of the ADF but tends to politicise its operations to the satisfaction of the government and the dismay of the opposition—whoever they are. A subset of this tendency is the growing conviction in some quarters that the ADF is being politicised. Journalists who are a large part of the interface between government and the electorate have become extremely disillusioned with Defence public affairs branches that are forbidden to release even the most basic information without political or semi-political approval.

Perhaps the most extreme example of the problem came with the so-called ‘children overboard’ affair when proper and accurate advice from the ADF to the government was misused or concealed. The report of the subsequent Senate inquiry is a devastating indictment of the politics-before-government tendency but there is little evidence that the proper lessons have been learned. Fortunately, one benefit of the inquiry was to shift responsibility to the political level of government rather than the ADF and its senior officers who had been

wrongly blamed by too many of the participants in the whole affair.

Now, in the current (as I write) preparations for possible operations in Iraq, the insistence on secrecy for reasons of so-called ‘operational security’ is also being abused. In practice, true operational security requirements are very limited. The reasons for imposing the restrictions vary. In some cases, there is no doubt that excessively cautious security personnel are insisting on rules that cannot withstand scrutiny. For example, the notion that a soldier’s identity can be concealed by suppressing his surname while revealing his given name and a photograph with his family is simply farcical. There is a good case for not publishing photographs of SAS personnel whose operations are often clandestine but, for most, revealing a soldier’s identity has no effect on operational security. It may well impact on his and his family’s personal security but the processes in place will not be helpful.

Similarly, attempts to suppress discussion of the type of operations in which Australian forces could be employed in the Middle East has nothing to do with operational security. It is no more than an attempt to convey the politically acceptable notion that our forces, although committed to war, are unlikely to suffer casualties. The community, of course, understands quite plainly that there is no such thing as a casualty-free war and that combat operations are likely to involve Australian casualties. The corollary, of course, is that if Australian forces are to be committed but kept out of battle, there is no point to the commitment except alliance grandstanding.

Is that callous? No one wants Australian casualties but, if they are to be avoided, we should be honest and disband the ADF. The ADF has a fundamental purpose and capability, and that is war fighting. There is no point in shying away from that reality simply because it might be thought to be politically embarrassing. But that is precisely what the current politically-driven public affairs program is attempting. Given that expert public commentators are able and willing to speculate about future operations, Defence public affairs should be producing frank and professional advice to the media. Genuine operational security issues can then be dealt with frankly by giving cogent and credible reasons why some particular matter is and should remain secret. Such a process might even persuade the security people to analyse their rules.

These issues, however, pale into insignificance compared with the rarely discussed issue of the proper defence policy for Australia. Despite the present government’s pre-White Paper community consultation, itself useful and generally successful, there is not much evidence that the views of the community actually translated into the White Paper policy. And the White Paper itself was not debated in the parliament because it has no legal status.

After the event, the Australia Defence Association published its own view of the 2000 White Paper

(*Defender*, Autumn, 2001) as did other individuals and groups. Generally, the reviews were mixed with much questioning of what were seen to be inadequacies and inconsistencies but only ADA confronted the issue of the questionable value of the White Paper process or the lack of genuine commitment to the program. The government's public-relations machine produced—and continues to produce—misleading headline data about future spending with little or no reference to outcomes as distinct from inputs. The propaganda tended to be transmitted uncritically to the general community by a media that seems incapable of serious analysis of defence issues.

Any White Paper process produces a document of negligible official standing, limited applicability and in-built obsolescence. It is supposed to act as a discipline on the planning process but all too often becomes the internal bible for mutually antagonistic interest groups within Defence. It is invariably a lowest common denominator document paying deference to many of those interest groups. Its implementation demands tight discipline from a strong leadership but also an intellectual flexibility from the same leadership to recognise when it is out of date. The fundamental problem for defence planners is that money rather than security strategy defines the process. Defence planning is based upon inputs rather than outputs. The force structure is defined as a result of a process of bargaining for inadequate resources. In this process, the three Services are the key players with the department acting as a 'gatekeeper' to ensure that the Services do not upset the equilibrium of the process by demonstrating that an adequate defence force cannot be produced within the current fiscal constraints.

Strategic policy is controlled by the gatekeepers, otherwise it might become all too obvious that the ADF has a very limited capability. Independent military advice tends to be limited to military technical or operational issues to avoid confronting the mismatch between strategic challenge and force capability. This mismatch is underpinned by the diarchy—the sharing of responsibility between the Chief of Defence Force and the Secretary of the department—which ensures that military advice can be moderated by the gatekeepers and that the government is not embarrassed. Strategic policy itself tends to be based upon a degree of wishful thinking, some ideological views and a fair degree of confusion. The White Paper, for example, clearly confuses the strategic objective of defending Australia and its interests with the strategy of how best to achieve that objective. The two concepts are dramatically different but any examination of the debate over the past three decades since the end of the Vietnam commitment would be hard pressed to find any recognition of the difference.

The bottom line is that the ADF lacks substance and sustainability. Its reputation is built more on the quality of its people and their training than on its ability to engage in a range of challenging military operations on a sustained basis. Personnel numbers are kept low to limit costs but the small numbers ensure that there are

insufficient units, many of which are undermanned or at low levels of readiness. Much of the force's equipment is either very old or incomplete while replacement or modernisation programs are repeatedly delayed. This may be acceptable when strategic challenges are limited but that is no longer the case—if it ever was. In recent years, the ADF has been operating at an ever higher tempo and on a shoestring. Then, as funds have to be shifted from maintenance or growth to operations, the former miss out and the problem is compounded.

Ultimately, the issue of funding must be confronted seriously. It is inconceivable that a country like Australia with its range of strategic interests and challenges coupled with a high internal cost structure can afford the necessary defence force with an investment of not more than 1.8 per cent of Gross Domestic Product. This historically very low figure is in place at a time when real costs of both personnel and equipment are rising faster than any growth in outlays. The law of diminishing returns operates inexorably in these circumstances.

The government's problem is obvious. As on the one hand, it attempts to shift resources to the private sector to maintain high economic growth, it diverts more of its revenue to the voracious populist measures such as health, education and welfare. Despite complaints of cost cutting from those sectors, the fact is that outlays in the health education and welfare sectors amount to a full two-thirds of all Federal spending compared with 60 per cent in the year before the present government came to office. In that same period, outlays on defence have averaged 7.3 per cent, falling in one year to an all-time low of 6.7 per cent. On current projections, that average figure is not expected to change in the next three years.

## Conclusion

One can only conclude that, for a range of reasons, Australian governments, regardless of party, do not take defence seriously. Strategic approaches are lacking and policy change is made within artificially low financial provisions, an excessive and immature dependence upon the American alliance, and an admittedly diminishing (at least on the part of the current government) refusal to recognise that Australia's security interests are spread much more widely than Australian territory. This lack of sophistication is now being confronted by a much more diversified challenge to concepts of security but also by direct and violent attacks on Australian interests.

In earlier days, a naval officer used to be judged by his commanding officer in one of three categories. He either conducted himself 'to my entire satisfaction', 'to my satisfaction', or 'to his own satisfaction'. No Australian government in the life of this Association has warranted any but that last judgment in the development and implementation of a national defence policy. †

*Michael O'Connor AM is a Director of the Australia Defence Association and is shortly to retire after 22 years as National Executive Director. This article represents a personal view.*

# Is there CORRUPTION as well as MISMANAGEMENT in DEFENCE?

On Sunday 12 January, the Melbourne *Sunday Herald Sun* published a series of reports not only on management failures in the Defence department but also failures by those departmental organs that are supposed to police issues that, at the very least, border on corruption. Additional allegations appeared in the daily *Herald Sun* on the following day.

The articles are by the paper's Gerard McManus, widely regarded as a good reporter. They are clearly based upon information emanating from within the department. Specific allegations include:

- Lax security that has left more than 10,000 personnel and contractors without required security clearances.
- Contractors paid for work not done.
- Contractors' management fees taking up as much as 90 per cent of budgets.
- Inadequate logistics and warehousing with no complete inventory of defence assets.
- Allegations of contracting fraud accompanied by the destruction of incriminating files.
- The loss through theft of: 'thousands of mobile phones, televisions, cameras, DVDs, hand-held computers and laptops each year'. (Incidentally, the articles refer to this as 'petty theft'. Given the normal value of such items, we would regard it as grand larceny!)
- Billions of dollars lost in trying to fix the defence central computer system, which, after ten years, still does not work properly.
- Buildings and assets are leased to private industry at nominal cost.
- Shortages of ammunition.
- The existence of sweetheart deals that allow hundreds of defence personnel to take 'retirement' packages before moving to lucrative private industry jobs despite apparent conflicts of interest.

In a dismissive media release published on the same day, the Defence Minister, Senator Hill, commented that: 'The *Sunday Herald Sun*'s so-called "Special Report" on the Department of Defence is full of generalisations and inaccuracies that are offensive to

the military and the public servants who support them, Defence Minister Robert Hill said today.

In a letter to the newspaper, Senator Hill said while it was difficult to respond to broad statements, he would be happy to address specific allegations if the journalist had the courtesy to put them to him.

'For example, your report is misleading in relation to security clearances,' Senator Hill said. 'While there is a backlog, the changed security environment has required new levels of assessment which are being progressed as quickly as possible.'

'In relation to ammunition, the Chief of the Defence Force advises the Government on ammunition requirements and ensures that our military are properly provided for in terms of training and operations.'

'The allegations in relation to HMAS Cerberus have been extensively and independently investigated and the findings do not support your conclusions.'

'I have heard no complaint about the support the Special Forces received while in Afghanistan.'

'Allegations of widespread theft are not only inaccurate but also extremely offensive.'

'Many of the general issues you have raised have been extensively canvassed in Senate estimates committees and elsewhere for a long time.'

'Defence is a large and complex organisation and there will always be instances that taken out of context will lead to criticism. The Government is committed to remedying faults and overcoming deficiencies where these occur.'

'The reputation of the Australian Defence Force is second to none. They are doing a fantastic job at a time of high operational tempo and are ably supported by a capable and committed Defence organisation.'

'The "Special Report", with so many gross inaccuracies and misrepresentations, is unfair and offensive to all who serve in these uncertain times.'

In his response to the minister, the paper's editor commented that 'the minister should not be suffocated by the bonds of allegiance to his department; rather he should immediately examine the evidence published ...

and scrutinise the shortcomings it exposes.'

In part, the minister's reaction and the editor's response reveal a misapprehension of the relationship between the minister and his department. The minister owes no allegiance to the department; in fact, the department owes allegiance to the minister. For too long in Australia, we have had a situation where, whatever the reality, the minister tends to appear as a puppet of the department. The point might also be made

that the minister's attempt to divert attention to the glories of the ADF is an insult to those members who for so many years have struggled against the mismanagement and short-changing that keeps the combat force ever short of resources of personnel and equipment.

As regrettable as the minister's response was, the opposition's response was worse because it was effectively non-existent. †

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## More SPIN doctors

## than medical doctors



**Dr Malcolm Kennedy**

It really should be no surprise that the ADF has more spin doctors than medical doctors. The civilian world is blessed with battalions of spin doctors. If this is a norm of our society, perhaps, we should be more content and happily swallow the material with which they bombard us.

The communications doctrine of the 1970s has been internalised and has won the battle with media practitioners and their trainers in the universities. The mantra 'the medium is the message' obscures almost all aspects of media information.

Communications, media and journalism courses in the universities have been captured by the teachers rather than the doers. Information, facts and figures are part of a social construct, which has emerged as part of the western capitalist economic order. This order is authoritarian, paternal, racist, sexist, homophobic, aggressive and rightist.

Theory and dogma are valued much more highly than investigative skills and the ability to provide a factual and fair account of an event, issue or debate. The media organisational culture, which has been nourished on this custard of half-baked Marxism and its contemporary apologists, pretends to carry out the role of the essential fourth estate—providing critical

accounts of government, business and the behaviour of their society.

The fourth estate, which once acted as part of society's conscience, has lost its moral moorings. It is no longer a balanced and unbiased reporter of human affairs. The message, grounded in a search for the truth and built on hard, proven facts, is not considered by many in the media to be relevant to contemporary society.

The media's cry when questioned about its reportage of foreign affairs and war is that: 'the first casualty of war is the truth'. One must admit that our governments in World War I and World War II were ruthless in their manipulation of the bad news, however, unlike reporters they justified their actions as being part of winning the war. The irony of the journalists' criticism is that they are the people who kill the truth in war.

The recent anti-war or 'no war' demonstrations, in this and other democratic nations, were made as one of the rights of citizenship. Citizens have a right to voice and demonstrate their views in public. This right carries with it the duty to put their views in a peaceful, law-abiding manner.

Unfortunately, members of parliament and leaders of groups, for or against an issue, are far too often not

permitted to put their case. The minority of thugs who use demonstrations to incite violence and a police response are very often trained in the very old Leninist doctrine of provoking action by the state, which can then be represented as repressive and deserving of being overthrown, by force if necessary.

These people are not interested in peace and do not have any understanding of the enormous complexity of building a peaceful society and the even more difficult task of establishing and maintaining peace between nations. Their concern is power—the power to disrupt, to cause violence, to win recruits and to prosecute their dogma successfully, and be able eventually to seize power and run their political laboratory as they please.

How were the dangerous, the superficial, plain dopey, idealistic or thoughtful ideas expressed in the ‘no war’ campaign assessed and reported by the media? Most reports were unfortunately examples of the first three types noted above.

The non-peaceful activists were excused for having youthful energy. The Prime Minister, as a public figure, is ‘a legitimate target’ for abuse. TV news repeatedly ignored that Howard was elected to lead the nation, it was more important that he should consult with his opponents, and adopt their views! Why should he do this? Because there were a lot of people in the demonstrations and this meant he must be wrong. Equally vile was the physical attack on some young soldiers on leave in Townsville. They were under orders not to fight back if they were harassed. The thugs enjoyed their sport.

The superficial approach was the winning favourite over the period. War was bad, peace was good, therefore no war. If there was a war in Iraq there would be thousands, perhaps, hundreds of thousands of women and children killed by the allied forces’ bombs. This foul assertion clearly demonstrates the intellectual and moral bankruptcy.

In many ways this theme was developed. US, UK and Australian troops would be deliberately making war upon the innocents of Iraqi society! No mention was given of the fact that these nations have strict rules of engagement, which give priority to the protection of innocents. In addition, the so-called champions of liberty were comfortable to ignore the oppression of the Iraqi people and the huge numbers of Iraqi people who are brutally murdered every day in Saddam’s prisons. Again ignorance and bias dominated this view, which was also espoused by certain members of the Senate. Once again ignorance about military affairs and international relations reached new depths.

The lack of concern for the human rights of the Iraqi people, also demonstrated in the failure of the ‘no war’ groups to discuss the systematic impoverishment that Saddam has brought to his people. In the year when Saddam seized power the Iraqi per capita share of gross income was one of the highest in the region at over

\$8000. In the period of his rule he has squandered the income of the nation on wars, arms and grandiose palaces, and then redistributed the wealth to his clan and backers. Iraqis now have an average annual income of less than \$1000 per capita.

The leftist hostility to changing a violent, murderous dictatorship was rarely noted, until a mature radical, with real knowledge of Iraq, argued cogently why he supported the overthrow of Saddam. The great symbol ‘talk a lot do nothing’—the UN became the holy cow for any decision on Iraq’s continued defiance to act on existing UN resolutions requiring him to give up WMD stocks. Given its failure to act in a timely fashion in the past leaving decisions to the UN was a neat way of getting no action—no war.

One of the most tragic ironies of war is that peace movements have not stopped wars and have generally prolonged the fighting. Only a fool could imagine that Saddam was not delighted by the apparent divisions in so many nations. Saddam is a creature of a violent and passionate culture, he has been generally successful in his control of Iraq. Even the huge losses in the war with Iran and the Gulf war failed to galvanise enough people to overthrow him. This can be explained by the ruthlessness of his security police. The steady decline in living standards, the routine tyranny and the murderous punishment given to those accused of not supporting him may have brought the people to a point where a solid military shove may bring him down.

The greatest challenge we face is to ensure that post Saddam Hussein the Iraqi people have the opportunity to enjoy liberty, a just society and the benefits of their labour and resources. It is important that our media examine their role in our society. Is it prepared to be the fearless guardians of the truth, giving detailed information to the public or will it remain a discredited doctor of spin. †

*Malcolm Kennedy is a Director of ADA and the Editor of ‘Defender’.*

**The commitment to the defence forces we have outlined is a necessary basis for guaranteeing the future security of Australia.**

**We cannot afford not to afford it.**

**Liberal Party Future Directions**

by Australis

**Australis is a collective name for a number of individual contributors to *Defender*.**

## Soldiers—the new celebrities

Roll over, Mick Jagger, Michael Jackson and all the other ageing darlings of the great media celebrity industry. The new celebrities are the Australian serviceman and woman. The insatiable appetite of the media wants to feed off the troops themselves, their families, both immediate and extended, and anybody else who will peddle gossip, preferably salacious.

ADA fields literally dozens of calls from journalists wanting to be put in touch with troops and their families. The journos get quite annoyed when we refuse to do so on the dual grounds of security and, more especially, privacy. We have no objection if troops want to tell their stories about the anthrax vaccine or anything else to the media but we won't pimp for them.

One of the characteristics of the media's sudden interest in ADF personnel is their total ignorance of the nature and ethos of military service in Australia. Of course, that does not hinder the adoption by many of some seriously false assumptions. Nor does it prevent the pursuit of irrelevant or personally intrusive issues. There seems to be no understanding of the reality that troops are individuals with their different social, economic and political aspirations. Too many Australians, including journalists who should know better, see members of the ADF as some sort of homogeneous mass. If the media had paid more attention to defence issues when war was not looming, we might now have a more rational community debate.

A Defence department public affairs machine that is silent does not help the sophistication of the debate.

When anti-war protestors abused soldiers in Townsville, almost without exception the media interest was generated by reports that soldiers had been advised or ordered not to wear uniform in public. That advice rather than the abuse by a vicious and cowardly minority became the issue. To be fair, most commentators were appalled by the attacks but the pursuit of what was perceived to be official timidity reflected a highly politicised agenda on the part of the media.

In fact, advice not to wear uniform in public in these circumstances is regrettable but prudent. In such a climate, troops become targets for the radical fringe whose strategy is to generate a violent reaction to their provocations.

Soldiers are not, and should not have to be, trained to deal with such provocations by their own people. That drags troops into the political dispute at a time when they must be seen as what they actually are, servants of the whole community and under the orders of the legitimate government.

## The Iraq imbroglio

It would be difficult to find any serious defence commentator who does uncritically support a unilateral attack on Iraq. There are those who will do so if a case is made. But all would agree that the case has not yet been made.

Hardly anyone would doubt that Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq constitutes a substantial threat to regional and, possibly, global peace. No Arab neighbour and certainly not Israel can feel comfortable beside a well-armed and more populous Iraq, especially one which is certainly advanced in the development of weapons of mass destruction and which has now defied the United Nations Security Council with impunity for twelve years. This incidentally is the answer to those who persist in calling for a diplomatic solution to the problem. Diplomacy has been tried and has so far failed in the face of Saddam's obduracy and the UN's pusillanimity.

There are three substantial arguments for the current Australian troop deployment, which is, of course, significantly short of an actual strike on Iraq. The first, and most obvious, is that the deployment creates options for the timely use of force should the decision to strike be made. It would be an example of military and governmental incompetence to make the decision, then prepare and send the troops. By the time they arrived, the conflict would have ended and we, as a nation, would look supremely silly—some sort of international clown.

Secondly, the deployment of forces into the Middle East by the United States, Britain and Australia adds substantially to the diplomatic pressure on Saddam Hussein. It is naive in the extreme to expect that the traditional posturing of UN diplomats, even weapons

inspectors, without the backing of a credible threat of force will persuade Saddam to dismantle or disclose his stocks of weapons of mass destruction. Saddam has shown on a number of occasions that, like most totalitarian dictators, he only understands force. He has to be persuaded that the troop build-up, more than that in 1998, presages a devastating strike akin to that in 1991 if he does not comply with the United Nations disarmament resolutions and the 1991 armistice agreements that left him in power.

Thirdly, the troop build-up puts necessary pressure on the United Nations Security Council. This body is responsible under the UN Charter for maintaining peace and security in the world. Over the 58 years of its life, it has presided over humanitarian disasters of immense magnitude in, among others, the Congo, Somalia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Kosovo because it has lacked the determination to meet its responsibilities. It is possible to excuse its inaction during the Cold War. It is not possible to excuse its failures since.

Nevertheless, an attempt to solve the problem militarily faces serious obstacles. The Americans could certainly defeat Saddam's large but obsolete army once it is deployed into Iraq. Assuming that the Americans do launch an invasion, the conflict is likely to be very short and, despite the 'peace' propaganda to the contrary, generally free of civilian casualties. US military capabilities are even more advanced than they were in 1991, while Iraq's have not been restored. So substantial is the American technical superiority that the Iraqis could be defeated totally without ever sighting their adversary. Saddam has threatened to withdraw to his cities and force the US to fight house to house, a difficult but not at all impossible task.

Alternatively, he could use some or all of his weapons of mass destruction (WMD) against the US forces or their bases. That would be a self-destructive effort, somewhat like Hitler's *Gotterdammerung* in 1945. WMD enjoy substantial political value which, however, evaporates once they are used in combat. The political and military consequences for the user will ever be catastrophic unless retaliation in kind can be avoided.

The most difficult challenge would be rebuilding Iraq after such a conflict. An indefinite and expensive period of military occupation and nation building would be needed in a very infertile political, social and religious environment. Maintaining the buffer against Iran would be essential and this, in itself, would require a large occupation force. Politically, provision would have to be made for the various minorities of which the most troublesome would be the Kurds whose territory spills over into Iran and Turkey.

For all the hyperbole from Australian ministers, there is very little that Australia could contribute. Our forces are too small, under-equipped and unsustainable for extended commitments, especially for armoured or mechanised operations in open country. Australia has now deployed an increased naval commitment, a team of SAS

Special Forces, a squadron of F/A-18 fighters forces and some other minor units, in all about 2000 personnel. In the context of an operation involving some quarter of a million troops, this is a miniscule contribution—less than one per cent of the total—and hardly worthy of all the current and, dare we suggest, manufactured angst. Moreover, a cynic might comment that, the SAS apart, it is relatively risk free.

Conventional Australian ground forces would play no role in the initial battle but could, perhaps, play a time-limited role in post-conflict, internal security operations. We just don't have the military muscle and should stop pretending otherwise.

Our reservations are based primarily upon the lack of authority for any military action and the failure, so far, to outline any credible objectives for that action. Should the United Nations Security Council authorise action to achieve realistic objectives that will significantly reduce the threat to regional peace and security, those reservations will evaporate.

In this context, it is worth noting that the Iraq imbroglio represents a serious challenge to the international community not only in itself but also as a road map to the future of the UN's role in maintaining peace and security. If the Security Council submits to Iraq's defiance, its moral authority will be perhaps fatally compromised. Despite the contumely that so many commentators heap upon the United States, it ought to be recognised that it together with Britain and Australia are doing more than anyone else to put some backbone into the UN.

## Peace protests—or street parties?

Over the weekend of 14–16 February, some half a million Australians joined in marches for peace. The old Vietnam moratorium junkies drooled not only over the numbers but also the widely representative nature of the crowds. Despite the variety of speakers who addressed the marchers, prominence was given to such political geniuses as Senator Bob Brown (who displays an extraordinary ignorance of Australia's system of government every time he opens his mouth), Peter Garrett (who claims to be a musician of some sort) and John Pilger (who just hates just about everybody except the most nauseous dictators on the planet).

No one commented on the amount of organisation and money that had to have been poured into staging the marches. No one asked where all this had come from.

No one asked whether such marches had any effect. It was simply assumed that the vast numbers would pressure the government into backing down from its confrontation of Saddam Hussein.

Of course, the numbers actually represent less than three per cent of the Australian population. Suggesting that such a number represents some sort of democratic

majority is a Leninist construct. It is like Hitler claiming that the Nuremberg rallies of the 1930s validated his policies.

Leaving that aside and with the utmost respect for those who made their point, it has to be asked what was the point? What were they trying to achieve? Or was it, like the recent reconciliation marches, simply some sort of ultimately futile street party to relieve their own feelings.

*Defender* and some of its contributors have been around for a long time. We recall that anti-war protests in the 1930s, 1950s, 1970s, and so on right up to the present have always protested against attempts to deal with some pretty obnoxious regimes and dictators. In every case, the political effect if not the intent of the protests has been to support the strategies of such blood-stained world citizens as Mussolini, Hitler, Stalin, Khrushchev, Ho Chi Minh, Mao Tse-Tung and, now, Saddam Hussein and Kim Jong-il.

For most of the marchers, the clue to the difference between ideals and reality lies in the Newspoll published in *The Australian* on 4 February. That poll disclosed that 57 per cent of Australians supported Australian military involvement against Iraq provided it was supported by the United Nations. Only 18 per cent supported action without United Nations support. On the other hand, 65 per cent considered that Saddam and Iraq constituted a threat to global security, while 75 per cent were satisfied that Iraq was hiding weapons of mass destruction. Some 60 per cent of those polled opposed the deployment of Australian forces to the Middle East at this time.

What these figures say to this writer is that Australians perceive a problem that affects their security but want someone else to fix it.

## The Security Council has obligations

The Australian community's popular support for the United Nations is touchingly naïve. It assumes that the United Nations Security Council possesses both the ability and the will to deal with threats to international peace and security. For the whole of its life, the Council has failed dismally to do so, so much so that there can be little doubt that the future of the world body is at risk.

Under the Charter of the United Nations, the Security Council has clear responsibilities for the maintenance of international peace and security. Article 1 requires the UN 'to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace'. The Charter clearly provides for the use of military force in some circumstances and indeed establishes a Military Staff Committee comprising the armed forces chiefs of the Council's permanent members.

Diplomats working within a culture that not only

decries the use of force in all circumstances but also actively refuses to collect intelligence about the looming disasters dominate the Security Council. There is every reason to believe that the current crop of weapons inspectors are not supposed to find evidence of weapons of mass destruction so that the Security Council can again walk away from its responsibilities. Baseless conspiracy theory? If so, why did it sack its inspectors in 1998 at the behest of Iraq and its Russian friends when they were finding clear evidence of WMD and, worse, were using American intelligence to do so? Now Chief Weapons Inspector, Hans Blix, has walked away from his originally forthright condemnation of Iraq into a mealy-mouthed rationalisation of a situation that has not changed in any substantive way. Does he perhaps enjoy his job too much?

Even in our own region, there is current evidence of the Security Council disinclination to do its job. With growing pro-Indonesian militia incursions into East Timor, the UN refuses to allow its large peacekeeping force to intercept them. Australian troops on the border who could, and happily would, deal with the militias are not allowed to do so because they are under UN command. This situation is no more than a re-run of what happened in Rwanda, Bosnia and Kosovo.

In this context, it is worth remembering that the United States intervened unilaterally in Kosovo in the face of a burgeoning humanitarian disaster when the UN dithered. Ultimately, the UN endorsed the American action but, if the world had waited for the UN, it would have been too late just as it was too late in Rwanda, ineffectual in Somalia, incompetent in Bosnia and both incompetent and dilatory in East Timor.

Moreover, East Timor would have been an even greater disaster if the Australian Defence Force had not been preparing for a rapid deployment for some months and if the UN Security Council had not bowed to heavy pressure from Britain and Australia.

The current public debate puts enormous faith in the UN as some sort of legitimate guardian of international interests. It is nothing of the sort. Rather it is a collection of timid diplomats, too heavily influenced by countries like France and Russia who are too close to Iraq and too negative to offer any credible alternative proposals to solve the Iraq problem. It is not the job of the Council to find excuses for doing nothing useful but to find the means of achieving proper outcomes.

Those who insist that diplomacy be used to force Iraq to disarm need to be able to demonstrate what new diplomatic process will be effective when the efforts of the past 12 years have failed. Similarly, those who assert that armed forces should not be deployed in advance of any UN authorisation for military action should recall UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan's dictum that: 'You can do a lot with diplomacy, but of course you can do a lot more with diplomacy backed up by fairness and force'.

Despite the existence of the Kosovo precedent, it is certainly desirable that the UN authorise any military action against Iraq. The justification certainly exists but

the obstacle is the UN's own failure to meet its responsibilities. If it fails, its own standing is in jeopardy. Those Australians who insist on the primacy of the UN process should focus their efforts on persuading the Security Council to do its job. It can't run away forever.



Photo courtesy © 2002 Palm Sunday

## They're at it again

One supposes that it is not unreasonable for politicians to gather around troops going away. In part, it demonstrates an acceptance of their responsibility for making the decision to send them. It would be better, however, if their media managers made less of a political meal of the event. All they do is create the impression that the troops are just a supporting cast for their political ambitions. Wouldn't it be something new if the PM and Leader of the Opposition told their staffs that they wanted to see the troops off but wanted no journalists and no TV crews? Pigs will fly first.

At least Mr Crean was frank in expressing his opposition to the deployment while expressing support for the troops. He was unwise though in his choice of words. At least one ABC report quoted his opposition to the deployment but edited out his support for the troops. Was this a problem of shortage of air time or deliberate politicking by the editor?

There is something seriously unpleasant about devoting some two thirds of one paper's Opinion page (*The Australian* 24/1) to two political groupies claiming the electoral benefits or otherwise of the current troop deployment for their respective leaders.

Who cares? One of the great strengths of our system is that politicians can disappear and after an initial flurry, no one would notice the change.

The egregious Greens Senator Bob Brown made much of the governor-general's statement of support for the troops, damning it by reference to

'constitutional conventions'. All Brown managed to do, of course, was display his ignorance of the constitution and its conventions. Under the constitution, the governor-general is the nominal commander-in-chief of the ADF and he was acting in that role as well as identifying with the implementation of a lawful policy of his government.

Brown would be better advised to suggest to his rent-a-crowd demonstrators that they express their opposition to the politicians and not the troops themselves. Their

dissent is, of course, legitimate and is protected by the constitution and by our laws. But that dissent ought to be directed against the decision-makers, not against the troops who are constrained by the same laws from entering into the argument. Attacking the troops is just cowardice.

Whatever their own personal views, members of the ADF are the loyal servants of the Australian community working through its democratically elected government. They go where they are sent because they serve the government, not the prime minister or the Liberal Party. Democracy does not mean that the government may do only what the people endorse at the time. It means that it must submit its record to the judgement of the people at the next election. One of the essential arts of politics is to judge between what must be done or what ought to be done against what is, for the moment anyway, the popular thing to be done.

## The anthrax nonsense

Perhaps as many as 40 personnel from ships deploying to or in the Middle East have refused to accept anthrax vaccination and have been returned to Australia. ADF authorities have said that no disciplinary or administrative action will be taken against these personnel. Possibly the reason for not taking such action is that Defence failed to provide advice on the vaccinations or the vaccinations themselves before the ships left Australia. Nevertheless, the action of these personnel, a small minority of the 700 or so in the three ships, is disappointing. Clearly they have accepted the validity of some scaremongering articles on the Internet rather than the considered judgement of the ADF's medical experts. Australian Medical Association President, Dr Kerryn Phelps, did not help by asserting that there was no report indicating that the vaccine was 100 per cent safe. Our advice is that no vaccine is ever considered to be 100 per cent safe.

What is certain is that the personnel concerned have walked away from their duty and from their obligation to their shipmates. They have left gaps that must now be filled by other personnel who have not worked up with the ships. This would have consequential problems in the posting cycle for a considerable number of people throughout the ADF.

There is a strong argument for the proposition that these personnel have made themselves unfit for their assigned duty. In those circumstances, there should be some sanctions unless or until within a reasonable time they make themselves fit for that or any other duty. The notion that individual service personnel should be allowed to assert the superiority of their unqualified judgements and override professional experts is risky. At the very least, there should be some disciplinary or administrative consequences.

Predictably, some of the recusants have felt the

wrath of their peers with one report at least of a yellow stripe painted on the back of one sailor. This is not acceptable either but it is hardly surprising, more especially if the defence organisation fails to deal properly with these people. The ADF does not need another 3RAR situation where troops take the law into their own hands.

## Australia–Indonesia relations post-Bali

Thanks to the sterling efforts of both the Indonesian National and Australian Federal Police in investigating the Bali bombing of October 12 last year, Australian–Indonesian relations have taken a substantial upswing. The close co-operation between the two police forces and the co-operation of the Indonesian government in allowing the Australian involvement has been a paradigm case of vital co-operation not only in the war on terrorism but for the longer term future.

If the Indonesians were less capable than the Australians in dealing with the scientific investigations, they demonstrated a high professionalism in tracking down the culprits and in developing a criminal case. Indonesia has good reason to be proud of its detectives.

The Australia–Indonesia relationship is one of our most important. Despite occasional tensions and misunderstandings on both sides, it has stood the test of time because it is in the interests of both countries that it should. What certainly added to the Bali outcome was the program of personnel exchanges and training that have gone on for years. They should and must continue for the benefit of both countries.

Reports from personnel visiting Indonesia suggest that, at all levels, there is a desire to put the East Timor tensions behind us and get on with the development of regional security co-operation programs.

## What is the role of the ADF?

As if the ADF does not have enough on its rather small plate with continuing commitments to East Timor, Bougainville and now the Middle East, there are still those who believe it should be out there guarding dams, power stations and municipal swimming pools against terrorists. Don't even mention guarding politicians' swimming pools because they might get ideas.

Similarly, when the Eastern states were hit with devastating bush fires, the cry went up for troops to come in and help. In fact, the troops got in to Canberra to assist before the cry went up. That rapid response is indicative not just of the capability but the fact that, constitutionally, the troops can't go in until the States request their help.

We were fascinated to see one newspaper report of the Canberra fires that discussed the dire need for ADF help. The accompanying photos were of an Army bulldozer and a Navy helicopter fighting the fires!

## Why are France and Russia resisting action on Iraq?

The supporters of Saddam and the leftists are chanting the American imperialism story again. In the Vietnam War it was South China Sea oil, now the US is after Iraqi oil. The fact that the US does not rely on Iraqi oil and is unlikely to do so seems to have been missed.

The French and Russians seem to have gone missing on the dangers of Saddam's drive to keep on building weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Indeed, during 1996–98 they sabotaged the UNSCOM process and rejected calls for more inspections, claiming that sanctions should be lifted and Iraq allowed normal trade relations.

The reasons are now apparent. Under the UN oil-for-food program Russia has earned \$4 billion in trade with Iraq and is negotiating the recovery of pre-Gulf War debts of \$12 billion. In 2002 France sold \$1.5 billion of goods to Iraq and was successful in signing major contracts for communications and automobile sales, as soon as the sanctions are lifted. In addition, France and Russia signed multi-billion-dollar oil development deals, which were cancelled, but renewed when both countries became more active in trying to end the sanctions.

The oil and trade deals are estimated to have a medium-term value of over \$50 billion for Russia and France. The no-war brigade who chant the US oil imperialism line have missed the two players who are after Iraqi oil. The US could do the same, purchase the oil and ignore Iraq's development and future use of WMD. The world will be a better place, while the US maintains its moral stance and if Saddam Hussein's tyranny is ended. †

**Weakness on the part of a major power risks war, not only for that power, but also for all the other nations depending on international checks and balances to maintain peace.**

**Thomas Sowell**

# North Korea's

# nuclear bomb:

## the Beijing, Islamabad, Pyongyang

# nexus

**N K Pant**

Of late newspapers in their own man-bites-the-dog familiarity have been coming out with weird news stories, with new startling revelations on the North Korean and Pakistan nuclear and missile exchanges. These incredible sounding reports of brazen acts of proliferation have not only dangerous repercussions for India but also for the rest of the world. With the nuclear weapons falling in the hands of rogue nations, the global village may be transformed into a highly hazardous place to live in.

The US Secretary of State Collin Powell has already gone on record by warning Pakistan, its so-called front-line ally against terrorism, that any future interaction with North Korea, one of the axis of evil would be improper, inappropriate and would have serious consequences. Further reports emanating from Tokyo seem to confirm Pyongyang having the bomb fabricated with the help of Pakistani nuclear expertise. While North Korea has served as a conduit for ballistic missile supplies to Pakistan, Islamabad has shared its weapons-capable uranium enrichment technology with the renegade communist regime? Incidentally, Pakistan's nuclear weaponisation program is based on the centrifuge method.

But what is being missed is the Chinese duplicity in the whole murky affair of nuclear proliferation. The Communist leadership in Beijing has perfected the art of proliferation of clandestine missile and nuclear technology transfers as a tool of the Chinese national security policy. Incidentally, the proximity of Pakistan and North Korea to Chinese strategic interests is well

known and both the countries owe a greater part of their nuclear and missile capabilities to the wily dragon. China sees India located south of Tibet, which it forcibly occupied in 1950, as a competing power. By helping Pakistan in nuclear and ballistic missile field, it has created a menacing rival to India in the form of hostile Pakistan. Obviously the aim of the exercise is to tie down New Delhi with a serious security dilemma within the Indian sub-continent.

Japan, the economic giant on China's northeast is another rival that Beijing would like to contain. The propping up of Pyongyang with ballistic missiles and nuclear weapons has perhaps been considered handy in this respect. Since China wants to project itself as a responsible world power, it has fathered the nuclear-cum-missile exchange between its two villainous proteges. To take the heat off its proliferation activities, which would have attracted sanctions from the United States, Beijing has encouraged these two rogue states to establish closer nuclear and missile co-operation links since the early 1990s. The reports even suggest that as late as October 2000, Pakistani and North Korean nuclear and metallurgical scientists were invited to observe the mating of miniaturised nuclear warheads and missile systems at China's Lop Nor nuclear testing area in Xinjiang Province.

According to the experts, increasing Chinese assistance in the prohibited nuclear and missile fields takes the form of covert technology transfer through the

third parties. Moreover, missile parts are exported in manageable consignments as opposed to complete missile systems. Surprisingly while the fact that Beijing was the chief instrument by which Pakistan got its bomb was well known, the growing Islamabad–Pyongyang–Beijing missile nexus has not only evaded the media glare but also the US sanctions. Washington, therefore, has once again winked at Pakistan’s treacherous activities that pose serious security threats to India.

Strangely, Pakistan acting under the Chinese tutelage, has not only benefited Pyongyang in its quest for the weapons of mass destruction, indications are that it has lent a helping hand to Saudi Arabia as well. This must be known by Washington, which, at the moment, is busy in letting off steam toward Iraq. Prior to the black day of September 11, Pakistani President cum Army Chief had reportedly reached an informal understanding on sharing nuclear technology with Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia. In return for liberal financial assistance from that country, bankrupt Islamabad was also expected to provide medium-range, Chinese-supplied M-11 or Ghaury missiles of the North Korean origin. These would have replaced DF-3 silkworm medium-range, ballistic missiles now operationally obsolete, which Riyadh had purchased from China in 1988.

Around the same time Pakistan had successfully completed its covert nuclear weaponisation program.

Under the covert backing from Communist China, Pakistan and North Korea have often in the past been showing brinkmanship and belligerence in their respective regions to change the territorial status quo. During the foregoing Operation Parakram intensely inimical Pakistani rulers had several times openly threatened India with nuclear blackmail. New Delhi needs to be on guard against such satanic forces. Its diplomatic hue and cry in the international arena is not going to help as the US has let the Pakistanis off the hook by merely stating that its trusted ally against international terrorism has already stopped the notorious missiles in lieu of nukes exchange program. But in all likelihood the dirty barter may still be going on surreptitiously. Such crass perfidy perhaps leaves no other alternative for India but to possess an assured retaliatory capability in order to deter the devilish designs being hatched by its adversaries in the immediate and extended neighbourhood. ‡

*N K Pant is a retired Wing Commander of the Indian Air Force and a prominent India-based defence consultant.*

## Controlled madness

# in the Hermit Kingdom



*Photo courtesy KFA*

**Dr Malcolm Kennedy**

The ‘Hermit Kingdom’ of North Korea is a desperate state, with an imploding economy, which cannot prevent persistent famine but which must rigorously control food and resources to maintain its massive military machine at a high order of readiness. This is a country that should have collapsed, however, the control and discipline exercised by the leadership is such that it still does amazing things.

The mass demonstrations of love for the Dear Leader are a poor echo of the Maoist personality cult of the past, but must be seen to represent current levels of control. The missile test firing into Japanese waters may be little more than putting on a defiant face. The vast military machine may have the numbers but may be unsustainable for more than a few weeks combat. The regime offers visitors smoke and mirrors, however, it is difficult to prove what these hide.

North Korea has a population of less than half that of South Korea, it is an impoverished, authoritarian, dynastic communist regime committed to the doctrine of *juche*. *Juche*, or self-reliance in all things, is a particular sham as the country continues to suffer from starvation and a shrinking economy. Nonetheless, North Korea is the most militarised society on earth. The population is mentally and physically programmed from birth to death in the truths of the regime.

It is highly likely that at least one fifth of the population has been given thorough military training and they are fit enough to serve in war. The objective of the billions spent on the militarisation of the country is clear and simple. The forces in North Korea are trained to defend the People Democratic Republic. This defence, however, is planned on the basis of a pre-emptive invasion and destruction of the South Korea.

This time there will be no failure. Over the past fifty years the regime has developed a huge armed force, especially the army. The army has taken up, with great enthusiasm, the Russian doctrine of the application of massive force. Over one million troops are ready to begin the attack across the demilitarised zone. These troops are backed by another one million reserve troops and older trained reserves of a similar number can be called to arms.

North Korea's missile forces may play only a small part in an attack on the South Korea, but its forces are equipped with huge numbers of conventional weapons. The attack will be destructive beyond common reckoning. Seoul will be destroyed by a sustained artillery attack by probably half of the 12,000 guns emplaced close to the border.

In a matter of hours Seoul will suffer hundreds of thousands of deaths and wounded, even greater numbers will pack the transport routes to flee the city. Added to the chaos of the bombardment and the massive strike force of tanks and infantry sweeping across the border, will be the work of agents and special forces working in the South Korea. They will concentrate on the destruction of civil and military command, control and communications systems. Years of programming in North Korea have prepared millions for the great task of liberating South Korea and expelling the evil American forces. The forces from North Korea will apply great brutality as a terror weapon to ensure victory.

The current campaign in the North Korea 'to resist an American invasion' will fire up the people who have been fed a propaganda diet of the evils of the United States, Japan and the 'traitors' in the South Korea for over fifty years. There are no alternatives to government controlled information, which will cause most of the population to fear an American attack and the one million-plus ready forces are, no doubt, ready to launch themselves against the South Korea.

Is this scenario likely to happen? Is the planned madness in the best interests of Dear Leader? Could the North Korea win a war for South Korea?

There have been dozens of cases of brinkmanship by North Korea, which the United States and the South Korea have taken seriously in the past. On many occasions North Korea has made agreements, which it has deliberately ignored or lied about. The recent revelations about the continued nuclear weapons program is a typical example of the regime giving little of real substance while continuing to pursue its objectives.

The apparent real determination of the US to disarm Iraq and change the regime has alarmed Kim Jong-il. The US words are being backed up with massive weapon and troop deployments. The North Korean leaders, especially the senior military officers, know that the United States' technological capacity could halt their attack on the South Korea. The recent movement of US bomber aircraft to positions, from which they could attack North Korea, was put as a safeguard operation, given the

US focus on Iraq. The second message was that these aircraft are nuclear capable and might be so armed.

In the view of North Korea, the government of South Korea has had nuclear weapons for a very long time, albeit, US weapons. The drive to build nuclear weapons must be seen in this context, and with the special hope that the US has removed its nuclear weapons from the area. A nuclear-armed Kim Jong-il would have much greater bargaining power to bring about an accommodation with the South Korea, largely on his terms.

North Korea has made good use of the expertise of other countries—at first East German experts supplied scientific information, more recently China and Pakistan have provided personnel and technology. The most talented scientists and engineers in North Korea have been committed to the weapons and missile programs. The discussions and apparent agreements with past American governments over the control of nuclear weapons have all been shadow games.

Compliance in the development of nuclear power has been a trick to cover the real intention, which has been to produce weapons grade material and a basic nuclear warhead. Linked to this has been the long-run effort to build more advanced, powerful, and greater payload carrying missiles. To imagine that the regime would behave in any other fashion contradicts the established behaviour of decades.

The recent threats of an attack on South Korea and test firing of a missile into Japanese waters are both part of Kim Jong-il's brinkmanship and desire to squeeze more concessions out of the US and South Korea. The latter paid the North over \$400 million for the Prime Minister's visit to the North. The Clinton deal on reactors has now been shown to have been a farce. The second missile test has given further confirmation of the regime's continued success in developing missiles with a greater range.

The five corners meet in the north-west Pacific, and North Korea has now set a new dynamic power play into motion. The Japanese have announced that they might have to expand Japan's military power, and, perhaps develop nuclear weapons. This has alarmed the PRC; while the PRC and South Korea's increased trade and closer links have infuriated North Korea. These interactions have caused considerable concern in the United States, and the role Russia will play remains obscure. Some things are clear. The leaders of North Korea are highly skilled at duping leaders of other nations and they do so deliberately. At present, and in the future, they will employ high levels of brinkmanship, which will be carefully calibrated to obtain benefits for a player who holds a poor hand. The long-run record shows that while the regime will push for advantages it will never do enough to cause military retaliation. North Korea is not, and will not be, a threat to Australia. It has far more important fish to catch and fry in the north-west Pacific. †

# AUSTRALIA'S MARITIME STRATEGY



**A submission by the Australia Defence Association to The Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Of the Australian Parliament**

## Background

The *White Paper Defence 2000: Our Future Defence Force* suggests that 'Australia needs to be able to control the air and sea approaches to our continent—a maritime strategy'. This is not a maritime strategy in the accepted sense of the term, merely one very incomplete element of a true maritime strategy. Elsewhere, the White Paper compounds its misunderstanding of the term by referring to 'maritime capabilities' as 'mostly air and naval forces'. This canard is repeated on a number of occasions throughout the document. Where the document refers to land forces in the context of a maritime strategy, they are given 'a vital and central role' to assist naval and air forces, defeat incursions on to Australian territory and secure air and naval bases.

What the White Paper is describing is one limited element of a strategy of sea denial, not a maritime strategy. A true maritime strategy is one, which uses all forces—land, sea and air—to further national objectives in a maritime context as distinct from a territorial context. The White Paper's concept of strategy is, in fact, a territorial or continental strategy rather than a maritime strategy with operations on or over the sea limited to protecting the approaches to the continent.

The following discussion draws heavily on Alan Robertson's *Centre of the Ocean World: Australia and Maritime Strategy 2001*, Seaview Press, Adelaide.

## The elements of maritime strategy

There are three fundamental elements to a maritime strategy. These are Sea Denial, Sea Assertion and Power Projection. The object of Sea Denial is:

- the detection and destruction of an adversary's naval forces and seaborne commerce;
- offensive operations against hostile naval forces;
- the seaward defence of ports and anchorages.

Clearly, the White Paper strategy does not envisage offensive operations against an adversary's seaborne commerce and limits operations against hostile naval forces to those operating in the seaward approaches to Australian territory. Sea Assertion is an element of

maritime strategy that includes:

- the establishment and maintenance of superiority in areas necessary for naval operations including protection of sea lines of communication;
- naval reconnaissance and surveillance, anti-submarine operations, protection of shipping; and
- military sea transport support for the ADF.

Of considerable importance in this context is the protection of merchant shipping, both coastal and international. This is discussed further below.

Power Projection involves the use of maritime capabilities to conduct offensive operations against enemy installations; and provide naval support for land operations.

In the context of a national defence strategy, which envisages a need to go to the aid of allied nations either in our region or further afield, the White Paper accepts the need for this element of a maritime strategy without actually recognising its significance.

Thus the commitment of Interfet to East Timor actually involved those elements of a maritime strategy set out above. All other elements of maritime strategy were implicit and applied to the lodgment and protection of Interfet had Indonesian forces attempted to interfere with the operation.

## A flawed military strategy

Apart from the misunderstanding of the nature of maritime strategy, the White Paper demonstrates additional flaws. For example, the section entitled 'An Attack on Australia' is sensibly dismissive of the potential for significant direct attacks on Australia but insists that 'Australia's most important long term strategic objective is to be able to defend our territory from direct military attack'. That strategic objective is in itself unexceptionable although it neglects potential threats to important Australian interests. Where the White Paper falls down is in its failure to distinguish between a strategic objective and a strategy. Thus a strategy is the means by which the objective is achieved.

In this context, it is necessary to distinguish between the strategic objective priorities set out in chapter four and the strategies described in chapter six. While the protection of Australian territory is the highest strategic objective, the strategic priority should be to maximise

Australia's military operational capabilities for tasks at a distance from Australia. The overall strategy should be the same as it always was at least until the 1980s—to keep potential adversaries at arm's length. Pursuing a strategy that allows an adversary to develop bases in the region for an assault on Australia is a faulty strategy that increases the risk to the primary strategic objective.

In this sense, the Association suggests that meeting the primary strategic objective is better achieved by pursuing the White Paper's second strategic priority, that of contributing to the security of our immediate neighbourhood. Focusing on that strategic priority not only actually ensures that the primary strategic objective is attained but also that our forces are prioritised for a more likely contingency than a direct attack on Australian territory. In any event, the capabilities developed for and the experience gained in pursuing the former priority would support the strategy of defence of the mainland. The opposite is not necessarily true.

## **Protection of merchant shipping**

The White Paper's focus on protecting Australian territory has inherent flaws because it fails to recognise that Australia has vital interests that extend beyond the national territory. As one example, Australia's economic and therefore its political health depends heavily upon foreign, mainly seaborne trade. In 2001, Australia's total overseas trade was valued at \$240.3 billion of which exports accounted for \$122.5 billion. The total value of overseas trade represented 34.7 per cent of Gross Domestic Product. According to the Bureau of Transport and Regional Economics, this overseas trade was represented in 1999–2000 by exports of 518 million tonnes and imports of 56 million tonnes. Domestic (coastal) shipping, much of it in vital commodities accounted for a further 101 million tonnes. This export/import cargo was carried in 9,619 voyages originating overseas. Port calls in Australia by overseas and coastal vessels in 2000–01 totalled 21,538. Although these figures are relatively small compared with some of the northern hemisphere shipping routes, the greater distance factor of most voyages adds substantially to the security task with an annual figure of 4,904 billion tons/kilometre.

As far as we can determine, there is no mention in the White Paper of the need to protect merchant shipping as an Australian strategic interest and one that would require maritime strategic capabilities. Indeed, academic and departmental responses have tended to be dismissive, suggesting that the need does not exist or, alternatively, that Australia has no need for a capability of its own.' In most cases, those responses have been couched in terms of a conflict between Australia and some other country but have ignored the reality that a conflict between one of Australia's major

trading partners such as Japan and another country could involve attacks on merchant shipping ranging from low-level harassment to a sustained attempt at interdiction. Depending upon the scale of such contingencies, their emergence would necessarily generate a multi-national response in which Australia would be required to play a part.

Similarly, neither terrorism nor piracy can be excluded as potential, albeit limited, threats to a substantial Australian maritime interest that would demand a maritime response probably in concert with allies but possibly depending upon the circumstances on our own.

Australia has been involved in sanctions enforcement against Iraq virtually continuously since 1990. Such sanctions enforcement is clearly an element of maritime strategy supporting Australia's strategic interests. While it may not constitute a strategic priority, it has nevertheless demanded a substantial contribution by a small force which, in the process, denies that force the ability to further other elements of maritime strategy.

## **The law enforcement and maritime safety challenges**

Offshore law enforcement in Australia's very large Exclusive Economic Zone plus the obligations undertaken under Safety of Life at Sea conventions involve provision of maritime forces over very extensive ocean areas. The Australian laws applicable to the EEZ cover customs, fisheries, environment, quarantine and migration. While the area to be covered is large and the laws extensive, the enforcement capabilities are very limited. The Australia Defence Association has argued since 1977 for the provision of a properly resourced and equipped Coastguard service not only to provide professional law enforcement capabilities but also to free the ADF for the range of military tasks that seem to be increasing.

## **The ability of the ADF to implement a maritime strategy**

In the Association's view, the defence of Australia as defined by both its territory and offshore interests can only be assured by the adoption of a true maritime strategy that provides for the ability to deploy and support Australian naval, air and land forces within our region and normally in association with allies. As indicated above, the deployment and support of Interfet in East Timor from September 1999 until February 2000 represented a classic maritime strategy in operation albeit on a small scale, in the immediate neighbourhood and in a low threat environment. A small ground force was deployed and supplied by sea and air—principally the former—throughout the five-month deployment.

This low threat assessment depends to a large extent on hindsight. If the Indonesian government or renegade

elements of their armed forces had responded forcefully, the challenge to Interfet would have multiplied substantially. Recognising the risk, the ADF very properly deployed significant and capable naval and air forces to deter any adventurism. In the Association's view, these deployments were probably influential in their deterrent task and would probably have been effective operationally if deterrence had failed.

What must be emphasised, however, is that the Interfet operation was a small military operation by almost any measure. Moreover, it took place in a relatively benign operational environment close to its logistics base but was still not sustainable beyond five months. If the operation had resulted in hard fighting or had to be extended beyond five months, Australia could not have continued the commitment on the ground without calling out reserves. Even then, as the Association pointed out at the time, the lack of legislative authority (at that time) and the low level of readiness of reserve units would have required both rapid legislative action and the call out to have occurred as Interfet was deployed.

In the context of defending Australia against a serious military attack on its territory (highly unlikely) or its interests (much more likely). There is some capacity in the ADF to implement a maritime strategy. The basic capabilities required are:

**Sea Denial:** Submarines; surface combatants (configured for anti-shipping, anti-air and anti-submarine warfare); offensive mine warfare vessels; logistic support ships; anti-shipping strike aircraft; maritime patrol aircraft; aerial tankers; airborne early warning and control aircraft.

**Sea Assertion:** All of the above plus defensive mine warfare, personnel transport ships; access to regional air bases or an aircraft carrier with fighter aircraft, well-equipped ground forces.

**Power Projection:** aircraft carrier with strike capabilities; amphibious ships plus substantially increased seaborne logistic support.

Clearly significant gaps exist especially in terms of air capabilities at extended distances from Australian air bases. Absent the ability to deploy from regional air bases, the RAAF is not able to support surface operations in a timely fashion. The lack of logistic support forces for naval and air forces also means that any ground forces deployed risk being left unsupported unless allied support is available. The Association has two further concerns. The first relates to the current demands upon the ADF for a wide range of small but persistent tasks such as Operation Relex, the continuing commitment to East Timor and Afghanistan, the diversion of much of the navy to law enforcement and the Persian Gulf sanctions enforcement task. While none of these is of itself demanding, the cumulative effect on training, maintenance and modernisation programs threatens the ability of the ADF both to sustain the commitments themselves or to be available for more significant

commitments that might be required by government.

Thus, the ability of the ADF to contribute in any meaningful way to combat operations against Iraq while maintaining existing commitments is negligible.

Related to this question is whether the ADF is of a sufficient size to meet a significant threat to Australia's overall security even in the absence of the existing level of commitments. Given the analysis above of the stress applied by the Interfet commitment, the Association considers it is not. As examples, we note that overall personnel numbers have been cut by some 28 per cent over the past 12 years, and the proposed level of 16 surface combatants for the RAN has been reduced to 14 with only ten in service at the date of this submission.

In terms of ground forces, the Association notes that the recommendations of this Committee in its report on the Australian Army not only have not been implemented but do not appear to have been accepted by the government. As one result, the Army is likely to continue to be dogged with insufficient personnel, hollow units, inappropriate equipment and inadequate logistic support for the offshore deployments that are not only implicit in a true maritime strategy but are also the likely outcomes of government's operational decisions or the emergence of as yet unforeseen threats. For its part, the RAAF lacks sufficient tanker support while the airborne early warning and control capability that has been discussed for almost 30 years is still at least four years from service. More seriously, it now seems likely that the F/A-18 and F-111 fleets are likely to be retired by 2010 while the probable F-35 replacement is unlikely to be in service before 2017 at the earliest.

## Conclusion

The Association considers that the use of the term 'maritime strategy' in the 2000 defence White Paper bespeaks a lack of understanding of the meaning of the term. This compounds a confusion between the concepts of strategic objective and strategy. The White Paper's concept of a maritime strategy is the very primitive one of denying the sea and air approaches to the Australian continent to an adversary. This is not only an inadequate defence strategy but is inconsistent with the strategic priorities set out in the White Paper.

Even with the limited and inaccurate definition of 'maritime strategy', the capacity of the ADF to provide the forces required to implement and sustain over time such a strategy, especially in the context of a significant threat to Australia or its interests, is simply inadequate. The force structure shows significant and growing gaps, the numbers of platforms and personnel are inadequate and the list of overage items is growing.

The defence of Australia and its interests demands the adoption of a true maritime strategy but there seems little evidence that defence policy makers understand what is implied. Nor is there much evidence that approved capability programs can deliver the ability to pursue such a maritime strategy. †



# MAJOR FURPHY



## Heigh ho, heigh ho, it's off to work we go

Barney - my boss, Air Marshal Barney Stoush, the VCDF - was in a reflective mood when I took in his afternoon coffee and bun. 'Why is it,' he asked, 'that journalists always want to go to war?'

I knew what he meant. He'd been swamped with requests from the media to cover the war the prime minister said we might have if and when a decision had been made to have a war. The Under-Secretary Barney for Corporate Relations and Public Security (US-CRAPS) had ordered Barney to field and refuse all requests. But the boss was running out of excuses.

'I've told them that we've got no room, we can't guarantee their security, the Americans don't want them, we have to protect them from Gulf War Syndrome and the liability waivers have yet to be cleared by our lawyers. The only reasons I haven't given them are that US-CRAPS said no and the troops don't want them in the way. I've used up the operational security excuse.'

I thought for a bit. There'd been that strange phone call from a young and rather naive journalist who wanted accreditation but, in the light of US-CRAPS directive, I'd fobbed him off. Then I had a brainwave.

'How about we get hold of one of these jokers and offer to accredit him to Baghdad', I suggested.

'Won't wash', said Barney. 'Every media organisation in the country is sending journos to Baghdad. There are so many there now that, according to intelligence, Saddam has around 20 foreign journos to protect each target.'

I wondered whether the Americans might not target any installation housing journos and then 'regret' the collateral damage. But I suppressed the thought and suggested that Barney might like to talk to my young friend to find out what made him tick. He agreed to see him next day.

He arrived next morning complete with a sort of camouflage outfit, flak jacket, about ten cameras slung around his neck (why security let him in with them beats me), and a haversack full, it seemed, of notebooks, tape recorders (another memo to security later) and combat ration packs. When I wheeled him into the Presence, it took a good ten minutes to stop him from telling us how the war would be fought and what was wrong with the way we treated our troops. Eventually, though, Barney

took charge-more or less.

'Why do you want to Baghdad with accreditation from us?' he asked. 'After all, they will probably be the enemy.'

'But, Admiral, the role of the modern media is to tell both sides and it will look very even-handed if Defence gives accreditation to report the other side. Anyway, everyone knows that our side controls the media so that we cannot tell the truth.'

Barney flinched at the Admiral bit but contained himself beautifully.

'Interesting idea', he said after a pause. 'How do you know Saddam won't control what you say?'

The young man was superciliously contemptuous. 'Look, General, I know they control the media and that I'll have minders to make sure my reports fit their propaganda. I didn't come down with the last shower, you know.'

'So what's your angle?' Barney wanted to know. So did I; he obviously had one.

He sneered a bit. 'I don't have a war on my CV yet. D'you have any idea how hard it is to build a career in the media without a war on your CV?'

'Besides, if I get your approval, I've been promised an advance on my book about the war and my great war novel, which is half finished. It will be bigger than Bravo Two Zero. Give me the paper and I'll dedicate it to you personally.'

I was beginning to hope that Barney would give him the paper and sign it Admiral Ned Kelly but he had a better idea. That's why he's an Air Marshal and I'm just a major.

'Tell you what', he said. 'I'll give you the accreditation provided you do some intelligence gathering for us. I'll get the Int people to brief you on what to look for and how to get the data back to us—a sort of quid pro quo, if you like. You are on our side, aren't you?' he wondered.

The young man was quite distressed at that. 'We in the media are not on anyone's side,' he declaimed. 'It's not our job to report the truth, only what people tell us. What Saddam says is much more newsworthy than anything you might say.'

Barney was starting to turn purple (with suppressed laughter, I found later) so I eased the young man out and promised we'd be in touch. †

# IRAQ'S



*Photograph courtesy ©2002 Microsoft Corporation*

## apparatus of lies

In December 1998, UN weapons inspector Dr Spertzel confronted Dr Rihab Taha, the head of their biological weapons program, and asked her directly, 'You know that we know you are lying. So why do you do it?' She straightened herself up and replied, 'It's not a lie when you are ordered to lie.'

Dr Taha's reply is one of a highly developed, well disciplined and expertly organised program designed to win support for the Iraqi regime through deceit. This elaborate program is one of the regime's most potent weapons for advancing its military and diplomatic objectives. In disinformation the Iraqis use elaborate ruses, covert actions, sophisticated preparation and spontaneous exploitation of opportunities. Many falsehoods die quickly, but even implausible claims find believers. Some continue to be repeated even after they are proven false.

An important priority of Saddam's deception apparatus is to manipulate the televised images the world sees. This is accomplished by controlling the movements of foreign journalists, monitoring and censoring news transmissions, disseminating old or fake footage and carefully staging events or scenes. The regime's most cynical strategy is to actually cause severe civilian hardship or even deaths and then exploit the suffering by blaming UN-imposed sanctions or other nations.

### **Crafting tragedy**

If conflict with Iraq should occur, Saddam is certain to lay a trap for the world's media. He believes that dead Iraqi civilians are his most powerful weapon in trying to create revulsion against any military action against Iraq.

The objectives of co-location are to conceal military assets, to deter coalition attacks on military assets that could not be concealed; and failing the first two objectives, to capitalise on attacks by generating civilian casualties and destruction of cultural sites. When coalition leaders stated that religious sites would not be targeted, Saddam began using these sites to shield military equipment and units.

On 21 January 1991, coalition bombers hit what the Iraqis claimed was a baby milk factory in Baghdad. The US insisted it was a biological-weapons development site. It appears the facility had briefly functioned as a baby milk factory in 1979 and 1980, and then again in the spring and summer of 1990, before the Iraqi regime began to use it for biological weapons manufacture.

### **The Amiriyah bunker-shelter**

On 13 February 1991, coalition precision-guided bombs hit the Amiriyah bunker in Baghdad. Television networks broadcast gruesome footage of charred

bodies being removed from the building. Iraq reported over 300 deaths, mostly women and children.

The bunker was originally constructed as an air-raid shelter during the Iran–Iraq War, and later converted into a military command-and-control centre. In 1991, it was used as a military communications centre, complete with barbed wire, camouflage and armed guards. Intelligence sources reported senior Iraqi military officials were using it for military communications.

Iraq claimed it was a civilian air-raid shelter that had been deliberately bombed. Unknown to the coalition was that selected civilians had been admitted to the top floor at night, while the Iraqi military continued to use the lower level as a command-and-control centre. In an article in the 14 February 1991, edition of Finland's *Helsingin Sanomat*, a Finnish expert confirmed that structures in Iraq like the Amiriyah had two stories and space for a total of 1500 people. The Finnish firm Perusyhtyma and the Swedish company ABV had built 30 of these structures in Baghdad.

Khidir Hamza, former director general of Iraq's nuclear weapons program, stated that during the Gulf War: 'We sought refuge several times at the [Amiriyah] shelter ... The shelter had television sets, drinking fountains, its own electrical generator, and looked sturdy enough to withstand a hit from conventional weapons. But I stopped trying to get in one night after noticing some long black limousines slithering in and out of an underground gate in the back. I asked around and was told that it was a command centre'.

The United States government soon learned that Saddam Hussein had decreed that, from then on, all Iraq's military bunkers would also house civilians.

## Exploiting suffering

Iraq is skilled at creating opportunities to undermine the international community's resolve to maintain UN sanctions. The real reasons for the suffering are quickly overwhelmed by the emotional weight of crying or emaciated children, doctors lamenting the lack of medicines and supplies, and parents pleading for relief. Hussein's government uses tragic images to influence world opinion, and particularly to support the false allegation that the United Nations is killing Iraqis.

In a particularly shocking practice, the regime is known to collect the bodies of dead babies and store them for months at a time, so that they can stage mass funeral processions and create the impression that UN sanctions are killing small children.

Under UN exceptions, Iraq is allowed to import food and a wide range of medicines and necessities. The oil-for-food program for the period December 2002 to June 2003 will generate \$1.4 billion for Iraq; while many Iraqi citizens face near starvation. Since 1991 Saddam has spent over \$2 billion building 48 new

palaces. In 2000, *Forbes* magazine estimated Saddam's personal wealth at \$7 billion.

Iraq claims that after the oil-for-food program began the number of children who died before the age of five jumped 50 percent from 1996 to 2001. The facts tell a different story: Under the oil-for-food program, the Iraqi regime exported food to earn hard currency to use for its own purposes. Infant formula sold to Iraq under the oil-for-food program has been found in markets throughout the Gulf. According to the UN, under the program the daily food ration rose from about 1200 calories per day in 1996 to over 2200 calories per day in August 2002. How much food does \$2 billion buy for hungry people? In 2001, the World Food Program spent \$1.74 billion to deliver 660,000 metric tons of food to 77 million people worldwide.

## Depleted uranium scare

In recent years, the Iraqi regime has made substantial efforts to promote the false claim that the depleted uranium rounds fired by coalition forces have caused cancers and birth defects in Iraq. Iraq has distributed horrifying pictures of children with birth defects and linked them to depleted uranium.

The propaganda has been effective because the word uranium causes frightening associations in the average person, which makes the lie relatively easy to sell; and Iraq took advantage of an international network of anti-nuclear activists who had launched their campaign against depleted uranium. Scientists working for the World Health Organization, the UN Environmental Program, and the European Union could find no health effects linked to depleted uranium.

Dr Christine Gosden, professor of medical genetics at the University of Liverpool researched congenital malformations, fertility and cancers in Halabja in 1998. Says Dr Gosden: 'What I found was far worse than anything I had suspected...Conditions such as infertility, congenital malformations and cancers in those who were in Halabja at the time ... are at least three to four times greater, even 10 years after the attack ...' The attack, using poison gas, was that conducted by Saddam's forces.

## Exploiting Islam

Saddam Hussein tries to win solidarity among Muslims by portraying himself as a devout believer and invoking the name of Allah in his struggles. Images of Saddam in prayer or extolling Saddam's dedication to Islam appear on billboards in Iraq and are circulated in pictures, publications, and videos; however, as a Baathist he is a non-believer.

## Oppression of Shi'a muslims

The hypocrisy of the Saddam's regime to Islam is shown by its long oppression of the country's Shi'a Muslim majority. Restrictions on Shi'a Muslims include: placing

conditions and outright bans on communal Friday prayer; prohibiting Shi'a mosque libraries to loan books; denying permission for Shi'a programs on government-controlled radio or television; banning Shi'a books, including prayer books and guides; banning many funeral processions and other funeral observances ...'.

## Corrupting the public record

Iraqi officials have forged documents, staged scenes for international photographers and television, placed false stories covertly in newspapers and lied on the record. Some examples were clearly intended for the Iraqi and Arab public. An official claim reported by Radio Monte Carlo on 17 January 1991: 'There were massive pro-Saddam demonstrations in Cairo'. And the Iraqi News Agency claim on 22 January 1991: '25,000 Saudis, including key figures, have sought refuge in Yemen.'

## Self-inflicted damage

On 11 February 1991, the Iraqis deliberately removed the dome of a mosque in Al-Basrah and dismantled it, in an attempt to make it appear as if the damage had been caused by coalition bombing. But there was no damage to the minaret, courtyard building, or the dome foundation, which would have been the case if the building had been struck by coalition munitions.

## False man-in-the-street Interview

Journalists or visitors to Iraq are often witnesses to 'spontaneous' outpourings of grief or anger by what appears to be common people, or hear stories about hardships supposedly caused by the United Nations economic sanctions. In one international news broadcast during Operation Desert Storm focusing on a missile that had struck near a civilian area, a woman posing as a casual passerby spoke to the camera in fluent English about the 'criminal bombing of Iraq'. But American diplomats who had served in Iraq recognised her as Suha Turayhi, a career minister in the Iraqi foreign ministry.

## Censorship

The easiest way to manipulate images is to control and censor outgoing broadcasts. During the Gulf War, the Iraqis would not allow CNN and other media to broadcast scenes of damage to Iraqi military installations—only footage of civilian casualties. According to BBC cameraman Peter Jovenal, censors excised footage showing a bridge destroyed by allied bombers at Nassariyah, to make it appear that the only victims were civilians.

## False claims of victory

In the early days of Desert Storm, Iraq issued false claims of military successes. Examples included: Iraq had downed more than 200 coalition planes and 'scores' of cruise missiles, and Iraq claimed to have destroyed an aircraft carrier. Only 37 planes were lost and no aircraft carriers were destroyed.

Western soldiers killed were being 'evacuated from Saudi Arabia to Djibouti in British planes and in a second step ... to the island of Crete, where they are secretly buried'.

Iraqi missiles have hit the Israeli Defence Ministry and have turned Tel Aviv into a 'ghost town'.

Iraq had killed 6000 allied troops. In fact, 148 US troops were killed in the whole conflict.

## The lies continue

Saddam Hussein continues to deceive the Iraqi people and the international community. This regime, which became expert at obfuscation during the Gulf War, has had more than a decade to perfect these practices.

UN Security Council Resolution 1441 calls for a full, final and complete disclosure of weapons of mass destruction. What the UN got was more lies and deception.

On 16 January 2003, warheads for chemical weapons discovered by UN inspectors.

Intimidation of Iraqi scientists to prevent private interviews with UN inspectors.

Numerous chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons stockpiles unaddressed in the Iraqi declaration.

Absence of 'active' co-operation by Iraq with UN inspectors.

Secretary of State, Colin Powell said on 19 January 2003: 'It is [Iraq's] responsibility under 1441 to cooperate fully with the inspectors in the disarmament process. Dr Blix says he has found no smoking gun, but he has also said that all he is getting from the Iraqis is passive co-operation. 'Catch us if you can. If you find something we might admit it. But we're working hard to deceive you, to hide things and make it harder for you to get to the truth'. †

*This is an edited version of a media release by the White House Press Office. The full text and notes can be obtained from the editor.*

**We have no choice but to develop and maintain our own defence links with our neighbours as an essential aspect of our self-reliant defence posture.**

**Kim Beazley, *Hansard*, 23 February 1988.**



# ADI Bids for \$750 m Patrol Boat Contract

ADI Limited has combined outstanding sea keeping, unrivalled accommodation and comprehensive operational support in its solution for the Royal Australian Navy's new patrol boat fleet contract. ADI is one of three short-listed contenders for the \$750 m contract, which allows for the production and through life support for the patrol boats. ADI's offer is to build the patrol boats at its Newcastle shipbuilding site.

The advanced composite hull of the ADI patrol boat would provide the Navy with up to 30 years of operational life. This is almost double the life provided by steel and aluminium.

According to ADI's managing director, Mr Lucio Di Bartolomeo: 'Patrol boats made from composites have significant advantages. Composites are the building material increasingly used by international navies due to their greater strength than steel and aluminium, resistance to corrosion and light weight'.

## Outstanding record

ADI's proposal for the Armidale-class patrol boats is developed from the Royal Danish Navy's proven Flyvefisken-class patrol boat design. The class has an outstanding and long operational record.

ADI has adapted the Flyvefisken design to meet the RAN's specific needs and will differ substantially from the Danish original in its electronics and armament fit. In adapting a proven design and using advanced

composites, ADI is following the same strategy at its Newcastle shipyard that has produced the Huon-class minehunters.

The basic vessel can perform a wide range of roles so that, if the ADF wanted to configure some as powerful war-fighting vessels and others as police vessels, the modular design would permit easy and rapid change.

## Flyvefisken-class (SF 300) multi-role vessel

The Flyvefisken-class multi-role vessels were built for the Royal Danish Navy by the Danish shipyard Danyard A/S between 1987 and 1996. A total of 14 vessels have been built. The first of class, Flyvefisken was commissioned in 1989.

Also known as Standard Flex 300 (SF300), the Flyvefisken-class is based on a modular concept-using a standard hull with containerised weapon systems and equipment, which allows the vessel to change role quickly for surveillance, surface combat, anti-submarine warfare (ASW), mine countermeasures/minehunter, minelayer or pollution control. Standard equipment for all roles includes the command system, radars and hull-mounted sonars.

Propulsion is combined diesel and gas turbine (CODAG). A General Electric LM500 gas turbine

# SPECIFICATIONS

<b>Crew (depending on role)</b>	<b>19-29</b>
<b>Dimensions</b>	
<b>Length overall</b>	<b>54 metres</b>
<b>Draught (at full load)</b>	<b>2.5 metres</b>
<b>Beam</b>	<b>9 metres</b>
<b>Displacement (at full load)</b>	<b>450 tonnes</b>
<b>Propulsion</b>	<b>CODAG 1 GE LM500 gas turbine 5450 hp 2 MTU 16V 396 TB94 diesels 5800 hp</b>
<b>Performance</b>	
<b>Maximum continuous speed (CODAG)</b>	<b>30 knots</b>
<b>Maximum speed on diesels only</b>	<b>20 knots</b>
<b>Endurance (18 knots)</b>	<b>2400 nautical miles</b>

drives a fixed pitch centre-line propeller, providing 5450hp. Two MTU 16V396TB94 diesels each drive a controllable-pitch wing propeller.

## Other features

Other features include a bow thruster, roll stabilisation system, which acts on the wing rudders, and complementary tank system. A Lyngso Marine control system manages the propulsion system and machinery.

The hull is constructed of an FRP (fibre-reinforced plastic) sandwich with a cellular core between outer- and inner-FRP laminates. This material reduces weight and maintenance, since it is non-magnetic. Electromagnetic compatibility (EMC) in the non-metallic hull is achieved by sprayed layers of zinc and shielding of cable glands and penetrating non-metallic pipes and ducts.

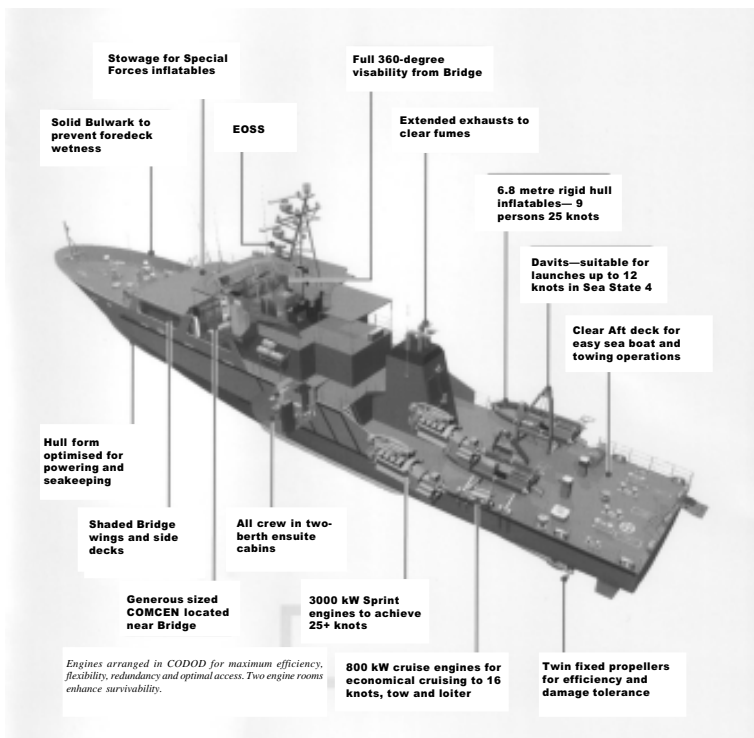
There are four container positions on each vessel.

The stainless steel containers, supplied by Monberg and Thorsen, measure 3 x 3.5 x 2.5m. All dedicated electronics or machinery is installed inside the container and connected to standard interface panels.

## A powerful mini-warship

The ship's C3I system, produced by SaabTech Vectronics (formerly CelsiusTech) and Terma Elektronik, is a variant of the 9LV Mk3 and is based on an Ethernet (IEEE 802.3) databus and a series of nodes with distributed processors. The open architecture allows new weapon systems to be added by creating new nodes. Ada software is used. Between three and six operator's consoles are required, depending on role.

The Royal Danish Navy has instituted an upgrade programme for the Flyvefisker C3I system. The new system will be called C-FLEX and Danish companies



*The ADI Patrol Boat concept.*



Terma and Systematic will be responsible for the software element and Maersk Data Defence (formerly Infocom) for the consoles. Maersk is also upgrading the communications suite. As well as increased functionality and commonality, C-FLEX will integrate the Evolved SeaSparrow Missile (ESSM) and Harpoon Block II land attack missile into the combat system. C-FLEX is due to enter service in 2004 and will be installed on six vessels by 2008, with an option on the remaining eight vessels to follow.

Boeing Harpoon surface-to-surface missile system is fitted for the surface combat role. Harpoon has an active radar seeker with inertial mid-course guidance, a 220kg warhead and a range of 120km.

Mk 48 NATO Vertical Launch Seasparrow surface-to-air missile system from Raytheon is fitted for the surface combat, mine countermeasures and minelayer roles. The Mk 48 Mod 3 launcher (for vessels under 1,000t) has cells for six missiles. SeaSparrow uses semi-active radar guidance and range is 14 km.

For all roles except anti-pollution, the ship carries one 76mm OtoBreda Super Rapid gun which fires 120 rounds/min and has a range of 16 km.

For surface combat roles, two 533 mm torpedo tubes are fitted with Bofors TP613 wire-guided passive homing torpedoes. For ASW roles, anti-submarine torpedoes and depth charge launchers will be carried. Mine rails for 60 bottom mines are fitted for minelaying missions.

For mine countermeasures/hunting, the ship carries the Thales Underwater Systems (formerly Thomson Marconi Sonar) IBIS 43 data handling system and Thales Underwater Systems 2054 side scan sonars and two remotely controlled mine identification and disposal vehicles. The ship will normally control two above surface drones called Surface Auxiliary Vessels (SAVs), built by Danyard. Each SAV can deploy a 2054 sonar in a towfish to a depth of 200 m.

For ESM (electronic support measures) the vessel has the Thales Defence Sabre radar warning system, and for ECM (electronic countermeasures), the Thales Defence Cygnus jammer. The ships have been upgraded with the Terma DLS decoy launch system, which has new computer software, hardware and engagement parameters and fires the Chemring 130 mm Chimera radio frequency/infrared (RF/IR) seduction round. The DLS uses the two six-barrel NATO Sea Gnat launchers.

The main search radar is BAE SYSTEMS AWS-6 2D G-band radar in the first seven ships of the class and EADS Deutschland TRS-3D/16 G-band radar in the last seven. Surveillance radar is Terma Scantec Mil E/F and I/J-band radar. Navigation radar is Furuno I-band radar.

SaabTech CTS 36 hull-mounted, active search, high-frequency sonar is fitted as standard. Thales Underwater Systems TMS 2640 variable depth sonar is fitted for the ASW role. ‡



## Australia's Boer War—the War in South Africa 1899–1902

**Craig Wilcox**

**reviewed by Dr Malcolm Kennedy**

All Australians interested in their past, and especially their military history, will greatly benefit from Wilcox's tour de force. His hard work, thorough research, commitment to detail and fluent writing style successfully creates a masterful and readable history of Australia's role in the Boer War.

Professor Blainey, in his foreward, stresses that this history seeks to give a clear picture of the real life of Australian troops in South Africa. It continues Bean's tradition of history of the diggers' story. He notes the strong connection between Australia and the large numbers of Australians in South Africa. So many, that Australian Rules football was played in Johannesburg. Blainey notes that Australians, generally, had a loyalty to the British Empire for many reasons; however, it can be added that Australians had a better understanding of global political-strategy at this time.

The title of the book is correct, but the work goes far beyond the Boer War and takes up many aspects of the South African experience that had long-run impacts on Australian society, military lore and social myth making. The amateur, citizen soldier myth was born in South Africa. Australian troops were rough, hard to discipline and lead, but when the crisis came in the field they were as good as any and better than most. This was hardly the reality of the experience in the Boer War. The massive death toll in World War I, as Wilcox stresses, finally gave enough blood to affirm the birth of a nation.

The war set in train the debates over the back pay, benefits, jobs and pensions that the veterans should receive. This was the beginning of one of Australia's most expensive exercises in medical and service welfare. An important issue resolved, concerned the command of Australian troops and the use of the death penalty—in future no Australian could be executed, and life sentences had to be approved by the Australian government. Australians had become extremely wary of being part of

the much bigger British army and refused to continue as part of an Empire force after the war.

Oxford University Press has made an outstanding effort in the production of this book. The 541 pages are packed with valuable and useful material. There are almost 200 illustrations, 17 maps, 18 simple and informative tables. One of the best features of the maps is that they show the names of locations discussed in the adjacent text. The preface provides an exceptionally pithy explanation for the book, the approaches taken by the author and lists the huge number of people he consulted. The narrative is divided into seventeen chapters and these are supported by lists of the Australians and contingents that saw service in South Africa, a glossary and notes on pronunciation. The notes to source materials cover sixty-five pages, followed by twenty-six pages of bibliography. The scholarly apparatus provides a virtually definitive source guide to the history of the Boer War and will be essential to future researchers and readers. The index is extensive and works!

The book will not satisfy those who want the broad scope of the whole war, since Wilcox maintains his focus on the Australian experience. He does make a considerable effort to cover the poorly recorded efforts of those Australians who served in British units. The overall result is to give the reader a strong narrative of the Australian units' experiences and to fill the story with form, detail and a feel for the nuances of the South African environment.

Wilcox's eye for detail enables him to develop explanations of why things we thought odd happened. He notes the importance of the horse in fighting a mobile war, but notes that although vital to the campaign and sadly consumed by the thousands, new technologies were about to make it obsolete in war. The myth of the



Australian horsemen's skill and dash grew on the representation of the war as one involving rapid movement and furious charges of the enemy, cunningly hiding behind ridges or rocks. The reality that few of the Australians were bushmen or skilled horsemen never corrected the mythological image. The relief of Damascus in World War I was the last charge of the Australian warrior horsemen. Railways, the navy, entrenchments, forts, barbed wire, resource denial, modern rapid fire weapons presaged the new industrial wars of massed armies. These were lessons that remain poorly understood at the end of the war.

In many respects the peace terms matched most of the Boer demands, apart from the most important of independence from Britain. The native African's hopes of being liberated from the strictures of Boer society were dashed in the peace and the Boer defeat injected a deadly poison into their political culture. The hatred of the British, their victory and liberal values made apartheid and eventual rebellion a natural outcome of the peace.

Australians in South Africa formed one of the first units to resist the Boers and the contingents raised in Australia were given broad public support. The profits from the supply of horses to the British army and all sorts of war stores helped to win support. The success against the Boers added a fillip to the country's pride. The popularity

of the war soon waned, as it so often does, when there were increased numbers of Australians killed or severely wounded, and as the war dragged on.

Wilcox points out, however, that it was a lucky war for the Australians, because there were so few killed or wounded, they never faced the slaughter of major battles and the brunt of the fighting was carried by the British.

The war slipped from public concern and was soon totally overtaken by the huge effort and cost of the Great War. In a pragmatic assessment of Australia's commitment the hard-headed would probably note that although the Cape was important in the trade route between Australia and Europe, British self-interest would have secured it against the Boers without our help. Moreover we would, in any case, have been able to establish a modus vendi with a Boer republic. Even if Australians had disliked the Boer's racial policy, which was not the case, economic and political liberty were adopted as the justification for intervention. This book is worth the price and more, if for no other reason it puts an end to the glorification of the murderer Breaker Morant. The Australian profession of arms has had its murderers but we have no cause to celebrate them as heroes. †

*Craig Wilcox, 'Australia's Boer War-The War in South Africa 1899-1902', OUP, 2002, 541pp, hard back, \$69.95.*

## STOP PRESS

The Defence Minister, Senator Robert Hill, released the Government's Strategic Review on 26th February as *Defender* was being compiled. This brief review will be developed and posted on ADA's Web site at [www.ada.asn.au/comment](http://www.ada.asn.au/comment).

Writing in *The Australian* on 27 February and 3 March, Dr Alan Dupont and Professor Paul Dibb respectively came to different conclusions about the document. Dupont thought it signified a radical change in the Government's approach to national security while Dibb thought any change was marginal. If the rumours are to be believed, the document had a most difficult gestation, frequently being sent backwards and forwards between Cabinet, the Defence Minister's office and the Defence department before agreement was reached. Then, the document was released first to the media whose general ignorance of defence caused it to focus on the assumed political importance of two rather vague paragraphs suggesting an Australian involvement in the American plans for a ballistic missile defence system.

In fact, there is little in the 5500 word document that is new. It tends to be little more than a compendium of previous government statements. Much of the strategic analysis is so superficial that any student would be better advised to read the daily newspapers. Presumably the government has better advice going to it in classified documents. At least, we hope so but, as a guide to policy making, the document is not very helpful.

The document refers to the need for the ADF to become more 'flexible and adaptable', terms that resonate with ADA's traditional prescriptions. On the other hand, it makes no mention of the biggest gap, the need to be sustainable as well.

In his article, Dibb asserts correctly that adequate defence cannot be provided from a commitment of just 1.9 per cent of GDP. Perhaps the government is engaged in some sort of softening-up exercise, intending to significantly increase defence outlays. But don't bet on it.

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