

defender

The National Journal of the Australia Defence Association

Price (rrp)
\$A12.50

VOL XXI No. 4

Summer 2004/05

www.ada.asn.au

Print Post Approved No: PP255003/06664

- Countering Islamist terrorism by understanding it

this issue

- Is war with Islam unavoidable?

- South Pacific instability endemic

- Rebuilding the Australian Merchant Navy

- Furphy on sensitivity and discrimination

- 10 book reviews



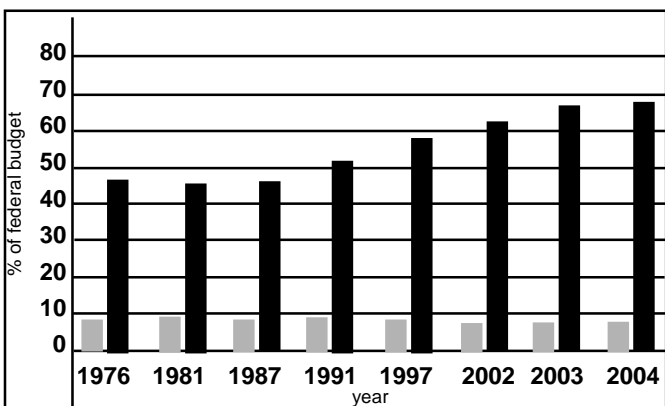
- **ASLAVs in Iraq: Workhorses for courses**
- **Securing Fallujah: Early observations**

The Coalition's recent federal electoral success has increased calls from both sides of politics for significant changes to the federal compact, such as the Commonwealth taking over all hospitals or all aspects of universities. Revision of the federal compact on domestic issues is largely a matter of personal political opinion. National security and defence, however, are the highest responsibilities of government and the only major areas of governance that are wholly Commonwealth responsibilities. This is never going to change.

Unfortunately defence is also a matter that generally sways few voters until it is too late. All these factors have led to the long-term neglect of defence by governments of all persuasions. Defence has already been progressively squeezed over the last five decades by the Commonwealth increasing direct funding of areas of governance traditionally regarded as the responsibility of the states. Health and education are the two major examples but others, including law and order and land-use compensation, are also on the rise. This is unlikely to change.

If the Commonwealth is to assume even greater responsibility for areas that are large and seemingly ever-increasing consumers of taxation revenue, there are obvious implications for our national security. Defence needs adequate, long-term and sustained funding, and this is not a peripheral issue in discussions about amending the federal compact.

As the graph below clearly shows, while spending on defence has remained largely static or has even decreased in real terms, federal spending in the areas of social security, health and education continues to grow at an increasing rate.



The addition of substantial spending by the states shows that, each year, Australia now spends over eight times as much on social security, over four times more on health and just on four times more on education as we invest in our defence. Spending in these areas of social governance is important—but for the foreseeable future defence remains just as important and is being continually neglected.

Politically all governments pay lip service to the importance of defence. Few politicians are interested or have relevant experience, and very often defence policy and capability matters are ignored because of their perceived complexity.

contents

Comment and Information

Leading Article	1
Letters	2
Current Comment	5
Major Furphy	9
The Sharp End	29
Association Update	16
Conference Calendar	16
Subscriptions and Privacy Policy	8

Articles

Understanding the Challenge of Islamist Terrorism in Order to Counter it	<i>Dennis Richardson</i>	10
Can we Avoid War with Islam?	<i>Paul Dibb and Geoffrey Barker</i>	14
Endemic Instability of the South Pacific	<i>Helen Hughes</i>	17
Rebuilding the Australian Merchant Navy	<i>David Leach et al.</i>	22
The ASLAV in Iraq	<i>Tim Hales</i>	29
The Taking of Fallujah	<i>Ian Bostock</i>	31

Reviews

Goodbye Cobber, God Bless You: The Fatal Charge of the Light Horse, Gallipoli, August 7th, 1915	Kokoda	34
Kokoda Commander: A Life of Major General 'Tubby' Allen		35
On Shaggy Ridge: The Australian Seventh Division in the Ramu Valley: From Kaiapit to the Finisterres	Chester Wilmot Reports	35
Other People's Wars: A History of Australian Peacekeeping		38
Reluctant Saviour: Australia, Indonesia and the Independence of East Timor		39
Indonesia's Struggle: Jemaah Islamiyah and the Soul of Islam		40
The Geopolitics of East Asia: The Search for Equilibrium		41
Australian Defence Almanac 2004–2005		42
		43

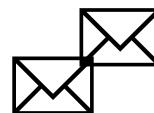
Our cover

A US Marine surveys the situation during streetfighting in Fallujah on 9 November.

Photo courtesy USMC

Many members of parliament consider defence unimportant politically. They believe the electorate is more concerned about the big social expenditure areas and seek to buy votes accordingly. They also see faster political advancement personally in working these latter fields.

The electorate blindly trusts the national government to look after defence but are continually let down. Our defence must be guaranteed an effective share of our interest and our resources. This includes real parliamentary oversight rather than party-political nitpicking over administrative details and, most importantly, adequate, long-term and sustained funding that is effectively quarantined from the perpetual short-term perspectives of our political and governmental processes. ♦



The letters pages are an important part of *Defender's* role in furthering public debate on national security issues. Letters to the Editor of *Defender* are submitted on the condition that the Australia Defence Association as publisher may edit all letters and reproduce them in electronic form. Emailed letters should be sent to <defender@ada.asn.au>. All writers must supply their name, address and daytime telephone number. Identification of writers will be withheld where justified. Letters should be kept to a maximum of 250 words (ideally 150) and avoid personal attacks.

Sir: *Defender* has provided reasoned analysis about whether the ADF should get two larger amphibious ships or half a dozen smaller ones.

You are too kind to the disparate gaggle of advocates clamouring for the smaller ships option. I have yet to meet a naval officer who does not consider this option as being the clearly inferior one on any number of strategic, operational, financial and personnel grounds.

My soundings in the Army have been much fewer but the result has been the same. I distrust all governments with military procurement because they are usually swayed off target by bureaucratic or ideological waffle, the lure of the pork barrel and simple fiscal parsimony.

For once we should pay due respect to naval professional advice. After all, they are the ones we expect to fight in and from the ships in question.

**Lee Shaw
Queensland**

Sir: Your coverage of the debate on the new amphibious ships was just what is needed. Howard Anson's article stands in marked contrast to many public statements by supposed expert commentators in this regard.

Hugh White, for example, published an article in the *Sydney Morning Herald* in mid July that was riddled with factual errors, biased statements and a clear lack of understanding of military strategy and tactics. Two simple examples suffice. He strangely claimed that smaller LPDs '... would be capable of handling tougher fights against the kinds of forces we might find in our immediate neighbourhood'. Later he regurgitated the weekend harbour sailor-type opinion that high-speed catamarans (on their own) might be a better option.

Mr White was once a deputy secretary in the Department of Defence, was then appointed to head ASPI and is now heading SDSC at ANU. That he could rise to such positions without any practical experience, or apparent knowledge, of defence force operations speaks volumes for why the department needs thorough reform.

No official, academic or scientist should be involved in deciding our defence strategy, or in selecting equipment for our defence force, unless they clearly appreciate both the operational needs and conditions involved, and the potential consequences in human lives of their decisions. This is not just commonsense but a moral requirement of the highest order.

**Mathew Hayes
Queensland**

Sir: Thanks for the measured ADA contribution to the ABC programme *Australia Talks Back* on 15 November 04. Your support was appreciated. I think it saved a few infuriated Army members from potentially getting into trouble by having to break the rules regarding official comment, etc. in order to provide a fair and balanced point of view to the debate.

**Name and Address Supplied
New South Wales**

Sir: The ADA correctly criticises the low level of defence spending as a percentage of GDP, but I think we fail to comprehend the psychological root cause of this problem. Australians suffer from a dependency syndrome, in our approach to defence, for example, we needn't think seriously about defence self reliance because of a psychological dependence on the US alliance. The strategy of the alliance is sound, but the national psychology it breeds is deplorable. I wish I was wrong, but to win the political debate, the political psyche needs to be analysed and purged. As I said, I wish I was wrong.

**David Mason
Queensland**

Sir: Please do not hold us all in suspense any further. How did the ADA respond to the fascinating letter from Richard and Alison Broinowski [*Defender*, Spring 2004] seeking evidence for the Association's suggestion that they were polemicists in terms of their criticism of the Howard government (and that the objectivity of the Letter from the 43 perhaps suffered accordingly)?

I assume your answer included a photocopy of the title page and contents list of Alison's diatribe, *Howard's War*, which was so comprehensively reviewed in the Spring 2003 issue of *Defender*.

**Antonia Cobb
New South Wales**

Sir: Apropos your comments in the October *Defence Brief* concerning the atrocious standards of terminology and research in much media reporting of defence force activities. I note that a recent story in the *Australian* [30 October 04] about the promotion of the new Commander Special Operations to the rank of major general still managed to refer to him as *Mr Hindmarsh*.

Enough said.

**Bill Edgar
Victoria**

Sir: As an Australian of the Islamic faith thank you for your Association's responsible distinction between Islamist terrorism and Islam. The perpetrators of this terrorism are definitely not Islamic in any shape or form.

As Muslims we need to face up to the fact that all the terrorists inspired by Osama bin Laden are professed Muslims. Until we condemn not only their terrorism but the perversions of our faith supposedly 'inspiring' them we are at least partially complicit in their bigotry and in its tragic and murderous results.

Tolerance of religious bigotry by mainstream followers of any religion, sect or denomination can never be justified, especially when the bigotry leads to violence and murder. It is, indeed, a religious and civic duty of mainstream believers to defeat such bigotry by preaching the truth, practising moderation and denouncing the perversions of scripture or religious practice involved.

**Name and Address Supplied
New South Wales**

Sir: I note recent ADA comments in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on Islamist terrorism. I tend to disagree with your assessment that the Islamist's strategic centre of gravity is their ability to recruit.

First we need to identify *who* the enemy or adversary is and what they are capable of. There is an emerging consensus that the threat is not actually a group or an individual. A group-centric focus is arguably characteristic of what might be classed 'old terrorism'. 'Old terrorist' groups have identifiable organisational structures, identities and objectives. In a sense they were inherently 'conventional'.

The threat from the radical Islamist movement transforms this calculus. These groups are not easily identifiable as they have become loosely connected networks, with variable and unpredictable capabilities and objectives. There is no neat 'org chart'. Nor is there any rigid doctrine or a set of SOPs that mark their identity or operational capability. Indeed their sophistication is such that they are characterised by a series of organisational cut-outs in which the links between cells and the senior leadership are indirect (at best). Such adversaries are non-linear and the threat they pose has moved beyond the simplicity of 'al Qa'eda' or an individual.

Second, the *why* needs to be answered. The threat from transnational radical Islamism predated 11 September 2001, and perhaps even the end of the Afghanistan War in 1989. The foundation of today's transnational threat was evident in Algeria in 1956; the Arab-Israeli Wars of the 1960s and 1970s, the Iranian Revolution in 1979, and Lebanon in 1982-83. Each of these, among other 'causes', added an element of capability (tactics and techniques) and *raison d'etre* for what could be termed today the 'Islamist Internationale'.

This phenomenon did not begin with Usama bin Laden or al Qa'eda, but it did gain momentum from

defender

THE NATIONAL JOURNAL OF THE
AUSTRALIA DEFENCE ASSOCIATION

(ABN 16 083 007 390)

Published quarterly since 1983

Print Post Approved No. PP255003/06664

ISSN 0811-6407

PO Box 320, Erindale Centre, ACT, 2903, Australia

Telephone/Facsimile: (02) 6231 4444

Email: defender@ada.asn.au

Web: www.ada.asn.au

EDITOR

Dr Malcolm Kennedy

EDITORIAL BOARD

Ian Bostock

Patrick Gallagher

Professor Jeffrey Grey

Neil James

Michael O'Connor

Dr Hugh Smith

Printed by Industrial Stationers

43-51 Queen Street, Melbourne, VIC, 3000

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

Australia and New Zealand: \$A50.00 (post paid)

Rest of the World: \$A65.00 (air post)

Together with *Defence Brief*: \$A100.00

ADVERTISING

Telephone/Facsimile: (02) 6231 4444

advertising@ada.asn.au

Defender seeks to encourage informed public debate on national security issues and includes articles from a wide range of Australian and foreign contributors. The views expressed in signed articles are those of the particular author and not necessarily those of the Australia Defence Association. The Association will not be legally responsible in contract, tort, or otherwise for any statement made in a signed article in this publication.

Responsibility for election comment is taken by Neil James, of the above address, acting as Executive Director of the Association.

Standard permission to quote extracts from *Defender* is granted, subject to their accurate rendition and full acknowledgement of *Defender* as the source, including its mention as the quarterly journal of the Australia Defence Association. Permission to reproduce articles should be sought from the editor.

Advertising in *Defender* does not mean the ADA necessarily endorses that product, or its manufacturer, and is kept strictly segregated from the formulation of ADA policy or editorial comment in Association publications.

two important contemporary developments. Undoubtedly the experiences gained in Afghanistan by 1989, and the networks of mujahideen veterans established, have had a profound influence on the cohesion of today's radical Islamist, not least because they provided the means it became transnational.

Such transnational networks still needed to overcome incompatibilities stemming from local, cultural, religious, and operational diversities. This has not been achieved through capability, recruitment or organisation.

The 'Islamist internationale' comprises Chechens, Tajiks, Uzbeks, Iraqis, Jordanians, Syrians, Tanzanians, Yemenis, Tunisians, Moroccans, Egyptians, Saudis, Pakistanis, Filipinos, Indonesians, and even 'Western' Muslims, among others. All believe they are 'fighting' as jihadists, locally and internationally. They are going in the same direction but do not necessarily belong to one organisation, nor is their immediate objective common.

This brings me to my point of departure from your assessed strategic centre of gravity. This is not capability (recruitment or organisation) but the source of their cohesion—the reason for going in the same direction without identifiable control or co-ordination—their 'common values'.

These values are now linking with the underlying puritanical or radical ideology that resonates beyond anti-US or anti-Western imperatives. There is a spectrum of perceptions, from Kashmir to Chechnya, the streets of North Africa to Karachi or Mindanao. The spectrum is geo-strategic, and also socio-cultural, and is certainly economic.

But is the cohesion as fundamental as the radical Islamist ideologue movement (be it al Qa'eda or Jemaah Islamiyah) simply providing a solution to the broader Muslim community's sense of 'survival and identity' or 'sense of hope'?

To decisively target the strategic centre of gravity of the 'Islamist Internationale' the response cannot be linear. Any response must identify and target the dynamic that binds this adversary. To do this perhaps we need to be 'imaginative'.

Tony Keene
New South Wales

Sir: Thank you for publishing such a comprehensive review of Tony Kevin's book on the sinking of SIEV X in mid October 2001. Kevin's constantly mutating conspiracy theories required tackling by a reviewer with a sound grasp across the areas of academic research methods, nautical knowledge and ethics. In Dr Tom Frame, he has certainly met his match.

Kevin originally alleged that the boat was sunk by the Navy, first deliberately and then when the evidence was not there, by alleged neglect and incompetence. He then moved on to accuse the AFP in a similar manner. Now it seems he has his suspicions about ASIS.

One can excuse Kevin's numerous errors, poor judgement and tortuous attempts at bending facts,

conjecture and rumour to suit his conspiracy theories. We could, perhaps, even tolerate his mistaken zeal. His refusal to apologise to those he has wrongly accused when his conspiracy theories move on is, however, quite unforgivable.

If his apparent unwillingness to concede any error continues and he persists with making further baseless or exaggerated accusations against individuals and national institutions, surely we are now approaching the time when Tony Kevin should be prosecuted for criminal libel. This would satisfy justice, the wider public interest and Kevin's oft-expressed desire for a judicial inquiry.

Lyn Strachan
South Australia

My book, *A Certain Maritime Incident: The Sinking of SIEV X* (reviewed by Tom Frame in the Spring 2004 *Defender*) was bound to offend some. But its analysis of how Australia's border protection system went off the rails in 2001, in terms of its obligation to protect human life, is credible and accurately researched. Service people owe it to themselves, ethically and professionally, to read the book and make their own judgements about the case it presents—or else such things will happen again.

There was an Australian government people-smuggling disruption program in Indonesia in 2000–2001, conducted by the AFP and DIMIA. It went off the rails and 353 people, who should have lived, died as a result. The truth about these shaming events is being covered up still. It will eventually come out in court. The Senate CMI inquiry began the process and my book is a further step on the road to full disclosure. Buy it and read it—Australians who cherish our country's honour need to know this story.

Tony Kevin
Australian Capital Territory

Sir: On the matter of whether ONA is actually an intelligence agency? At every level of the question—no.

Andrew Kirk
Victoria

Sir: *Defender's* review of Andrew Wilkie's attempt at self-justification [Spring 2004] hit some real nails firmly on their thick or pointy heads. The concluding observation that 'at least part of the blame [for the Wilkie debacle] must be sheeted home to those who wrongly selected him to work there in the first place' is especially telling.

Wilkie was selected to work at ONA twice: once by the Army on secondment and later by ONA itself as a permanent employee. The error by the Army can largely be attributed to the arrogant prescription that officers seconded to ONA should come only from the 'Arms Corps' rather than being selected on their professional merit irrespective of their core specialisation. Once again the ADF's prevalent 'ops snobbery' came a real cropper.

(Letters cont'd p. 13)

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

Back to the future

As the hubbub, cant and pseudo-clarity of the federal election recede the higher management of Australian defence policy returns to its common mix of torpor, cant and muddle.

As the ADA predicted, defence was not a substantive election issue. The Coalition paid so little attention to it that its sparse defence policy paper was released on the final Thursday of a six-week campaign. In itself this did not matter much as their middling record in government was clear and obvious. The Opposition policy proposed some thoughtful and viable reforms, but Labor remained saddled with a national security leadership team that few believed could actually work together if elected.

In an overall campaign where both sides claimed an approach based on intrinsic 'values' they both still shovelled promises of money at the electorate in a veritable auction for votes. Their 'core values' also ignored the fundamental government responsibility to ensure adequate defence investment. Neither side was really prepared to increase defence funding because they perceived there were no votes in it, nor did they show the slightest shame.

Follow the money and it leads you to the real commitment. Sadly, it may again take defence force casualties caused by insufficient troops and inadequate equipment for the task ordered—but which would have been avoidable with due attention to defence resourcing—to draw appropriate national attention to the continued and worsening under-investment in our defence. ♦

Overlander shortlist goes AWOL

The \$A3 billion project to replace the Army's various fleets of light, medium and heavy general service vehicles and trailers, Project Overlander, appears to have mysteriously run out of juice.

A shortlist announcing which of the world's vehicle makers would proceed to the next stage in the tender evaluation process was due in April 2004. Then the date slipped to May. This then turned into late June, when the Minister for Defence announced publicly at the Defence Procurement Conference that the shortlist would be announced 'within days'.

More than five months later there is still no announcement and no explanation for the delay. It has been suggested that considerable headaches have resulted from the insistence, by the Defence Materiel Organisation

(DMO), that overseas vehicle manufacturers team up with a local industry partner as prime contractor in an unnecessarily complex, multi-layered and cumbersome arrangement.

The most logical approach would be to select the best bid in each vehicle and trailer category. Instead the DMO has expressed a clear preference to deal with a single industry bid team leader to supply the complete capability solution and take on the responsibility for provision of in-service logistics support. Never mind that none of the major defence firms in this country actually make trucks or trailers.

Perhaps the DMO has realised it is making things harder than they need to be and is busy reassessing how this important project might proceed. ♦

Costing the DMO

The Defence *Portfolio Budget Statements* note that the DMO is funded \$A435.8 million for employees in 2004–05. A further \$A349.6 million is apparently allocated as 'operating expenses' spread across the major equipment projects. This indicates that the DMO intends to spend some \$A760 million to administer the \$A2563.1 million allocated to acquiring equipment for the defence force this financial year.

In 2003–04, the DMO spent \$A567 million on staff and management overheads and around \$A2500 million on new equipment. Basic arithmetic indicates that the DMO purchased about \$A4.40 worth of equipment for each dollar of overhead.

A quick comparison for 2002–03 with the UK Defence Procurement Agency (DPA), itself under fierce criticism for inefficiency in Britain, shows that the DPA spent £187 million on staffing and nearly £5.3 billion on capital equipment. This means the DPA purchased around £28 worth of equipment for every pound expended on overhead.

There is much wrong with the way Australia has equipped, and in many cases not equipped or ill-equipped, its defence force over the last three decades. Although the DMO has a wider ongoing materiel management remit than the DPA, the apparent stark contrast in value for money spent on administration between the two agencies clearly exposes fundamental structural problems in the way Australia organises its defence.

No amount of 'commercial best practice' or 'modern business management' is likely to turn this around without an underlying first-principles rethink on how the defence force should be equipped and by whom. ♦

Stocktaking fault

The Department of Defence is again in trouble with the Auditor-General over major discrepancies in its balance sheet. This time the error is a theoretical \$A8 billion deficiency in assets. Most of the problems relate to the introduction of accrual accounting to Commonwealth accounts. One key difficulty is how you assign a useful value to land and weaponry that will be required for defence purposes for the foreseeable future and has no real cost-of-sale or 'market value' because it cannot be sold, perhaps ever, at a 'market' price. It is also difficult to assign a useable figure to the deterrent value of weaponry and its integrated supporting capabilities such as its users and their bases.

While the accounting of equipment and stocks at unit level and below in the defence force is generally very good, there are significant problems at higher levels, not least as a result of the contracting out of many such functions.

The Opposition blames the current Minister. The ADF says it is mainly the Department of Defence's problem. The department, quite rightly, points to the major difficulties with applying accrual accounting to defence purposes and the big steps it has taken over the last two years or so to improve its financial management. Everyone blames the contractors involved and, rightly, criticises the exaggerated and inaccurate media reporting.

The bottom line is that there is no single cause and therefore no one, quick or simple remedy. A first-principles analysis should obviously start by asking why is Defence so big, so complex and often so badly managed? A big part of the solution is to simplify the structure and align financial responsibilities and accountabilities as closely as possible with the command, legal and moral ones.

A good follow-on query would be to ask why we expect one minister to do the work that, before 1974, was invested in five ministers and five boards of management? No-one is seriously suggesting a return to separate departments but at least part of the solution lies in more ministers in the defence portfolio—a senior one and two assistants—and them all having no other ministerial responsibilities. ♦

Rules of engagement

This issue's *The Sharp End* includes a brief analysis of the

initial operation to secure the Iraqi city of Falluja in order to conduct next month's UN-supervised elections successfully. Once again, as for many arguments about this conflict both here and overseas, much public discussion of such operations has involved people talking at each other rather than to each other and about the issues.

The shooting of an apparently wounded Iraqi insurgent by a US marine is a case in point. To those opposed to the coalition collective intervention in Iraq it was said to be an example of American belligerence and a 'war crime'. Many of those supportive of the intervention were quick to claim a variety of legal and practical excuses for the marine's actions in the circumstances. Most of the claims on both sides, including much of the media and so-called 'expert' comment, were simplistic at the very least.

No judgement of this obviously complex and highly nuanced incident can be effectively made, or should be, until all the facts are known. All discussion should also be based on a good understanding of international humanitarian law, particularly those aspects governing the conduct of war (*jus in bello*). Substantive consideration of the issues involved also needs to be based on rules of engagement—in more ways than one.

In warfare, rules of engagement govern when, where and how force may be applied; who it may be used against, and who must be protected by it. At the tactical level, this translates into orders for opening fire. To kill someone outside these rules is an offence up to and including murder in certain circumstances.

The problem in Falluja, as is the case in much of Iraq, is that only coalition forces follow such rules or at the very least even try to. The insurgents, for example, have blown up without warning the (neutral) Iraq headquarters of both the UN and the International Red Cross, have tortured and/or beheaded numerous non-combatants supposedly protected by the Geneva Conventions, and continually violate prohibitions of tactical warfare such as using mosques for military purposes, using civilians to shield attacks, killing prisoners, and staging false surrenders to kill coalition personnel trying to do the right thing.

Now the 1907 Hague convention included the Martens Clause which, in summary, declared that internationally agreed rules of warfare intended to eradicate barbarism

AMPH

did not necessarily apply to conflicts with uncivilised peoples who refused to abide by them. In other words, if you were fighting savages who tortured or mutilated captured personnel, without resorting to their level of brutality you were entitled to employ methods to suppress the savagery that could not be employed in warfare between civilised countries. The clause was later largely superseded by the 1949 Geneva Conventions—perhaps another case of the road to international hell being paved with good conventions.

The essential problem about waging war in Iraq, or in discussing it from armchairs elsewhere, is that the side which is responsible by far for the most, and most serious, violations of international humanitarian law is not the side receiving the bulk of the criticism. This should be the starting point for all serious discussion of the issues involved. ♦

Lack of direction

The foundation director of the nominally independent Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI), Hugh White, has now moved to head the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre (SDSC) at ANU. His successor at ASPI, a cabinet appointment, had not been announced when *Defender* went to press at the end of November.

The position was advertised mid year and the ASPI Council undertook two rounds of interviews before the election caretaker period intervened. Two nominations were duly forwarded to the Minister for Defence. The Council's first choice, a respected and well-known academic in the field, later withdrew his application for unrelated personal reasons.

Professor White, as he now is, an ex-senior civilian official from the Department of Defence, did a good job in setting up the institute and he recruited some very good staff from academic and scientific backgrounds. It was also a difficult task to establish ASPI's relative independence given it is overwhelmingly government-funded, its governing council and director are all ministerial appointees, and several of its original senior staff were virtually unknown intellectually outside narrow bureaucratic circles.

Some ASPI critics contend it can never be a truly independent think-tank while it is linked so closely to the government and so dependent on official financing. On the other hand there are politicians and parts of the bureaucracy who believe some of its product has been too independent. The other common criticism has been that some of its research efforts and reporting have been more influenced by legacy protection imperatives, rather than academic rigour, high standards of objectivity and the critical re-examination of longstanding strategic beliefs commonly held in the Department of Defence over the last two decades.

In fact, it could be argued that ASPI's heavy dependence not only on government funding but also on reluctant bureaucrats and out-of-office ministerial staffers encapsulates the worst features of the Westminster and presidential systems of government.

The search for the new ASPI director has attracted similar criticisms. This was especially so when four of the six applicants first selected for interview came from backgrounds in the Defence or DFAT bureaucracies. Some did not also appear to meet all the advertised selection criteria, especially the requirements for a suitable international profile and appropriate academic qualifications. The puzzling exclusion of other eminently qualified candidates also attracted criticism, as did the perceived gender imbalance of the first shortlist. This led the Council to conduct a second round of interviews with some new faces involved.

Structuring and managing the intellectual dynamics of think-tanks, both internally and externally, requires considerable effort—as does keeping the organisation's perspectives and reputation fresh. The last thing a nominally or actually independent ASPI needs is to be headed by successive directors from similar backgrounds, particularly where this is the policy-making bureaucracy of the Department of Defence. All other things being equal, it is clearly preferable that ASPI's second director should be someone with respected academic, military or other professional credentials in the strategic policy field.

Some argue that even a diplomat might do, although there are few Australian diplomats with much of a reputation in *strategic* policy and a diplomat senior enough for the job would pose significant credibility problems on the independence front. Furthermore, diplomats already inappropriately head too many other organisations in the bureaucracy. While ASPI is regarded superficially by some as just another convenient diplomatic parking spot, such a thoughtless step would clearly do nothing for the institute's overall effectiveness or reputation for independence.

Many believe that the new ASPI head needs to be an academic with an international reputation in order to bring appropriate gravitas and to strengthen ASPI's reputation for scholarship and intellectual rigour. This belief is partly based on the marked degree of intellectual atrophy that has affected both university-based strategy think-tanks (SDSC at ANU and the former ADSC at ADFA) over the last decade or so. This decline is often attributed to limited funding and the downside of tenure leading to few fresh faces and ideas. At ASPI at least, this latter impediment to vitality can be avoided by turning staff over every 3 to 5 years or so.

Effective public debate on national security issues requires a balance of informed community, academic, military, official and political inputs. Think-tanks play an important part on the academic side (and sometimes help on the community front) but only if they are both independent, in every sense, and intellectually virile. In this regard ASPI, for all its limitations, has clearly filled a growing vacuum as SDSC and ADSC both declined. The institute, however, faces similar longer-term difficulties as it is weaned from the government financial teat and needs sound leadership.

As the community-based public interest guardian organisation on national security issues, the ADA sincerely hopes the government chooses wisely, and in the national interest, in selecting the new ASPI director. ♦



Help us to help Australia's Defence

The Australia Defence Association (ADA) is Australia's only independent and non-partisan public-interest guardian organisation on national security issues. Membership of the Association is open to all Australians interested in Australia's defence and in effective public debate on national security issues.

AUSTRALIA DEFENCE ASSOCIATION

(ABN 16 083 007 390)

<www.ada.asn.au>

Founded in Perth in 1975 by a retired Service Chief, a leading trade unionist and the director of a business peak body, the Australia Defence Association (ADA) is Australia's only truly independent and non-partisan community watchdog and 'think-tank' on national security issues. Detail on the aims, activities and structure of the Association can be obtained from the ADA website

As a guardian of the public interest, the ADA seeks to promote the development and implementation of national security structures, processes and policies encompassing:

- an accountable, integrated and flexible structure for making national security decisions
- robust means of continually assessing Australia's strategic situation
- the allocation of adequate national resources to national security according to such assessments
- the implementation of a defence strategy based on the protection of identifiable and enduring national interests
- the development and maintenance of adequate forces-in-being capable of executing such a strategy
- the development and maintenance of manufacturing and service industries capable of sustaining defence force capability development and operations.

The ADA seeks the support by subscription of all Australians and the categories of membership are detailed on the adjacent form. Association members are spread across Australia and there are ADA Chapters in many of the larger cities and towns.

The ADA publishes a quarterly national journal and a monthly bulletin, and also maintains a comprehensive website. The Association is frequently called on for media comment and for contributions to public, academic and professional debates on national security issues. The ADA is also regularly invited to make submissions to official and parliamentary inquiries, especially those conducted by the all-party Joint Standing Committees on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade; and Intelligence and Security.

The Association maintains regular liaison with counterpart public interest organisations, research institutes and scholars in 12 allied and friendly countries in the Pacific Basin.

NAME:

ADDRESS:

EMAIL:

PHONE: (h) (.....) (w) (.....)

(fax) (.....) (mob)

OCCUPATION (optional):

Membership details are retained by the Association for membership purposes only and with the strictest confidentiality. Any details you provide the Association as a member or subscriber to Association publications will not be passed to a third party without your prior express permission.

Please select your desired subscription (all options include GST)

Fellow of the Association—\$A100 per year

As an ADA Fellow you can contribute to the development of Association policy and your support enables the ADA to undertake its core research, public interest advocacy and public education services. Fellows also receive four issues of our quarterly national journal, *Defender*, and at least eight issues of our electronic bulletin *Defence Brief*.

Associate Member—\$A50 per year

As an ADA Associate Member your support helps the Association in meeting some of its running costs and you can contribute to the development of Association policy (but you cannot hold office or vote on policy or other matters at general meetings). Associate members also receive four issues of our quarterly national journal *Defender*.

Benefactor of the Association—\$A1000 upwards per year

As an individual or corporate ADA Benefactor your generous support is fundamental to the Association being able to undertake its full range of activities as a guardian of the public interest. Benefactors also receive four issues of our quarterly national journal, *Defender*, at least eight issues of our electronic bulletin, *Defence Brief*, half yearly and special reports, have priority access to ADA advice and consultancy services, and qualify for special advertising rates in *Defender*.

Institutional or corporate subscription to ADA publications—\$A100 per year

As an institutional or corporate subscriber you are contributing to effective public debate on national security issues and reserving your direct and immediate access to principal publications underlying such debate. You will receive four issues of our quarterly national journal, *Defender*, eight issues of our electronic bulletin, *Defence Brief*, and have access to advice from the Association when reasonably available.

Annual subscription to *Defender* only by overseas addressees—\$A65 per year

Annual subscription to *Defender* only by Australian libraries—\$A50 per year

Mail with your remittance (cheque, money order or contact ADA for direct credit) to:

AUSTRALIA DEFENCE ASSOCIATION
REPLY PAID 320, ERINDALE CENTRE, ACT, 2903,
Ph/Fax: (02) 6231 4444 Email: subscriptions@ada.asn.au

Major Furphy

Sensitivity is touching both ways



For those of us whose intellectual life-support mechanisms are nourished by an appreciation of irony the Department of Defence, and Russell Offices in particular, can be seventh heaven at times. There are simply moments when you can do nothing but kick back and ride the slide from the sublime to the ridiculous.

A few weeks ago, Barney (Air Marshal Barney Stoush, my boss the VCDF) and I were undergoing one of the mandated regular seminars in sensitivity training. I can't remember exactly which type it was—gender, sexuality, ethnicity, religion, multicultural appreciation, recognition of sexual harassment, cross-species awareness—and it really doesn't matter, they all appear the same after a while and have similar results anyway.

Luckily this one was in a conference room with a window so I could partly pass the time by watching the smokers and the shivering sparrows in the R1 courtyard idle another morning away. This soon unconsciously transitioned into an efficiently time-zapping daydream about floating the case for compulsory non-smoker sensitivity training. My reverie in this regard was eventually broken by the now deeply programmed guilty thought that my automatic appraisal of these bludgers sunning themselves was probably judgemental and therefore insensitive and no doubt illegal. It just goes to show how all this sensitivity training eventually seeps into your paranoia glands. There didn't seem much point broaching the ethical dilemma with the contract zealot giving the presentation so when a break was called I diplomatically woke Barney to seek his senior officer opinion.

Before I could raise the matter we were interrupted by Barney's secretary summoning us back to the office urgently. I wasn't sure whether Barney had pre-arranged this rescue or it was a genuine one, but on returning to the VCDF suite we were met by one of the many departmental functionaries responsible for public affairs. The PA guru was clutching a canvas laundry bag, which at least cut down on the intensity of the hand-wringing. Apparently some tabloid had printed a years-old spoof formal photo gone wrong, staged by some Townsville diggers, in which the said laundry bags were used to imitate Ku Klux Klan hoods. Barney, who being a senior ADF officer has no public-affairs authority or responsibilities until something goes wrong, immediately smelled a rat.

They wanted Barney to front an ABC interview in order to grovel and try and put the spoof photo in context. Barney ducked this obvious PC ambush by suggesting that a senior Army figure might have more weight, especially in a case of apparent gallows or black humour.

After the spin doctor had left, Barney fell into one of his increasingly frequent philosophical moods—perhaps his retirement as rumoured in the *Canberra Times* is not far off. As one of the few senior air-force officers with a real experience of jointery, Barney is a fount of considerable wisdom on the dark and mysterious corners of ADF culture. No doubt prompted by thoughts about the likely impending witchhunts to scapegoat the supposedly insensitive, he fell to musing on one of his pet fixations, the department's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) branch.

As his eyes swept the badge of my hat on its stand, Barney sought my observations about the presence of inequality in the defence force. I mumbled the usual deeply programmed mumbo jumbo about needing to do more to adapt to contemporary Australian culture but Barney, as usual, cut my waffle short.

'Have you ever noticed the irony', he asked, 'that we spend inordinate amounts of time, money and effort in stamping out perceived inequalities that are just as common in the rest of society but miss absolutely those which are most virulent and most peculiar to our own profession?' Warming to his theme he went on. 'After all, as they mentioned again this morning, unlawful discrimination is the making of arbitrary judgements as to someone's worth, effectiveness and career prospects based on unjustified stereotypical perceptions rather than their individual merit.' Going to full throttle he explained, 'the glaringly worst cases we have are the way fighter pilots treat everyone else in the air force as automatically and permanently inferior, followed closely by the blind snobbery of Arms Corps officers in the army. Not to mention the way Principal Warfare Officers just assume everyone else in the Navy is there to enhance their career and are incapable of deep professional knowledge or an original idea'.

As Barney's analysis tapered off, I found myself nodding in agreement and not just because I'm the personal staff officer to a three-star. 'Perhaps', I tentatively ventured, 'we could insist the EEO people look into it'.

Barney was silent for a full 20 seconds—often a characteristic sign of suppressed outrage in senior officers. A thought then apparently struck him, out of left-field, as they say. 'Draft me a minute to the Secretary recommending a team of EEO advisers be sent to Baghdad immediately to ensure the embassy security detachment are interacting with the local community appropriately during a war. That should solve several problems at once.'

As an afterthought he directed, 'make sure they are issued Kevlar laundry bags in case they appear on Al Jazeera'. ♦

Understanding the challenge

of Islamist terrorism in order to counter it

Dennis Richardson

The challenge of transnational Islamist terrorism is a global problem but this article concentrates on the threat to Australia. The term 'al Qa'eda' is used as a loose descriptor to cover both the organisation itself, as well as other groups acting independently and without central direction, but which share al Qa'eda's ideology and are inspired by the likes of Usama bin Laden and his deputy, Ayman al Zawahiri.

Iraq and terrorism

Amongst the insurgents in Iraq there are former Saddam Hussein loyalists, other Iraqis with a range of motivations and non-Iraqis, including militant Islamists, of whom al Zarqawi is the most prominent. It is easy to get so caught up in the debate about Iraq that you overlook the fact that al Qa'eda's intent and purpose was marked out long before Iraq and long before '9/11', as witnessed by bin Laden's fatwa in February 1998 in which he declared innocent civilians to be legitimate targets. In respect of al Qa'eda and Iraq, a UN-sponsored and peaceful resolution to Iraq in late 2002 or early 2003 would have been irrelevant to al Qa'eda's intent and purpose.

All the terrorist attacks outside Iraq during and since the war, and committed by al Qa'eda or groups sharing its ideology, would have occurred with or without the war. This includes the 11 March 2004 train bombings in Madrid and the attack on the Australian Embassy in Jakarta on 9 September 2004. To the extent Iraq may have been a motivator, when you strip it down, it has been an add-on, not the central driver.

The terrorist leader in Iraq, al Zarqawi, fought in Afghanistan in the late 1980s and early 1990s. He was imprisoned for terrorism offences in Jordan in 1994–99, had his own training camp in Afghanistan in 1999–2001 and moved between South Asia and the Middle East during 1999–2003. Al Zarqawi shares bin Laden's ideology and it would be naive in the extreme to assume that, but for Iraq, al Zarqawi would be at peace with the world. For him, Iraq is a convenient killing field. If not Iraq, it would be elsewhere.

In making these observations I am not suggesting that there have not been any downsides to Iraq:

- Iraq has provided al Qa'eda with propaganda and recruitment opportunities and it only stands to reason that they would have some success;
- it has provided another self-justification or rationalisation for acts of terrorism; and
- it has increased the threat of terrorism against Australian interests in the Middle East, as the Prime Minister noted in answer to a question in Parliament on 24 March 2003.

So far, Iraq has not had a significant impact on the security environment here in Australia and there has been no change to the overall threat level domestically. For the relatively small number of people in Australia who share bin Laden's ideology, for instance, Iraq is just one more focus. It is possible that some new followers in Australia have been motivated primarily by Iraq, and we cannot exclude the possibility of Iraq being a motivator for some people here in Australia who may want to do harm. Iraq was not a motivator, however, for Willy Brigitte, the Frenchman who was in Australia last year to carry out a terrorist attack.

Internationally, Iraq has not so far become the *cause célèbre* that Afghanistan became for many young Muslims worldwide in the 1980s. The number of non-Iraqis fighting coalition forces is not known but is estimated to be around 2–3000, with most from other Middle Eastern countries. Some have come from further afield, including from Western Europe and South Asia, and we would need to be concerned if those numbers became significant. We should not be surprised if the odd one turns up from Australia.

Iraq is, however, well short of the global 'honeypot' that was Afghanistan. It has, not yet at least, fired the passions of South East Asian militant Islamists. That could of course change but we need to be careful in assuming Iraq is a re-run of Afghanistan.

To what extent those who have gone to fight in Iraq were already committed militant Islamists or to what extent fighting in Iraq has or will turn others, including some Iraqis, into committed militant Islamists, is not known. The only reasonable assumption is that Iraq has added to the number

of militant Islamists and will lead to the further development of international linkages between such individuals and groups. This is something we will need to measure over time.

In the context of global Islamist terrorism, the real potential downside of the conflict in Iraq would be if the US-led coalition lost its resolve and drifted away. Such a development would embolden militant Islamists globally and could lead to the establishment, in parts of Iraq, of Afghanistan-type safehavens for terrorists in which training and other rebuilding could occur unhindered. I note this without making judgement about the Iraq war per se. At this stage, however, we have more to lose if the US-led coalition gives up than if it stays with the appropriate commitment and resourcing.

A global challenge

The situation in Iraq also raises the question of where Australia's counter-terrorism efforts should be focused. Every country has finite resources and, consistent with the national interest, choices must be made about their allocation and deployment.

In the context of the current terrorist challenge, it is essential that we make these choices within a global perspective and do not put an artificial intellectual fence around Australia itself or a particular region. It is not a zero-sum equation with anything done beyond South East Asia being, by definition, at the expense of what can be done within the region.

Clearly we must be, and are, closely engaged in and with the region. Other things being equal it should and does come first. It is that part of the world in which we can make a substantial counter-terrorism contribution, consistent with our national interests.

The two terrorist attacks against Australia so far have been in Indonesia and our interests remain under high threat in the region generally. We have a visibility and a profile in South East Asia beyond what we have elsewhere. Furthermore, Jemaah Islamiyah was certainly developing a presence in Australia and, but for the lead information provided by the Singapore authorities in late 2001, this might have gone undetected for some time.

We also need to understand clearly that Australia is a global target. Our interests are at high threat elsewhere, especially in South Asia and in the Middle East. While Australia is not the target of first choice, there have been credible threats against our interests beyond South East Asia and our interests could be attacked anywhere.

Since '9/11' the Australia Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) has sought to identify Australians worldwide connected to terrorism. That work has taken us from Indonesia to inside the Arctic Circle and to all continents but Antarctica. It is work which continues to this day.

As an example, Willy Brigitte was born in the Caribbean, introduced to militant Islam in France, trained as a terrorist in Pakistan, and was sent to

Australia to carry out a terrorist attack. If it was not for the co-operative work of the French authorities, ASIO, the AFP and the NSW Police, he may have succeeded.

Overwhelmingly, those people resident in Australia who have undertaken terrorist training have done so beyond South East Asia. Furthermore, their motivations and continuing links come from beyond the immediate region. Of the Australians who have so far been convicted of terrorism offences or who are facing terrorism charges only one, Jack Roche, has a connection to South East Asia. Roche, the first Australian recently convicted of terrorism offences, is a British migrant trained in Afghanistan by al Qa'eda and connected to Jemaah Islamiyah.

Of the four Australians awaiting trial in Sydney for terrorism offences, two are Australians of Pakistani origin, one is an Australian of Lebanese origin and one was born in Australia of Lebanese background.

One Australian was recently released from custody in Lebanon after serving a short sentence for terrorism offences and a further Australian is awaiting trial in Lebanon on terrorism offences. One Australian from China is in custody in Kazakhstan after being convicted of a terrorism offence in 2001. Two other Australian citizens are in Guantanamo Bay awaiting trial before a United States Military Commission. One of these detainees was born in Australia of Caucasian parents and the other is of Egyptian origin.

So while South East Asia needs to be our priority, this should be within a global perspective and in a framework which recognises the terrorist linkages and threats beyond the region. This framework should also be sufficiently flexible to accommodate involvement beyond South East Asia in recognition of the fact that, when it comes to terrorism, Australia's national interests can be engaged almost anywhere.

Certainly, ASIO could not properly fulfil its legislative and operational responsibilities if we saw our job primarily limited to Australia and South East Asia. On the contrary, we must go where our responsibilities take us.

Australia and terrorism

The debate about Australia's involvement in Iraq has also, at times, clouded the issue of when Australia became an al Qa'eda target and for what reason.

Before the attacks in New York and Washington DC on 11 September 2001, ASIO had already identified a small number of Australians who had trained in Afghanistan and others with some connection to al Qa'eda. ASIO's 1999-2000 Annual Report to Parliament—the public version of our classified report to Government (which is also provided to the Leader of the Opposition)—noted that:

'there are militant groups internationally which view terrorism as a legitimate means of pursuing their cause. Some are sufficiently well-resourced to view the whole world as their theatre of operations. Some have a small number of supporters in Australia'.

The Report also referred to 'the threat of terrorist activity by associates of Usama bin Laden and other groups'.

Before the attacks of 11 September 2001 ASIO's broad assessment was that:

- despite bin Laden's threats against the United States and 'its allies', there were no indicators that Australia was a priority target, either here at home or against our interests abroad; and
- any attack within Australia would most likely be directed against United States and/or Israeli interests.

Following 11 September 2001, ASIO raised formal threat levels in Australia, and raised to High the classification of the threat to Australian interests in Indonesia. In particular, we considered it significant that bin Laden's statement of 3 November 2001 explicitly mentioned Australia as a target for the first time.

The extent to which Australia was considered a target well before '9/11', however, only became evident subsequently. In late 2001 Singapore uncovered the plot by Jemaah Islamiyah to attack mainly US interests there, but also including an attack on the Australian High Commission. The JI investigation in Australia led to Jack Roche and to the aborted plot to attack Israeli diplomatic interests here in 2000. A raid in Pakistan in late 2002 uncovered details of the casing (before the '9/11' attacks) of a number of airports worldwide including one in Australia. This does not mean that there was an actual plan to attack an Australian airport, but it does indicate that consideration of an attack here was within al Qa'eda's strategic vision.

During 2002 we were able to establish that al Qa'eda's chief operational planner, Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, had obtained a tourist visa to visit Australia in August 2001. The visa, which was applied for by Khalid using a then unknown alias, had not been utilised and was cancelled. The only reasonable assumption is that Khalid was planning to come to Australia for some operational purpose. From the debriefing of captured senior al Qa'eda figures in 2002 and 2003 we know that attacks in Australia, over and above the ones I have already mentioned, were actively canvassed well before '9/11'. Finally, in the context of the extent to which Australia was and is considered a target, we had actual attacks against us in Bali in October 2002 and in Jakarta in September 2004.

The obvious question is why are we a target? One possibility is simply to take at face value what terrorists like bin Laden and al Zawahiri say. They claim we are a target because of our alliance with the United States, and because of our involvement in East Timor in 1999, Afghanistan in 2001–02 and Iraq since early 2003.

We should take seriously any statement by al Qa'eda leaders declaring particular countries to be targets. However, their claims as to why are puzzling—except if you interpret their declarations as being directed not at their avowed enemies but at their followers or potential followers.

In this context, bin Laden's first known reference to East Timor in November 2001 was designed to strike a chord in South East Asia, especially Indonesia, and his subsequent references to Afghanistan and Iraq must be

seen in terms of wider al Qa'eda propaganda and recruitment purposes. This is not to diminish the significance of his references to East Timor, Afghanistan and Iraq, but to question whether our involvement in those countries is the central driver in al Qa'eda's targeting of Australia. Otherwise, how do you explain al Qa'eda's very real interest in Australia, and the targeting of us, before our involvement in the countries cited. It simply does not make sense.

Perhaps then, we are a target because of our longstanding and close alliance with the United States. As I have noted previously, the fact that we are in close alliance with the United States does contribute to us being a target—but this is very different to any claim that we are a target solely because of our alliance with the United States. Furthermore, even if we were a target only because of our alliance with the United States, on what basis would any self-respecting country allow terrorists to determine such central policies—in this case one which has had bi-partisan and popular support for over 50 years?

In addition, as the governments and peoples of Kenya and Indonesia know, you do not need to be in alliance with the United States for your citizens to be murdered by the likes of al Qa'eda and Jemaah Islamiyah.

If East Timor, Afghanistan, Iraq and our alliance with the United States are, to varying degrees, only contributors or add-ons, what is it then that lies at the centre of those who provide the intellectual and strategic drive which leads to us being a target?

The answer to this question lies in the world view of Islamist terrorist leaders such as Usama bin Laden, al Zawahiri, al Zarqawi and Abu Bakar Bashir. This is a world view shaped and driven by a militant, extreme and literal interpretation of the Koran. It is a world view which seeks to hijack one of the world's great religions and is a world view which predates the Afghanistan of the 1980s. This world view reaches back to the teachings and ideologies of Sayyid Qutb, a leading figure in the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt in the 1950s and early 1960s, and which reaches back many centuries before that.

This Islamist world view, in which we and others are seen as part of a Jewish–Christian conspiracy, is a world view in which the United Nations and its Secretary-General are declared enemies and legitimate targets, and a world view in which Muslim countries ruled by other than Taliban-style governments are declared enemies and supposedly legitimate targets.

Finally, it is a world view so removed from our own values, traditions and experiences that it is tempting to dismiss it as empty, meaningless rhetoric and so unreal as not to be taken seriously. It is so much easier to explain the challenge in terms of other supposed root causes such as poverty, or in terms of our own failures. Such explanations have a familiar shape and give us something concrete to address within a somewhat comforting framework. Such an approach gives us a sense of some control, a sense that, if only we can get our side of it right, it will go away.

It is, of course, so much more confronting to be challenged by leaders who have such a totally different frame of reference and who are playing a different game on a different playing field.

I appreciate that my perspective is but one view and that some scholars and terrorist experts would disagree. I also acknowledge that the resolution of issues, such as Palestine, would deny al Qaeda some significant oxygen. Resolution of the Palestine–Israel dispute is an important goal—provided we do not fall into the trap of seeing al Qaeda merely as an outgrowth of the Palestinian issue.

Nor am I seeking to pretend that our involvement, in Afghanistan for instance, is irrelevant. As noted by the then Australian Attorney-General, Daryl Williams, in the House of Representatives on 17 September 2001: ‘we must be acutely aware that our own active involvement in the fight (against terrorism) could well bring terrorism closer to our own shores’.

In my view we have no alternative but to continue to meet the challenge of al Qaeda and groups such as Jemaah Islamiyah; their world view allows for no compromise or

conciliation. People such as Abu Bakar Bashir are terrorists masquerading as good Muslims. As Bashir’s interview with the *Bulletin* of 21 September 2004 shows, they seek to hide their hatred in the language of the pious.

In summary:

- Iraq is not the starting point for Islamist terrorism;
- the Islamist terrorist connections into Australia are global, the challenge is global and our regional counter-terrorism priorities should continue to be managed within a global context; and
- the world view at the centre of al Qaeda and groups such as Jemaah Islamiyah best explains why we are a target and is the key to understanding why the challenge will be with us for a long time. ♦

Dennis Richardson, AO, has been the Director-General of Security and head of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) since October 1996. This article is based on his address to the Sydney Institute on 26 October 2004 and has been slightly updated for publication in ‘Defender’.

Letters cont’d (from p. 4)

ONA later recruited Wilkie as a civilian seemingly because he fitted in with the gentleman amateur culture of the agency, perhaps because so many diplomats and academics without real intelligence experience have been self-selected to work there.

ONA claims to be the country’s paramount intelligence agency. Yet neither selection process appears to have taken account of Wilkie’s pronounced lack of intelligence experience, qualifications or aptitude. Hopefully the appropriate institutional and professional lessons have been drawn rather than the whole sad saga being blamed just on Andrew Wilkie’s personal weaknesses and professional shortcomings.

**John Rogers
Victoria**

Sir: I thoroughly enjoy reading the ADA’s commentary, so well synthesised, in your regular *Defence Brief*. It is infrequently that I find myself disagreeing with the Association’s synopsis of events. This, however, is one such occasion.

In commencing your pre-election comparison of defence policies you noted that this would be restricted to the Coalition and Labor. Your rationale for the exclusion of the Greens and Democrats was the absence of any ‘serious chance of forming a government’ and an absence of ‘serious Defence policy’. This is a potentially dangerous perspective and approach, and one I am sure, that various Greens and Democrats supporters would applaud heartily.

Both the Greens and Democrats have defence and national security policies. It is variously illuminating, amusing and horrifying to wander at your leisure through their respective websites. Are they sensible? No—they

are a collection of nonsense underwritten by an apparent overarching complete absence of commonsense or reflection on real-world realities. Indeed, it is perhaps unfair to arbitrarily collate the two together. At least the Greens appear to have put some effort into their task, crazy though most of their solutions appear. The Democrats have not even done that. Their ‘policies’ are restricted to a few specifics only. Both parties, however, are to be commended for their motherhood statements in support of ADF veterans.

But are they serious? Well, from a perspective informed by Mr Brown’s discussion of the need to free up access to (currently) illegal drugs, I suspect they are serious about what they outline. The danger in your exclusionary approach is that the influence of both parties, but especially the Greens, could eventually be significant if they ever hold the balance of power in the Senate. Just what could be the ultimate quid pro quo of Labor’s preference deals with the Greens? Is it possible that aspects of national security could be sacrificed at the feet of a combination of domestic political expediency and utopian faith in human nature?

Only by exposing the inaccuracies, unrealities and stupidities of these off-the-wall pseudo-defence policies will the electorate see these fringe parties in their broadest and truest sense. They are not just ‘tree huggers’ or bastard honesty testers, but parties with broader social and political agendas including defence and national security policies that are positively dangerous.

Analysis of party defence policies for future elections should include the minor parties. All parties should be invited to detail their defence and national security-related policies so comprehensive comparisons can be published.

**Mitchell Thomas
Victoria**

Can we avoid

war with Islam?

Paul Dobb and Geoffrey Barker

The frequency and savagery of Islamist terrorist attacks raises the inevitable question of whether Islam itself is sliding into a war with the West. Each successive attack seems to raise the bar of obscenity: the mass murder of office workers in the United States and train commuters in Madrid, the slaughter of Russian schoolchildren, videos of the decapitation of hostages in Iraq. What is next? A chemical or biological assault on a city or its water supply? Or is it more likely to be a nuclear bomb?

The fact that these questions must even be contemplated is a reflection of the seriousness of the situation in which we find ourselves. The extreme Islamist terrorists know no bounds in the horrors they want to visit on the West. We hope such concerns will prove unwarranted; we fear equally that they may not be.

Certainly, there is no refuge from conventional or even nuclear terrorism in Australia. The recent federal government White Paper on terrorism contains repeated warnings about these possibilities and declares: 'The acquisition of chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear weapons by transnational terrorist groups would add a new dimension to the terrorist threat to Australia'.

No less alarming in our view is the propensity of Australian politicians and voters to ignore the reality of this threat. If the recent federal election campaign demonstrated anything, it showed that Australian politicians and voters are still overwhelmingly provincial and materialistic and more concerned with short-term personal utility maximisation than with long-term national survival when it comes to political campaigning.

We must be careful, of course, not to label all adherents of Islam with the smear of terrorism. But moderate Muslims the world over must root out the terrorists in their midst and not passively acquiesce in what is being done in their name. The alternative is a bloody slide into a new religious war, the likes of which the world has not seen since the carnage wrought in the Thirty Years War between Roman Catholics and Protestants in the 1600s, which resulted

in the deaths of at least a third of the inhabitants of northern Europe.

There is nothing new about terrorism in world history. We will do well to remember the anarchist terrorists who assassinated seven heads of state in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and that it was a Serbian terrorist who assassinated Archduke Ferdinand in Sarajevo in 1914 and precipitated World War I. Late last century, Europe experienced waves of terrorism in the United Kingdom (the IRA), Germany (the Baader-Meinhof gang), France (Algerian terrorists), Spain (Basque terrorists) and Italy (the Red Brigades). Elsewhere, we have had Palestinian terrorists and the Japanese Red Army. But none of them were on the scale of the terrorism that we are now experiencing. Previous terrorist organisations generally had a territorial focus and a set of political demands that could at least be negotiated.

But the extreme Islamist terrorists that we face are not interested in negotiation or in settlement of territorial disputes. Their aim is no less than the destruction of the West and the creation of an Islamic caliphate centred on the Middle East and to include South East Asia. The all-out war that extreme Islamist elements are waging on the West knows no limits of civilised behaviour: there are no rules of war here and no concept of international justice. There is nothing that al-Qa'eda would like to do more than explode a nuclear bomb in downtown Manhattan. Can you imagine what the American response would be? The attacks of 11 September 2001, brought about the destruction of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and the overthrow of Saddam Hussein and the occupation of Iraq by the United States. In our view, a nuclear attack on America would provoke terrible retribution.

We can take it for granted that the US is thinking hard about how to control illicit access to weapons-grade nuclear material from countries such as Russia, North Korea, Iran and Pakistan. Forensic technologies are apparently available that would enable Washington to determine the source of weapons-grade fissile material used in a nuclear explosion.

What we are likely to see is a new American declaratory policy that threatens a nuclear response on any country providing fissile material in this way to a terrorist group that successfully explodes a nuclear weapon in the US. Robert Gallucci, a former US assistant secretary of state experienced in nuclear-proliferation negotiations with countries such as Iran and North Korea, describes this form of preventive diplomacy as 'extended deterrence'. Gallucci's concern is that sufficient fissile material is known to be missing in the world to construct three crude nuclear weapons with yields similar to those dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It is not beyond the ability of determined terrorists to detonate such devices in American cities, or even in the cities of allies such as the United Kingdom and Australia.

What this does not address, of course, is how the US will respond to terrorists who perpetrate a nuclear explosion in a major American city. The pressure to respond in kind will be enormous. Of course, logic dictates that finding an incontrovertible terrorist target will be enormously difficult. But the US will have to respond to this sort of nuclear degradation. The risk will be that the obvious targets will be in the Arab Middle East, in Iran or Pakistan. And then the West may be at war with Islam.

It needs to be plainly understood that if terrorists break the taboo of the past 60 years on using nuclear weapons, all bets are off. Major powers such as the US (or Britain or France) cannot stand idly by while they suffer the terrible consequences, including long-term radiation effects, of a nuclear explosion in one of their cities.

What has brought us to this remove? It is simply not good enough to assert, as some do, that it is all to do with the wickedness of America, the exploitation of Muslim countries by the West for oil, or that terrorism springs only from poverty and oppression. Some argue that Washington's lack of even-handedness in the Palestinian dispute with Israel has caused great resentment among Muslims worldwide. We agree with that sentiment. The former Prime Minister of Singapore, Goh Chok Tong, also acknowledged as much in an address to regional defence ministers in June 2004.

But we need to face squarely the fact that the attacks of terrorism perpetrated since 11 September 2001, have all been done in the name of Islam. And the ideological centre of extreme Islamist terror has its wellsprings in the Middle East. It is from there that polluted interpretations of the Koran have spread to our very doorstep in Indonesia. Bernard Lewis, professor at Princeton University and an eminent authority on Middle Eastern history, asks: 'What Went Wrong?'. You do not have to accept every detail of his analysis to understand that the world of Islam, which for many centuries was at the forefront of human achievement, has failed dismally in its competition with the so-called Christian West.

Most apparent of all is what David Landes of Harvard University calls 'Muslim loss of civilisation leadership and

retreat from modernity', which is now at the centre of contemporary international affairs. Why, it also has to be asked, have so many countries in the Middle East failed where those of East Asia have succeeded? Less than half a century ago, most countries in our region were poverty-stricken and backward and many had dictatorial regimes. Now, Asia's success compares cruelly with the continuing failure of the Islamic Middle East. Lewis argues that, compared with its millennial rival, Christendom, the world of Islam has become poor, weak and ignorant. He states that by all the standards that matter in the modern world: economic development and job creation, literacy and educational and scientific achievement, political freedom and respect for human rights what was once a mighty civilisation has indeed fallen low.

Two years ago, the British academic James Piscatori asked the question whether we regard Osama bin Laden as the final cry of a whimpering revolution or as a disconcertingly representative voice for the future. The answer must be decisively the latter, although it remains to be seen whether increasing attacks of barbarism in the name of Islam are destined to backfire and isolate the radicals. For the latter to occur, Muslims everywhere will have to recognise that there is a problem that cannot just be attributed to the faults of the West. For example, Jemaah Islamiyah has yet to be legally banned in Indonesia and no senior Islamic figure in that country has condemned the terrorist network by name. Shahram Akbarzadeh, a senior lecturer at Monash University, observes:

Rejecting other Muslims as evil to a Western audience is probably the hardest challenge Australian Muslims have faced.

But, as he notes, voices of public condemnation have been hardly audible.

So, herein lies the nub of the problem. While it is obvious that all Muslims are not terrorists, it is sadly apparent that these days all terrorists happen to be Muslims, as *The Economist* has remarked. If we are to avoid a disastrous and full-blown war between Islam and the West, each side will have to make some radical changes. Muslims everywhere will have to raise their voices against Islamist fanatics. And they will have to stop blaming their predicament on the West for everything. Otherwise, as *The Economist* again argues, their faith will be hijacked and turned into a cult-like vehicle for a clash of civilisations.

In Australia, with its sizeable and visible Islamic population, these issues have potentially grave ramifications in the aftermath of the Bali attack. Osama bin Laden and other terrorist spokesmen have warned that Australia is a target, and there is no reason not to believe them. One Australian Muslim, Jack Roche, is already in jail for helping to prepare terrorist acts in Australia. Other senior terrorist leaders and suspected terrorists, including the French suspect Willy Brigitte, have been in Australia. In his report on Australian intelligence agencies, Philip Flood notes: 'Before the Bali bombings, Australia's

foreign intelligence agencies underestimated in some important ways the nature of radical Islam in South East Asia and the extent to which regional extremists posed a threat to Australia.'

The government's White Paper on terrorism says bluntly that 'the terrorist threat to our nation has never been higher'. It notes that modern terrorists are technically skilled, intelligent and educated and that 'the range of weapons at the terrorists' disposal is wide and increasing'. It says: 'Transnational terrorist groups have ready access to information on chemical, biological or radiological materials and, to some extent, nuclear weapons via publicly available information, including on the internet'. If terrorists obtained such weapons, there is little doubt they will use them against Western targets.

As for us in the West, we need to recognise that Israel's record in the West Bank is not pretty, nor is Russia's in Chechnya, nor for that matter America's actions in Iraq not to mention Guantanamo Bay and Abu Ghraib prison. It is a dismal thought that, having avoided nuclear holocaust in the Cold War, we are standing on the precipice of entering a global conflict that in a different way may involve the use of nuclear weapons. This must not end up becoming a war between Islamist fanatics and Christian fundamentalists because if it does, a dark future awaits the world. ♦

Paul Dibb is Emeritus Professor in the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre at the Australian National University in Canberra. Geoffrey Barker is the defence and national security columnist for 'The Australian Financial Review'.

2005 Essay competition

To help celebrate *Defender's* 22nd year of continuous publication, HarperCollins Australia have generously donated three copies of Paul Ham's new book *Kokoda* (reviewed on pp. 35-7) to be prizes for the journal's writing competition in 2005. A copy of *Kokoda* will be awarded to the ADA member or *Defender* subscriber who personally writes the best essay-type article published in each issue of *Defender*.

Such essays need to discuss a major issue affecting the formulation of Australian national security policy, defence strategy, or a major capability issue affecting the ADF. The essays need to be between 1200 and 1500 words unless prior permission for a longer piece is obtained from the editor. Submission must be received by the 15th of the month in February, May, August and November respectively.

The awarding of the prize will be judged by the journal's editorial board and their decision is final. ♦

Christmas greetings

The board of directors of the Australia Defence Association and the editorial board of *Defender* hope that all our members, readers and other supporters enjoy a happy Christmas and a safe and healthy New Year. At this time we also especially hope all Australians remember those defence-force personnel deployed overseas, often in dangerous places and situations, on our behalf. ♦

Conference Calendar

ADA members and other *Defender* readers may be interested in the following public conferences and activities:

UK Massed Bands from the Edinburgh Military Tattoo

Australia Day Tribute

7PM 26 January 2005, Australian War Memorial Parade Ground, Canberra

Enquiries: (02) 6243-4211

Edinburgh Military Tattoo in Australia 2005

A Salute to Australia

3-5 and 7-8 February 2005, Aussie Stadium, Moore Park, Sydney

Enquiries: www.edinburghtattooinaustralia.com/

Chief of Air Force Conference 2005

The Shape of Things to Come

14 March 2005, Melbourne Exhibition and Conference Centre

Enquiries: (02) 6266-1355 or www.airforce2005.com.au/conference.htm

Australian International Airshow 2005

15-20 March 2005, Avalon Airport, Melbourne

Enquiries: (03) 5282-0502 or www.airshow.net.au

Department of Defence (Strategy Group) Joint Future Warfighting Conference 2005

Preparing for Tomorrow's Threat Today

20-21 April 2005, National Convention Centre, Canberra

Enquiries: (0412) 472-766 or www.defence.gov.au/strategy/fwc/default.htm

Endemic instability of the

South Pacific

Helen Hughes

Independence and aid

When Captain Cook cruised the South Seas in the 18th century, life in the islands was so attractive that he had to take heroic measures to prevent his crews from deserting. The islands were beautiful and lush, food and leisure were ample, and island dances and rituals attested to plenty. The islands did have a dark side. Incessant fighting led to cannibalism and many rituals used human sacrifices. Infanticide prevented excessive population growth. But to 18th century sailors the contrast with their home or shipboard lives made the Pacific Islands seem like paradise.

After the colonial carve-up of the Pacific, the pace of change remained slow. Exports of minerals and agricultural products paid for cargoes of industrial goods, but investment in ports, roads and utilities, health and education was largely confined to administrative centres where European and American colonial administrators and missionaries enjoyed a leisured, if isolated, life. Paul Gaugin and Robert Louis Stevenson were among the many 'beachcombers' who escaped the harshness of 19th century industrial societies in the Pacific.

When the last quarter of the 20th century inaugurated a new era of independence, the gap in living standards between island and industrial countries no longer favoured the Pacific. Technological change had transformed industrial countries. Nearby Asia not only achieved political independence, but began to catch up with industrial societies, becoming socially, politically and culturally integrated into the modern world. Pacific Islanders thought that political independence (or territorial self-government) would set them on the same path to progress.

The aid industry promised to help. Between 1970 and 2002, the Pacific received \$US55 billion (in 2000 dollars), the highest per capita aid flows in the world. For Papua New Guinea aid only averaged \$US100 per head annually, but French Polynesia and New Caledonia received more than \$US1000 per capita a year and the very small islands of Niue and Tokelau averaged over \$US3000 per head per year. Apart from France, Australia has been the principal aid contributor to the Pacific, together with the United States, Japan and New Zealand. The International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank

have contributed little aid funding, but they have devoted thousands of man hours and hundreds of thousands of pages of advice to the Pacific. So have UN agencies. The Pacific Islands are members of more than 30 international organisations whose staff constantly visit the region. Pacific bureaucrats, academics and businessmen in turn attend international conferences, workshops and seminars.

Two economic theories hypothesise about the effect of aid on growth and development. A 'two gap theory' argues that poor countries cannot save enough or earn enough foreign exchange to invest and grow; they need aid to fill these two 'gaps'. This is the justification for the vast international aid industry, with its army of staff, that transfers \$US50 billion a year to developing countries worldwide. Unfortunately, research on aid and development has been unable to find that aid leads to growth. Economists agree that aid is only effective if a country adopts pro-growth policies. And there is now even doubt whether aid is effective in these circumstances. Certainly, in rapidly growing countries, from Botswana to China, aid has not been a factor in development. Overall, the relationship between the volume of aid and growth is inverse.

An opposing theory of aid, the Bauer thesis, argues that aid is inimical to growth and development for three reasons. First, aid makes it possible for governments not to govern responsibly, but to waste their revenues on excessive payments to politicians and public servants instead of building roads, ports electricity networks, health centres and schools. The principal effect of aid is thus to keep irresponsible governments in power. Second, aid has negative economic impacts. Aid flows overvalue the currency, harming exports. Because aid goes to governments, it inflates the public sector at the expense of the private sector. And third, aid encourages corruption. Bauer therefore argued that it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to give aid effectively.

Economic stagnation

The Pacific is a microcosm of the Bauer thesis. Aid has enabled Pacific governments to pursue economic policies that prevent growth. Table 1 shows the appalling development record of the Pacific since independence.

	Population 2002	Population growth 1970–2000	National income per capita: 2001 purchasing power parity in \$US	Average annual real income growth per capita		
				1970–2000	2002	2003
Papua New Guinea	5,320,000	3.7	2450	1.0	-3.0	0.0
Fiji	812,000	1.9	4920	1.7	2.7	3.4
Solomon Islands	447,000	3.9	1910	-1.4	-12.8	-2.5
French Polynesia	235,000	3.7	24080	0.1	3.4	na
New Caledonia	213,000	3.2	25,200	-0.9	na	na
Vanuatu	199,000	4.6	3110	-1.1	-1.9	-0.6
Samoa	170,000	0.6	6130	2.0	5.3	3.5
Fed. States Micronesia	118,000	3.3	na	-1.3	0.6	na
Tonga	100,000	0.5	na	2.1	-1.1	na
Kiribati	91,000	2.8	na	0.6	-0.8	na
North Mariana Islands	70,000	na	na	na	na	na
Marshall Islands	50,000	2.9	na	-3.5	-1.3	na
Cook Islands	21,000	0.0	na	na	7.1	na
Palau	20,000	na	na	-0.3	-0.5	na
Wallis and Futuna	20,000	na	na	na	na	na
Nauru	12,000	na	na	na	na	na
Tuvalu	11,000	1.6	na	na	na	na
Niue	2000	na	na	na	na	na
Tokelau	1000	na	na	na	na	na

Table 1: Population, Per Capita Income in 2001 and Average Annual Real per Capita Gross Domestic Product Growth, 1990–2001, 2002 and 2003. (Source: H. Hughes, 'Aid has failed the Pacific', *Issue Analysis*, May 2003 and 'Is the Pacific viable', *Issue Analysis*, December 2004, Centre for Independent Studies, Sydney)

Some of the smaller territories, notably Samoa, the North Marianas, Cook Islands and Niue have shown some progress. All but Samoa are not independent but have a close association with a developed country. Average per capita income is also higher in French Polynesia and New Caledonia—territories of metropolitan France—but it is highly skewed toward the French bureaucrats who run the public services. In the main, the only non-elite Pacific islanders who have improved their standards of living are Samoans, Tongans, Indian Fijians, Micronesians and others who have emigrated from the Pacific.

Overall population has been, and is, growing faster than income. With elites—'big men' in villages, politicians and public servants and a few business people—appropriating most of the benefits of growth, most Pacific Islanders' standards of living have stagnated or declined. The hard work of the women keeps the Pacific fed, but agricultural exports have declined. Men are not taking up coffee, cocoa, copra, palm oil and other opportunities, there is therefore no off-farm employment and there are no urban jobs. Boys grow into men without a decent education and without opportunities to work and earn an income. Girls have even worse prospects.

Social disintegration

Social deprivation means Pacific Islanders—particularly the women—live in the most socially retarded countries in the world. Many Pacific Islanders can only expect to live 60 years compared to Australia's 80 years. Child, infant and maternal mortality is horrific because of the limited availability of water and sanitation and crowded housing

on which diarrhoea and chest diseases thrive. Malaria is returning and modern diseases are spreading. Nauru has the highest incidence of diabetes in the world. An HIV/AIDS epidemic is emerging with more than 40,000 people across the region already infected. If HIV/AIDS continues to be neglected, 1–1,500,000 people are expected to be infected by 2015–2020 in Papua New Guinea alone.

Less than half of the children in the Pacific attend primary school regularly. Village schools lack sanitation, power, books and often pencils and paper. Teaching methods that have destroyed the three 'R's in Australian schools dominate. In addition, teaching in local languages has become so iconic that today's children (like Aboriginal Australian children in remote communities) are less well educated than they were in Missionary schools. Aid pays for these philosophies in the Pacific. Only the elites, the French territories and communities with emigration in mind, have a reasonable education.

Corruption at the top leads to economic stagnation and social disintegration follows. Port Moresby ranks alongside other economically failed capitals such as Nairobi, with the highest incidence of violent crime in the world. Its gang warfare is like Haiti's. Crimes against property have reached epidemic proportions in Suva as unemployed youths drift into town. Violence, particularly against women, is prevalent in villages where property crime is also increasing. Disturbances in the Solomon Islands were essentially over land and jobs. While the Australian-led RAMSI (Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands) force found it easy to deal with relatively small numbers of modern weapons, home-made rifles and

machetes, in Bougainville and the Papua New Guinea Highlands fighters are armed with large numbers of modern high-powered weapons. A cannabis-for-guns (packed in crates of secondhand clothing) trade flourishes via the Northern Territory. Kalashnikovs are unloaded in timber camps with saw-milling equipment. The Pacific is awash with guns. Political coups ever threaten to explode.

At present the Pacific's social and political disintegration does not represent a traditional military threat to Australia. The Solomon Islands are not going to invade us. Nauru's, Kiribati's and Vanuatu's chasing of China's and Taiwan's favours will not precipitate an international war. The sale of passports by Kiribati and Nauru and the theft of Papua New Guinea's passport printing equipment do not represent a major invitation to terrorists. The Pacific Islands' pornography and pedophile Internet sites do not have a world monopoly. Money laundering by Nauru and Vanuatu 'off-shore banking' is part of worldwide systems, but it damages the Pacific through corrupt payments to local elites that result in political thuggery.

But if the Pacific continues to stagnate its problems will increase. By mid century, with the demographics already in place, Papua New Guinea will have a population of some 10 million and the Pacific as a whole some 15 million compared to Australia's 23 to 25 million people. At the very least, unless there is substantial growth, Australia will be flooded by 'boat people' from the Pacific. At worst, Papua New Guinea could become a serious failed state and/or a formidable rogue one. Our military and police forces will inevitably be, to use the polite euphemism, 'put in harm's way', as our children and grandchildren reap the dragon's teeth that our policies are sowing.

Is the Pacific viable?

The international aid industry supports the Pacific in a litany of excuses for its lack of growth. The smallness of the countries, their distance from markets and each other, their location in the midst of the vast Pacific and their geographic configurations (too mountainous or too low and flat), are

said to prevent growth and require large volumes of aid. These excuses do not bear examination. The Pacific islands are located near the world's most rapidly growing markets in Asia. They have enormous tourist potential. Most of the land is fertile. A regenerating timber industry could be a great source of wealth. The Pacific has huge fish resources. And the Pacific's 'rim of fire' is rich with minerals. The costs of transportation and communications have been sharply reduced so that distance would not be a problem if Pacific governments did not pursue counterproductive transport and communications policies.

The Pacific's natural advantages suggest that its per capita income should be growing at some seven per cent a year. With the growth-oriented policies that have been followed in rapidly growing developing countries, the present per capita income of some \$US2500 per head would become \$US20,000 (in today's dollars), that is close to Australia's current per capita income, in one generation or some 30 years. Pacific Islanders could then have the standard of living that Australians enjoy today. Reform can not, of course, be imposed from the outside. But the pages of Pacific newspapers show that there is a strong demand for growth and security. If aid did not support policies that undermined growth, the Pacific Islands could then choose reform options.

A reform agenda

Inappropriate institutions, introduced in the colonial era and extended by international agencies in the early days of independence make the Pacific egregiously over-governed (Table 2). Pacific countries are spending the bulk of their revenues and aid on excessive parliamentary and public-service structures. Nothing is left for education, health and investment in infrastructure. For the smaller islands, membership of the UN and other international organisations imposes financial costs and uses scarce manpower. The colonial powers were too self-centred to create some form of Pacific federation. It will now take at least a generation to collapse even the small Pacific institutions into one efficient polity.

	No. of members of parliament	Voters per representative	No. of cabinet members
American Samoa	20	1534	na
Cook Islands	25	509	6
Fiji	71	6451	22
French Polynesia	49	3533	15
Kiribati	13	3877	12
Marshall Islands	33	875	10
Fed. States Micronesia	14	4017	12
Nauru	18	320	6
New Caledonia	54	2453	10
Niue	20	65	4
Norfolk Island	9	151	4
North Mariana islands	18	3217	9
Palau	16	867	9
Papua New Guinea	109	25,361	28
Samoa	49	2104	13
Solomon Islands	50	3770	20

Table 2: Members of Parliament, Voters per Representative and Cabinet Members in the Pacific, 2004.
(Source: H. Hughes, 'Is the Pacific Viable?', Issue Analysis, December 2004, Centre for Independent Studies, Sydney.)

Twenty years of aid-supported programs to 'improve governance' in the Pacific have not addressed the fundamental problems of excessive government. Some countries have improved their budgetary management, they have not done so by downsizing but by reducing investment and social-sector expenditures. The Pacific Islands will have to cut their governments and international memberships to a size commensurate with their real needs if they are to be able to grow and develop. Some of the smaller ones would be well advised to follow prosperous territories, such as American Samoa and the North Marianas, and integrate with larger, effective states. All will have to reduce their governments and public services to be able to grow.

The theory of resource 'rents'—incomes from minerals, timber and fish—suggests that such incomes are, similarly to aid, difficult to manage. Resource industries create little employment, appreciate the exchange rate so that labour-intensive exports are difficult, and lead to corruption. Nauru's path from 'riches to rags' classically illustrates the failure of the theory of rents in the case of minerals. By opting for early intensive resource development, the Pacific has wasted its resource income. Mineral and timber 'rents' are now falling to compensate for risks associated with crime and civil unrest. They continue to be wasted.

The communal ownership of land is the principal brake on Pacific growth. The productivity of agriculture remains low as a result. Agricultural exports are in decline throughout the Pacific. In Fiji tourist hotels have to import fruit and vegetables from New Zealand and Australia. No country in the world has developed without individual property rights. Communal ownership suits the village 'big men' and their parliamentary allies. Land registration and the reform of land tenure are unfortunately opposed by many of the expatriates who have been managing land policy in the Pacific and by anthropologists fearful of losing their laboratories. It is also opposed by the socialists who dominate thought in Pacific universities and idealise 'wantok' as a social security system. But communal ownership at best provides security at a very low standard of living and none when population presses on land. The weak fare better when the development of private property rights stimulates growth.

The Pacific has inherited inappropriate business regulations that prevent the growth of the informal sector. Police are still bulldozing markets and upsetting women betel nut sellers' trays when they are not paid their 'protection' money. Although base wages are low even in the 'formal' sector, industrial awards, with shift work, holiday and even long service loadings come into play when a firm becomes established and this prevent its expansion. Fiji was able to establish clothing exports by ignoring such rules after the 1987 coup, Samoa has motor vehicle component exports and the Northern Marianas also export clothing, otherwise there is negligible labour intensive production.

Although most of the Pacific islands are open to trade, some have been damaged by protectionist measures that

provide little employment, raise costs to other producers and consumers, but make large monopoly profits for the privileged businesses that engage in sugar, cement, canning and other production on an inefficient scale for domestic markets. Paradoxically, SPARTECA's (South Pacific Trade and Economic Cooperation Agreement) preferential market access to Australian and New Zealand markets damaged Pacific exports. The United States had a similar scheme. Pacific exports could bear high labor and infrastructure costs. As tariffs declined, Pacific exports were exposed to competition from Asia in Australasian and American markets. The European Union is spending its aid to the Pacific developing a Pacific Union in its image. But the Pacific countries' trade, unlike Europe's, is dominantly with the rest of the world because they do not have, even on a Pacific-wide basis, the economies of scale for the variety of goods and services they need. Pacific politicians and bureaucrats are rejoicing in the rents from yet another inappropriate trade scheme.

The Pacific's water, power, sanitation, transport and communications are still largely government owned. Their costs are high so that they burden producers and consumers and they do not reach outside the principal centres. Privatisation is urgent.

Migration to Australia

Australia, as arguably the world's most successful country of immigration, knows that firm policies are needed to ensure that the benefits immigrants gain and bring to their new country exceed the costs. Immigrants are thus a problem for host countries that encourage welfare dependency. Many South Pacific Islanders have been able to improve their living standards merely by accessing New Zealand welfare payments. But the resulting problems of poor schooling, alcoholism, drug abuse and criminal behavior plague the immigrant ghettos. Barely literate and unskilled immigrants would not be able to find jobs in Australia. Where they were skilled they would eviscerate the narrow skill bases at home.

The proposal for temporary guest workers from the Pacific stems from wishful thinking about a pliable labour supply for such jobs as fruit picking and domestic nannies at present supplied by young, educated and entrepreneurial backpacking, tourists and exchange workers. But there is still a reserve of unemployed in Australia for such jobs, notably in Northern Australia where efforts are now being made to engage young unemployed Aborigines dependent on social security in 'mutual obligation' commitments. European and North American experiences suggest that short-term immigration leads to serious problems. In the Pacific there would be another problem with the management of short-term unskilled migration. When in 2003 a group of Australian Senators visiting Port Moresby raised the possibility of a managed short-term migration program from Papua New Guinea to Australia, the proposal was welcomed by leading Papua New Guinea politicians. They worked out a scheme by which those 'selected' would be expected to pay for the privilege before the Senators had left Port Moresby. They had no doubt heard of Imelda

Marcos' schemes to milk Filipino domestic servant emigrants.

Migration is not a substitute for development. If Pacific countries develop, migration will continue to take place at the margins. Australia's worldwide non-discriminatory immigration policy has attracted Pacific immigrants in the past and will no doubt continue to do so.

What can Australia do for the Pacific?

Australia—whether it acknowledges it or not—is the hegemonic power in the South Pacific. We will be held responsible if the lack of growth results in failed states and/or terrorist dangers in the region. Yet until the middle of 2003, when the Howard Government initiated the RAMSI response to the Solomon Islands insurrection, Canberra gave scant attention to the South Pacific. And both RAMSI and the 'enhanced' police and legal aid program for Papua New Guinea were top-down political initiatives rather than reflections of an awakening by Canberra academics and public servants to the developing crises in the Pacific.

APSEG (The Asia and Pacific School of Economics and Government—formerly the National Centre for Development Studies) at the Australian National University, through its *Pacific Economic Bulletin*, has been the only voice analysing Pacific trends and urging reform for growth. The Canberra international relations establishment dismissed the alleged 'doomsdayism' of APSEG's '2010' project that correctly predicted stagnation, misery and insecurity as population growth exceeded economic growth in the Pacific, (Greg Fry, 'Framing the Islands: Knowledge and power in changing Australian images of the South Pacific', *The Contemporary Pacific*, 1997).

The Australia Defence Association called for security assistance to be provided to Solomon Islands when they first requested it in 2002. In June 2003 the Australian Strategic Policy Institute supported intervention in the Solomon Islands in *Our Failing Neighbour—Australia and the Future of the Solomon Islands*, but gave little thought to the economic causes of the Solomon Islands' collapse and none to how the country's economic future should be rebuilt. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *Solomon Islands: Rebuilding an Island Economy* (Canberra, 2004), again failed to analyse the underlying causes of the Islands' economic decline and gave no indication of how rapid growth might be achieved.

Once committed the Australian Federal Police and the Australian Defence Force did their job quickly and efficiently. Australian aid and advisers have reconstituted parliament and the public service, but more than a year after the RAMSI intervention, there is no movement toward property rights, jobs and economic growth. The Solomon Islands have become totally welfare dependent and their prospects remain bleak.

The last 30 years have shown that Australia cannot place any reliance on the international aid organisations in helping the Pacific to grow. Their agendas are dominated by their headquarters' need to appease their Non-Government Organisation critics. The international aid agencies turned toward 'Millennium Development Goals' that seek to mitigate poverty by the distribution of aid funds but ignore production and growth. Asian Development Bank and World Bank funding for productive projects has become negligible. Their staff recognise that the Millennium Goals are not appropriate responses to Pacific needs, but they can do nothing in the face of their headquarters' priorities.

Australia has no choice but to lead aid and development efforts in the Pacific. The increased capacity of the Treasury and Department of Finance to contribute to Australia's efforts for Pacific development have been important in enabling Canberra to contribute positively to Pacific problems. Inter-departmental jealousies and frictions will have to be overcome and academic research will have to be utilised if Canberra is to develop policies that will help the Pacific achieve rapid growth so that Islanders have access to agricultural land, jobs and business opportunities. Crime and civil conflicts can then not just be damped down, but put down. Only if Pacific Islanders can see evidence that they will be able to enjoy healthy, educated and productive lives will our neighbourhood become truly pacific. ♦

Emeritus Professor Helen Hughes, AO, is a Senior Fellow at the Centre for Independent Studies in Sydney.

BEQUESTS TO THE ADA

Have you considered making a donation or bequest to the Australia Defence Association?

The Association runs a very lean operation and every dollar makes a difference. A suitable form of bequest is 'I bequeath the sum of \$___ to the Australia Defence Association (ABN 16 083 007 390)'.

If you have already made a will, you don't have to change it; you can simply make a codicil.

The Association can assist with the provision of will or codicil forms, or referral to a solicitor. Further details may be obtained from <bequests@ada.asn.au>

Rebuilding the

Australian Merchant Navy

David Leach, David Leece, Peter Dent & Douglas McDonald

At a glance ...

- Australia's once strong merchant navy has been reduced to a few specialist ships and can no longer service Australia's coastal trade or the bulk of its exports and imports, let alone provide logistic support to the Australian Defence Force.
- An urgent need to rebuild the merchant fleet is emerging, however, driven by economic, trade security, exclusive economic zone, national security, border protection and defence imperatives.
- Several small nations (eg. Norway, population under 5 million but with 1400 ships) successfully operate large merchant fleets, so it should be possible for Australia to do so again.
- The Commonwealth government, however, would need to lead the rebuilding of the merchant navy by first adopting appropriate policy settings and then investing to catalyse the development of the fleet.
- Two development options are discussed: a large merchant fleet designed to service the bulk of Australia's 600 million tonne annual maritime exports and imports, with defence needs as a secondary role; and, a small merchant fleet focused on defence needs.
- The Commonwealth government should invest in this second option as a first step towards rebuilding the Australian merchant navy.

Current maritime context

As Australia enters the 21st century, there is renewed interest in, and concern for, the world's oceans and a burgeoning of international maritime trade. The 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea enshrined both the principles of a global approach to ocean problems and rights to ocean resources. Fish stocks, however, continue to be over-exploited to the point of collapse; and pollution of marine environments by land-based activities, vessels (including oil spills) and human-induced environmental phenomena (such as 'Asian haze' air pollution and 'red tide' algal blooms), threatens the marine ecosystem and resource sustainability. Concurrently, improved prospects are emerging for harvesting marine non-living resources, such as oil, natural gas, methane and polymetallic sulfides (copper, zinc, iron, gold and silver), including deep seabed resources now under the control of the International Seabed Authority. Indeed, the deep oceans remain largely uncharted territory, but are known to

contain rich pockets of biodiversity rivalling that found in tropical rainforests and to play a key role in regulating the global carbon cycle (they sequester carbon at the surface and store it at depth) and the associated 'greenhouse effect'. Concerted action is needed by governments to give statutory effect to the principles of ecosystem health and sustainability so as to protect, maintain and restore the integrity, resilience and productivity of the oceans.

Against this background, the RAN Sea Power Centre recently issued a timely reminder that Australia is a maritime nation located in one of the most complex open ocean, littoral and archipelagic maritime regions of the world. Australia's exclusive economic zone and continental shelf cover an area of 16 million square kilometres, including tropical, temperate and Antarctic waters and the biophysical resources they contain. Australia is responsible for the second largest maritime zone in the world, including for search and rescue and the guidance of allied shipping in time of crisis.

Even more to the point, the Australian economy is absolutely dependent on shipping. Of our international trade, about 99 per cent by bulk and 73.5 per cent by value is carried by ship, with about 95 per cent of that carried in foreign-flagged vessels. Furthermore, all trade that goes by air, must fly over the sea. It follows that protection of our maritime zone and sea lines of communication are essential to prevent our trade being interdicted and Australia becoming virtually isolated. An adversary could also target tourism, employment and resources, such as offshore oil and gas installations. The maritime nature of the Australian environment also makes it essential that Australia be able to conduct effective and successful maritime operations in support of its military strategy, especially within its region.

In 2003, Captain Alan Pearson, Master Mariner, examined the economic and military value of a merchant navy for Australia. He found that globalisation and the use of open registers (flags of convenience) in recent years have changed the face of merchant shipping worldwide. In Australia, this trend has been reinforced by: the lack of a national shipping policy; the use now of single-voyage permits for coastal trade; and the Commonwealth government's 1996 withdrawal of fiscal support (capital grants, accelerated depreciation etc.). As a result, Australian shipping has all but disappeared and the Australian coastal trade has become dominated by foreign-owned ships. Australian traders, however, have benefited in that they can now select the most economic form of maritime transport yielding the lowest freight rate. Alternatively, Australian exporters can sell their goods free-on-board (FOB), leaving it up to the consignee to provide the shipping.

Nevertheless, Pearson observed that, while Australia, on a strictly commercial basis, may not now need a merchant navy, there appears to be a strong case for one in broader national interest terms, particularly in support of our national security and defence interests. He instanced the political instability in countries to our north and the potential need for merchant shipping to logistically support naval and military deployments in the region, pointing to the Falklands War of 1982 and the East Timor conflict of 1999–2000 as recent examples of the vital role that can be played by ships taken up from trade (STUFT). The United Kingdom and Australia, respectively, would not have been able to undertake those operations had they been unable to immediately requisition the ships needed to provide logistic support from their respective merchant marines. Pearson, however, concluded that, while Australia's maritime doctrine recognises the importance of being able to take up ships from trade in an emergency, 'the hard reality must be faced that Australia's merchant fleet is now largely non-existent'. A change in government policy regarding matters such as taxation,

depreciation, and investment inducements, coupled with increased flexibility in manning, will be needed before there is likely to be a return of shipping to the Australian Register.

An independent review of Australian shipping commissioned by the Australian Shipowners' Association and undertaken by the Hon. John Sharp and the Hon. Peter Morris, former Ministers for Transport in Liberal and Labor Commonwealth governments respectively, was published in September 2003. This review also drew attention to the parlous state of Australia's merchant navy. Despite continuing growth in the Australian seaborne trade, the role of Australian-flagged shipping in servicing Australia's imports and exports continues to diminish—it declined by 5.5 per cent between 2001–02 and 2002–03. The market share achieved by Australian-flagged shipping is now only 1.4 per cent. Thus, the transport revenue from Australia's 564.6 million tonnes of exports and imports is almost entirely lost to Australia's national accounts. In June 2002, there were 54 Australian-flagged vessels, a reduction of 24 over a decade; and the average age of the Australian fleet was 15 years. The review made 12 key recommendations to redress the unsatisfactory situation.

'... while Australia, on a strictly commercial basis, may not now need a merchant navy, there appears to be a strong case for one in broader national interest terms, particularly in support of our national security and defence interests.'

Sharp and Morris noted an apparent inconsistency between the Commonwealth government's policy for coastal shipping (ie. to obtain the cheapest priced shipping services by accessing foreign ships and crews) and its policy of border protection. The United States Government, in contrast, is limiting access to its coastline to vessels and crews from nations regarded as having a high degree of security. Thus, Australia's dependence on lowest-cost foreign shipping with foreign crews not only increases the risk to our own borders, but also risks the loss of access to United States markets.

Sharp and Morris also noted that there may well be a military requirement for an Australian merchant shipping capacity. Shipping industry advice to the inquiry, however, was that the Department of Defence had made no overtures to the industry in connection with Australia's merchant navy capacity. Thus, while the industry accepts that it should support a Defence requirement in a defence emergency, in the absence of any discernible interest from government in this regard, it is not an issue that influences the industry's investment behaviour.

Part of the explanation for this may lie in the 2002 observation by Dr Michael Evans, of the Australian Army's Land Warfare Studies Centre, that a schism developed in the 1980s between Australia's defence policy on the one hand, with its post-Vietnam focus on the direct defence of Australia, and its foreign and trade policy on the other, with its emphasis on enmeshment with Asia, later broadened by globalisation and the end of the Cold War. Australia needs to overcome this continental-maritime divide at the heart of its strategic

culture; reconcile the conundrum of European culture and Asian geography (liminality); and forge a national security policy that re-links diplomacy and defence—one that is simultaneously globally attuned, regionally focused and alliance oriented.

The need for an Australian merchant navy

Within this context, there are many considerations driving a need to rebuild the Australian merchant navy. Principal among them are: economic and trade security imperatives; the need to protect, conserve and sustainably utilise Australia's exclusive economic zone; and national security, border protection and defence imperatives.

Economic and trade security imperatives

Australia's maritime exports and imports were 541 million tonnes and 62 million tonnes, respectively, in 2002–03. Imports and exports now exceed 600 million tonnes of cargo per annum with the freight charges paid to international shipowners now estimated to exceed \$US10 billion per annum. Freight charters of large bulkers, which cost less than \$US20,000 daily in 2002, cost almost \$US100,000 daily in some trades in 2003–04. With the addition of high insurance costs, there are both economic and trade security imperatives for the rebuilding of the Australian merchant navy.

Without a substantial merchant marine capability of its own, Australia is effectively at the mercy of international mercantile marine cartels. This situation makes us vulnerable to disruption of trade, either by refusing service or by setting unacceptably high prices. Australia is also paying overseas interests to transport its freight and denying itself the opportunity to accumulate this revenue within the national accounts. This is already a major cost to the national economy and it is likely to increase and compound annually along with the predicted increase in maritime trade globally.

Exclusive economic zone imperatives

The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea 1982 (UNCLOS) allows coastal states to claim territorial seas (which extend 12 nautical miles from the coastal baseline), a 200 nautical mile exclusive economic zone (EEZ), and a legally defined continental shelf. On ratifying the UNCLOS Treaty, Australia took responsibility for one of the largest marine areas in the world: some 11 million square kilometres, and potentially as much as 16 million square kilometres, depending on the limits of claimable continental shelf that extends beyond the 200 nautical mile EEZ. The Australian Government now puts the total area claimable

under UNCLOS at some 16 million square kilometres.

This zone includes tropical, temperate and Antarctic waters, rich in biodiversity and abiotic resources such as oil, natural gas and minerals. It will constitute essentially a new frontier of exploration, scientific research, management and utilisation in the 21st Century. To protect, conserve, sustainably manage and develop this vast resource will require a merchant marine involvement, much of it involving specialist vessels, on a scale not witnessed heretofore. There is a major opportunity here for Australia to harness its innovative talent and to lead the design, construction and operation of the state-of-the-art ships that will be needed to support management of the EEZ.

National security and border protection imperatives

The 21st century has brought with it renewed concerns about international terrorism and border security. Our ports are particularly vulnerable to terrorist attack and serve as points of entry for illegal cargoes and persons, as the International Ship and Port Facility Code, which is designed to provide a base-level of protection, is easily rendered ineffective by so-minded individuals.

Indeed, as Michael Richardson of the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies in Singapore, recently reported, while the international maritime trading system is the backbone of the modern global economy, the vast global shipping industry (more than 46,000 ships; 2,800 ports; 1.2 million seafarers; numerous port workers) is poorly regulated and is often secretive in its operations, to the extent of concealing the real owners of ships. Al-Qa'eda has publicly stated its desire to disrupt the international maritime trading system and could readily infiltrate the ranks of seafarers, most of whom are sourced from Asia, Eastern Europe and Russia. Many large modern ships are highly automated and can be operated by small crews (less than 20 officers and crew), so it would only take a small number of well-trained terrorists to seize command of a big ship.

The uniform steel containers in which most general cargo is now transported are a security nightmare. Once loaded and sealed, inspection is a problem. The contents of a container can be misrepresented and undeclared items hidden inside with relative ease. This is a made-to-order method of transport for terrorists—just as it is for drug and other contraband smugglers. Some 15 million containers are in circulation and over 230 million move through the world's ports each year. Worldwide, less than one per cent of shipped cargo is screened (five per cent in the United States).

Against this background, the current Australian practice of accessing foreign ships and crews so as to obtain the cheapest-priced shipping services, would appear to constitute a serious threat to national security and to be false economy. In the broader national interest, it would seem to be imperative that ships and crews entering

Australia's coastal waters, and especially its ports, be limited to those from nations known to have a high degree of security. The United States has already adopted such a policy. Implementation of such a policy by Australia would inevitably necessitate rebuilding the Australian merchant navy so as to ensure that adequate vessels of an acceptable security standard were available to carry our maritime trade.

Defence imperatives

During the 20th century, Australia repeatedly needed to draw on its merchant navy to logistically support its defence efforts. During the Boer War, and again in World Wars I and II, Australia drew extensively on its merchant navy.

During the Vietnam War from 1965–1972 the troop transport, HMAS *Sydney* made 22 voyages transporting 15,600 soldiers together with materiel, ammunition and equipment to and from South Vietnam. Two further vessels were taken up from trade: MV *Boonaroo*, a 3,904-ton coastal cargo ship of the Australian National Line, which made two voyages to Vietnam with military cargo in 1966 and 1967; and MV *Jeparit*, a 6341-ton coastal cargo ship also of the Australian National Line, which made 42 voyages to Vietnam with military cargo, including ammunition, equipment and supplies, from 1966 to 1972, and a 43rd voyage with civil aid cargo in 1972. Military supplies and civil aid cargoes carried to Vietnam in *Jeparit*'s 43 voyages totalled 173,820 tons.

Just prior to her second voyage in March 1967, members of the Seamen's Union refused to sail *Boonaroo* to Vietnam, citing as the principal reason the increased cargo of Air Force ordnance. *Boonaroo* was immediately commissioned into the Royal Australian Navy and all her crew, with the exception of two engineer officers with naval reserve commissions, were replaced by Royal Australian Navy officers and sailors. In March 1967, Seaman's Union members also refused to man *Jeparit*, but members of other maritime unions remained on board, so the 18 members of the Seamen's Union were replaced by one officer and 17 ratings of the Royal Australian Navy. Subsequently, as a consequence of the refusal of Sydney Waterside Workers to work *Jeparit* in December 1969, *Jeparit* was commissioned into the Royal Australian Navy. The ship's master, Captain A.A.C. Philip, was commissioned as a commander in the Royal Australian Naval Volunteer Reserve. The Naval detachment remained on board along with 19 civilian crew. The ship, henceforth, was loaded and unloaded by Service personnel.

More recently, HMAS *Jervis Bay*, a fast catamaran, was leased and crewed by the Navy for the East Timor conflict (1999–2000) and played a vital role in troop deployment and logistic re-supply of our forces. Additionally, heavy equipment was carried in seven merchant vessels which were taken up from trade (three Danish-owned self-discharging general cargo ships (MV *Arktis Atlantic*, 9000 tonnes; MV *Baltimar Satin*, 9000 tonnes; MV *Svendborg*

Guardian, 7500 tonnes); two Perkin barges (similar to a landing craft, mechanised—LCM8) obtained in Darwin; and two ocean-going tugs obtained in Western Australia. New Zealand also took up a Dutch general cargo ship from trade for the operation, the MV *Edam Gracht*. The availability of such vessels in future is uncertain at best.

Similarly, in the Falklands War in 1982, the Royal Navy took some 50 ships up from trade, including: three liners (*Canberra*, *Queen Elizabeth II*, *Uganda*); four passenger/general cargo ships; 15 container and general cargo ships; 15 tankers; five deep-sea trawlers (operated as Royal Navy mine counter-measures vessels); four offshore support vessels; three tugs; and one cable ship. This was in addition to 22 Royal Fleet Auxiliary ships (6 logistic landing ships, 10 fleet and support tankers, 5 supply ships, and one helicopter support ship) and two Royal Maritime Auxiliary Service ships (one heavy-lift salvage ship and one long-range salvage tug).

The RAN's capstone doctrine manual, *Australian Maritime Doctrine, 2000*, notes: 'Support capabilities can be improved by taking merchant ships up from trade and converting them to the extent required by the operation. These vessels cannot replicate the capabilities of built-for-the-purpose replenishment units, but they can play a vital role in maximising the capacity of the latter by acting as resupply units between shore bases and the operational area. If vessels are to be taken up from trade, then mechanisms need to exist for their identification within the national register and charter or requisitioning. In these circumstances, the possession of a substantial national flag merchant fleet can be an important strategic advantage. Merchant vessels can also be employed to provide sea lift for the movement of land forces and their logistic support. Nations with smaller merchant fleets may be forced to purchase or charter ships for these purposes from overseas sources, an expedient that can be difficult to achieve in emergencies'.

Sharp and Morris concluded, therefore, that it is puzzling that Defence has not encouraged Australian investment in the shipping industry and is increasingly outsourcing traditional tasks that require maritime skills and expertise, such as ship provedoring, port management, crew training and through-life vessel support services.

The Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade of the Commonwealth Parliament recommended in June 2004 that the government, as a matter of urgency, should respond to the measures proposed by Sharp and Morris. It should state whether or not it intends to introduce an Australian shipping policy and outline the role of merchant shipping and its support for defence objectives.

Small nations with large merchant fleets

Having established the need to rebuild the Australian merchant navy and before considering how this might be done, it should be noted that several small nations have large merchant fleets (Table 1).

Country	Population (million)	Tankers carriers	Bulk ships	Container cargo	General ships	Passenger	Total
Greece	10	787	1336	136	765	201	3225
Norway	5	479	177	23	571	123	1373
Singapore	4	321	91	127	155	6	700
Denmark	5	168	43	94	286	31	622
Hong Kong	7	120	239	60	118	13	550
Taiwan	22	34	148	197	126	3	508
Sweden	9	134	11	1	169	29	344
Saudi Arabia	15	71	1	5	25	7	109

Table 1: Small nations that control large merchant fleets. Data in each category, except population, are the number of ships over 1,000 Gross Registered Tons
(Data obtained from ISL 2003).

The experience of Norway is particularly instructive. Norway is one of the world's four largest shipping nations, yet it has a population of only 4.5 million, who enjoy a high standard of living (gross domestic product per head \$US36,000 cf. Australia \$US20,340). It has a full suite of maritime industries, including shipowners; shipyards; maritime research; design and engineering; a ship classification society; and specialised marine brokers, banks, law firms, insurers and underwriters. Its ship-owning and operating companies operate some 1400 vessels, which total 48 million deadweight tons, 75 per cent of which fly the Norwegian flag, while many have largely foreign crews. The Norwegian controlled fleet represents approximately 10 per cent of the world's total merchant fleet and is strongly represented in certain trades that require relatively complex, specialised vessels. For example, Norwegian companies control approximately:

- 23 per cent of the world's cruise vessels
- 19 per cent of the world's gas carriers
- 19 per cent of the world's chemical tankers
- 10.5 per cent of the world's crude oil tankers.

Norway is also one of the leading nations in the offshore oil industry, with a fleet of 200 offshore service vessels, including specialist supply, seismic, pipe-laying and other service vessels—the second largest such fleet in the world—plus an additional 75 mobile offshore units (jack-up and semi-submersible rigs).

Australia, by contrast, which has four times the population of Norway and the benefit of a 600 million tonnes maritime cargo base, no longer has an effective merchant navy. Given that several small nations successfully operate large merchant fleets, it should be possible for Australia to do so again in response to the renewed need.

Rebuilding the Australian merchant navy

Policy settings

The first step to rebuilding the Australian merchant navy will be to ensure that Commonwealth government and

shipping industry policy settings are appropriate. To this end, Sharp and Morris made 12 recommendations designed to encourage new investment in Australian-flagged shipping. Among them were:

- The current atmosphere of change and uncertainty in government policy and regulation must be replaced by a regulatory framework that is clear, is consistent over time and is applied equally to all participants. Barriers to competition by Australians, including those in the Customs Act, must be removed.
- The *Navigation Act 1912*, particularly provisions that regulate the conduct of coastal shipping, and the *Shipping Registration Act 1981*, section 12 especially, should be reviewed.
- Where the national interest is a factor in developing or applying shipping policies, government should clearly identify the process by which national interest is determined and give those affected adequate opportunity to contribute.
- Australian resident taxpayers serving in international trading vessels should be treated under the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1936* in the same way as other Australians employed in a foreign country. Inconsistent application of the Act in this regard should be corrected.
- Employees and employers should discuss the possibility of a more flexible range of occupations and skill levels on board ship so as to enable maintenance to be undertaken on board at reasonable cost.
- Opportunities should be explored to crew vessels in new trades with a combination of Australian seafarers and foreign seafarers. This would create training, job and career opportunities for Australians and enhance the skills base of qualified Australians.
- The Commonwealth government's policy for coastal shipping (ie. to obtain the cheapest priced shipping services by accessing foreign ships) is inconsistent with its policy of strengthening border protection and stands in contrast with the border protection policy of the United States government, which permits only vessels and crew from nations regarded as having a high degree of security access to its coastline.

- There is need for skilled seafarers for a wide range of occupations in the industry and for an industry forum (eg. National Maritime Industry Training Council) to progress and enhance career paths and competencies. Existing Commonwealth funding could be more effectively channelled to this end.
- The participants should investigate alternative forms of coverage under the *Seafarers' Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1992* with a view to reducing the cost of providing comparable cover. They should also rectify negative perceptions of the performance of the industry.
- The introduction of tonnage-based company tax should be urgently considered as an alternative to traditional company tax, as it has led to revitalisation of the shipping industry in other countries that have adopted such a system.

Options

Once the Commonwealth government has the appropriate policy settings in place, attention may turn to the types of merchant vessel needed and how they might be owned, funded and crewed. Two options are discussed below:

- A large, Australian owned, but primarily foreign funded, merchant fleet with Australian officers and mixed (multi-national) crews, with a mix of specialist and multi-purpose vessels (including some vessels suitable for providing defence logistics support).
- A small merchant fleet comprised of a few multi-purpose merchant trading vessels, all suitable for providing defence logistics support and each owned and funded by the Commonwealth government and crewed by Royal Australian Naval Reserve personnel.

Option 1: A large merchant fleet with Defence needs as a secondary role. One option would be to develop a large merchant fleet designed both to service the bulk of Australia's maritime exports and imports and to trade among international ports. The fleet would consist of both general-purpose and specialist cargo vessels, with a portion (say 1 in 10) of the general-purpose vessels specifically designed to meet defence logistic-support needs. The specialist vessels, for example, could include large tankers designed to transport Australian liquid gas from the North-West Shelf to China. The fleet would be owned by the Australian shipping industry with or without some Commonwealth government equity. The fleet, however, would be funded largely via foreign loans based on the expected cargo tonnages to be carried. The government, in conjunction with industry, would develop an elite force of graduate seafarers through the Maritime Academy in Tasmania to provide the officers and other specialist personnel required. Other crew would be drawn from the Australian and international markets as needed.

Given, however, that Australian shipping owners have

virtually abandoned the industry, with even traditionally major players having dropped shipping as an owned and operated part of their business, this option may well prove difficult for the government to initiate. A more modest approach may prove more practicable, either as an end in itself or as the first stage in the eventual development of a large merchant fleet.

Option 2: A small merchant fleet focused on Defence needs. A more modest option would be to build a few multi-purpose merchant trading vessels, all of which would be suitable for providing defence logistics support. Each vessel would be owned and funded by the Commonwealth government and crewed solely by Australian merchant mariners, all of whom would be Royal Australian Naval Reserve personnel. The intention would be for the fleet to become self-funding over time, by carrying a portion of Australia's coastal and export/import trade. The initial aim might be to develop a fleet of say 10 vessels and 500 crew within 10 years.

We consider that the multi-purpose merchant trading vessels would need to be twin-screw vessels of about 8000 Gross Registered Tons (GRT), crewed in accordance with modern merchant shipping principles of minimum crew. The ships would need sufficient sea-keeping qualities to enable them to resupply Australia's Antarctic bases and patrol the Southern Ocean EEZ, if needed, and should be able to load and unload either at port or at sea by virtue of heavy-lift gantry style cranes. They would also need a stern helicopter landing stage and the capacity to embark and store in a hanger a general purpose helicopter (eg. Sea Hawk). They would need some capacity to protect themselves from air and surface attack and also be able to apprehend small vessels. They should be able to carry around 600 Army troops in dormitory-style accommodation, in addition to their crew.

As they came on line, a ship might be home-based at each of Darwin, Perth, Hobart and Townsville, with subsequent ships home-based in Sydney. While the primary role of these ships would be to provide logistics support to the Australian Defence Force when required, this requirement probably would only arise intermittently. Accordingly, the ships normally would perform a mercantile function among Australian and international ports in our region, and should be able to undertake some border protection, EEZ surveillance and disaster relief (eg. Darwin after Cyclone Tracy in 1974) tasks concurrently.

There may also be a case for dedicating a few of these vessels solely to full-time naval support. If so, these vessels could be owned by Navy and function in a manner analogous to the British Royal Fleet Auxiliary.

Major issues to be resolved

Before either of the above options could be given effect, there would be several significant issues to be resolved. Foremost among these would be considerations relating to employment relations, government incentives and free trade agreements.

It would be important that crews of Australian-owned and operated vessels were fairly remunerated and enjoyed employment conditions in accordance with Australian community standards, yet within the context that a vessel's overall collective employment costs were internationally competitive. Given the low manning levels of modern ships, an appropriate balance should be achievable, but there would undoubtedly be challenges to overcome. Also, any requirement that certain vessels be crewed only by Naval Reserve personnel might require that the vessels in question be commissioned as naval auxiliaries.

The government may wish to use various types of incentive to encourage private investment in the rebuilt Australian merchant navy, including the exercise of certain preferences in favour of Australian-owned and operated shipping. Such incentives as may be proposed, however, would need to be examined in the light of any applicable free-trade agreements. Broader national interest considerations, including national security and defence requirements, might provide sufficient justification for any necessary government incentives.

Conclusion

While to economic rationalists in the late 20th century the Australian merchant navy seemed a luxury, and while sectional interests have gained short-term economic benefits from its demise, it is clear at the beginning of the 21st century that the Australian merchant navy needs to be rebuilt in the broader national interest. Key drivers for the rebuilding of the merchant navy include: economic, trade security, exclusive economic zone, national security, border protection and defence imperatives.

The first step to this end is for the Commonwealth government to readjust its relevant policy settings in line

with the recommendations of Sharp and Morris so as to make private investment in an Australian merchant marine attractive again.

There is also a need for direct Commonwealth government investment, at least to initiate the rebuilding, if not in the longer term. One option would be for government and private investment in a large merchant fleet designed both to service the bulk of Australia's maritime exports and imports and to trade among international ports. A small portion of this fleet would consist of general-purpose cargo vessels specifically designed to meet defence logistic-support needs. Several small nations operate comparable fleets, demonstrating that that this would not be an unrealistic objective for Australia.

A less ambitious option would be for the government to build, own and operate a few multi-purpose merchant trading vessels, all of which would be suitable for providing defence logistics support, and to crew them with Royal Australian Naval Reserve personnel. We consider that the Commonwealth government should adopt this second option as a first step towards rebuilding the Australian merchant navy. ♦

Vice Admiral David Leach, AC, CBE, LVO, RAN (Retd) was Chief of the Naval Staff from 1982–1985. Brigadier David Leece, PSM, RFD, ED, PhD (Retd) served in the Army Reserve 1960–95 and commanded 8th Brigade 1988–1990. In civil life he was a research scientist and public administrator. Mr Peter Dent is a retired expatriate shipping executive. Mr Douglas McDonald was an officer in the Australian Merchant Navy during World War II. This article, together with footnotes and detailed references, was first published in 'United Service', the Journal of The Royal United Service Institution of New South Wales (Vol. 55, No. 3, October 2004).

LEGACY

Caring for the families of deceased veterans since 1923

Our world has been changed by terrorism and other threats and the defence force is increasingly being called on to defend our way of life.

In this hazardous environment Legacy's promise to our Service personnel is that, should the worst happen, Legacy will be there to care for their family—now and for decades ahead. Across Australia, Legacy cares for some 133,000 widows and over 1800 children and disabled dependants of our veterans.

Legacy stands ready today to help the families of all veterans who die in war and peacekeeping operations or as a result of that service. We also help the families of full-time and part-time members of the Australian Defence Force who lose their lives on hazardous service or in training for war. If you want to know more about Legacy and its work, or want to help in our special 'Legacy of Care'—we'd like to hear from you.

Telephone: 1800 444 041

Website: www.legacy.com.au



The ASLAV in Iraq

Tim Hales

The Australian Army uses the ASLAV as a cavalry vehicle. The traditional armoured vehicle design principles of firepower, protection and manoeuvrability are adapted in favour of making the ASLAV a light and fast vehicle, with an advanced sensor suite and weapon system that can ‘punch above its weight’ at stand-off ranges.

In the traditional warfighting role the cavalry force operates forward of friendly forces on the battlefield, obtaining information, locating and testing enemy dispositions, strengths and reactions and ultimately their intent. An ASLAV-equipped cavalry force is also designed to be powerful enough to exploit any tactical advantage it uncovers.

Key to the cavalry role is adaptability. From medium reconnaissance-in-force operations to various security tasks, the vehicle and its crews are expected to operate with little support for extended periods and be capable of rapidly re-tasking to adapt to changing battlefield situations or conditions. To achieve this, ASLAV crews are well versed in the art of manoeuvre—placing yourself in a position of advantage in relation to the enemy. A cavalry force is also trained to conduct security tasks such as convoy or VIP escort, route reconnaissance, vehicle check points and establishing mounted and dismounted observation posts.

With regards to its use in Iraq, the cavalry vehicle traits of the ASLAV allow it to readily adapt to force protection roles. It is capable of highway speeds, can operate within traffic and also affords significant protection to crews and passengers. The Security Detachment ASLAVs in Iraq undertake typical bread-and-butter cavalry tasks: convoy escort, VIP protection, vehicle patrols, APC tasks, static defence requirements, quick reaction force and battlefield clearance. The vehicles are used extensively, by day and night, and a typical day for a vehicle and its crew may include up to eight different tasks, with a single vehicle typically driving 5000–8000km in a month.

Insurgent activities in Iraq include the use of improvised explosive devices (IED), vehicle-borne IEDs (VBIED); RPG, rocket and mortar attacks; drive-by shootings and ambushing. Disguised and hidden IEDs are a significant threat and they can range from simple, low-cost devices such as an artillery shell with a hole drilled in the fuse for a detonator, through to more complex and purpose-built

shaped-charge devices. The VBIED attack on an ASLAV patrol on 25 October 2004, for example, was a particularly powerful blast 1.5–2 metres from a passing ASLAV-25.

Vehicle protection

In terms of protection the Army has not taken a purely ‘weld on more steel’ approach. It has instead applied the layered approach required for protecting armoured vehicles overall, adopting (in priority) the don’t be seen, don’t be targeted, don’t be hit, don’t be penetrated, don’t be a casualty approach.

Most important ASLAV protection measure—tactical manoeuvre. ASLAV protection is not simply a function of how thick the armour is. The most important protective feature of the ASLAV is its considerable ability for tactical manoeuvre (as distinct from ‘movement’) both individually and in multi-vehicle patrols. This involves the capabilities of both the crews and their vehicles. Highly-trained crews can employ tactics and drills to minimise exposure to threats and suppress those threats that occur. The ASLAV’s high road speed, dash speed and 8-wheel drive performance across difficult terrain mean the vehicle can be manoeuvred and fought by its crew in reaction to a situation—assuming of course the vehicle and its crew survive the initial contact with the enemy. These proactive and reactive tactical manoeuvres are based upon several individual vehicle and vehicle group drills. The effect is that an individual vehicle is always supporting a fellow vehicle or dismounted soldier, and being supported by a fellow vehicle or soldier. This support reaches out through long effective weapon ranges from a stabilised turret with day, thermal imaging and image intensification sights (in the ASLAV-25).

Second most important protection measure—a purpose-designed vehicle. Second to tactical manoeuvre is the structural design of the vehicle. All ASLAV variants have been designed as a protected system with complementary design features. These include the welding techniques used to construct the monocoque hull and the high-hardness steel armour itself, through to the run-flat tyres and the ability of the vehicle to operate without all eight wheels functioning, either with drive to a wheel set removed, a damaged wheel chained up, or some wheels removed entirely. Integral protective measures inside the vehicle include the automatic fire extinguisher system. This

is a network of rapid discharge fire bottles and optical sensors that can detect a fire within 10 milliseconds, and a control unit that can not only put out a vehicle fire within 250 milliseconds but suppress an explosion before it affects the crew.

Additional protection measures introduced during 2004 for the ASLAVs deployed to Iraq include:

- **Spall Liners.** ASLAV vehicles were initially deployed with spall curtains and more recently Armatec contact spall liners. The Armatec spall liner proved to be the best commercial-of-the-shelf solution, incorporating latest generation material and providing a significant reduction of behind armour effects from penetrative warheads and IEDs. An additional benefit of a contact spall liner is that it reinforces the ballistic protection already provided by the vehicle's hull armour. Even with the spall liners fitted, the vehicle still has the capacity to absorb the extra weight of additional passive armour and not have its mobility affected.
- **Bar Armour System.** The new Bar Armour System (BAS) concept (similar to that already fitted to US Army Stryker 8x8s in Iraq) is currently being trialled for fitting to the ASLAV and has been found a very viable protection measure. Despite the large footprint of the system it still allows a vehicle to be used in traffic and constrained urban environments. A key consideration is to ensure the vehicle maintains its on-road performance; this is important as the ASLAV's high speed and agility is itself a key survivability feature. The system trialled to date is light yet durable, and allows the ASLAV to reach its top speed, a respectable dash speed and maintain suspension response to conduct violent manoeuvres where required. The system itself is easily fitted by the crew and has a simple modular construction that can be readily repaired if required.
- **Remote Weapon Station.** The Kongsberg Remote Weapon Station (RWS) was purchased in mid-2004 for use in Iraq to address a known deficiency in the ASLAV-PC; the vehicle crew commander being required to stand in his cupola with his body exposed from the waist up in order to use the vehicle's pintle-mounted 12.7mm heavy machine gun (HMG). The RWS can mount a 12.7mm HMG, 40mm automatic grenade launcher (AGL) or Javelin anti-armour missile. It provides the crew commander the freedom to patrol arcs with the RWS by means of a thumb control joystick, while positioning himself to best maintain situational awareness for driving in traffic or manoeuvring in contact. A large screen display provides all sighting information and incorporates day camera and thermal camera images. The system enables targets to be engaged with first round hits at the maximum effective range of the attached weapon and provides a precision lethality with the 12.7mm HMG that has not been seen before in Australian Army service. The 40mm AGL is a particularly impressive suppression weapon. With an effective range of over 2000m against area targets and a corresponding day or night sighting system, the 40mm AGL can pro-

vide a large volume of accurate fire in the event of an ambush or to provide suppression fire for dismounted elements.

- **Personal Protection.** Vehicle crews have been issued with body armour and ballistic protection goggles in addition to their standard crew helmets. The ballistic goggles proved their worth in the 25 October attack, saving the crew commander's eyesight.

In Iraq the ASLAV has adapted well to operations in the complex terrain of a major city. While the 'toughness' of its skin has been increased with the addition of spall liners, BAS and getting an ASLAV-PC crew commander out of harm's way with a RWS, these simply augment the protection already inherent in a well-designed vehicle. These measures in turn are supplemented by the protection offered by a crew commander's situational awareness, supported vehicle movement, and the ability for that crew commander to put his vehicle where his patrol needs him in relation to the enemy and a developing contact.

A 13-tonne ASLAV-25 moving at highway speed searching for and tracking potential targets from a stabilised turret is a formidable sight to anyone on the ground and its ability to psychologically intimidate should not be underestimated. ♦

Captain Tim Hales is a Project Manager with the ASLAV Project in Land Systems Division of the Defence Materiel Organisation.

The vehicles

Three ASLAV variants have been deployed to Iraq:

- The ASLAV-25 has a two-man electric-drive turret which provides the latest generation thermal-imaging and image-intensification sights, together with a laser rangefinder and integrated navigation system. The turret is armed with a fully stabilised 25mm M242 Bushmaster cannon and two 7.62mm machine guns, one co-axial and one pintle mounted. This vehicle can carry an additional six troops if required.
- The ASLAV-PC (personnel carrier) is capable of carrying a nine-man section plus the crew of two. For Iraq the vehicle has been fitted with the recently procured Kongsberg RWS. This provides protection and additional sights for the crew commander while significantly increasing the lethality of the vehicle.
- The ASLAV-F (fitters) variant is used for the immediate recovery and engineering support of damaged vehicles.

The taking of Fallujah:

Early insights and observations

Ian Bostock

Located around 65km west of Baghdad and quite concentrated for the size of its population (approximately 3km wide by 3.5km long), is the city of Fallujah. The city became a no-go area for US forces when an April 2004 operation, fought over three weeks by around 2000 US Marines, was prematurely called off by Washington due to outcries from Sunni and Shiite Iraqis over unconfirmed reports of civilian casualties.

In the months that followed it became the centrepiece of Sunni resistance and quite probably the nerve centre for insurgent activities across the whole of Iraq. On 8 November 2004 US forces returned in strength to retake Fallujah, or more correctly, to 'assist' Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) in eliminating insurgent elements and return a form of recognised official governance to the city.

By broadcasting its intentions to launch an attack on the city (in order to allow its residents to leave before operations began) the interim Iraqi government and US commanders inevitably presented insurgents with the choice of either staying to prepare their defence or escaping to fight another day. Some insurgents, it was acknowledged, had been able to flee to safety, including the alleged insurgent mastermind Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. Up to 80 per cent of the city's 300,000 residents are believed to have fled ahead of the assault.

Operation Phantom Fury took just six days to take control of the city, which was officially declared liberated after seven days of fighting. Of the 20,000 US troops that had massed outside the city since mid October, at least 10,000 of these entered the city on 8 November, supported by around 2000 coalition-trained ISF troops. Most of the Marines deployed for the operation did not take part in the first assault on Fallujah in April. This time, US forces had control of 70 per cent of the city inside three days, but were still encountering isolated pockets of resistance as of 21 November.

As Commander 1st Marine Division Major General Richard Natonski told journalists on 15 November: 'We had the green light this time and we went all the way. We learned we can't do it piecemeal. When we go in, we go all the way through.'

Building from 7 November, the preliminary bombardment of Fallujah was conducted by artillery and air strikes, and targeted known command posts, fortified positions, street barricades and safe houses using coordinates and information provided by various intelligence sources. It started to intensify shortly before jump off time. By 5pm on the first day (8 November), all electrical power to the city had been cut off.

According to the commander of US forces in Iraq, General George Casey, the expectation was that the insurgents would probably fall back from an outer ring of defences and withdraw toward the city centre, leaving a vast minefield of improvised explosive devices (IED) to slow the progress of US forces.

The cordon around Fallujah was much tighter this time than in April, when numerous gaps in US lines were

Aerial firepower

USMC F/A-18D Hornets operating out of Al Asad successfully used the GPS-guided, all-weather Joint Direct Attack Munition (JDAM) to destroy different target types found in Fallujah. These included 2000lb GBU-31 JDAMs with the Mk 84 warhead for soft targets and the BLU-109 'bunker buster' warhead for hardened and/or buried targets. Where reduced collateral damage was desirable (for instance, in confined residential areas), 500lb GBU-38 JDAMs with the Mk 82 and BLU-111 warheads were used. The 1000lb GBU-32 JDAM with Mk 83 and BLU-110 warheads was also dropped.

The US also used armed UAVs, with at least one MQ-1 Predator firing a Hellfire air-to-ground missile to destroy an anti-aircraft gun.

exploited by insurgent gun runners to keep fighters supplied with ammunition and weapons. The borders with Syria and Jordan were also sealed, allowing trucks carrying food and emergency supplies only to pass through. All roads into and out of Fallujah and the provincial capital of Ramadi, 48km to the west, were also shut down

In addition to resistance inside the city itself, the insurgents reportedly planned to harass US lines from the rear and flanks and commence a wave of attacks in other cities to divert US attention and resources away from the main game in Fallujah.

US forces wrested the city from insurgents house-by-house, building-by-building; clashing with small groups of enemy, some as many as a dozen strong, in often protracted firefights. Reports indicate entire squads (section equivalent) of Marines, complete with full packs, were seen jumping from rooftop to rooftop during the fighting. Fighting was so close at times that Marines were at risk from shrapnel when calling in air strikes and artillery fire support. The possibility that troops might find hostages in buildings that they entered forcefully added another layer of uncertainty to the fighting for US troops.

A lot of the fighting was against small teams of insurgents employing predominantly shoot-and-scoot tactics rather than set-piece battles, popping up to fire RPGs and machine guns and then disappearing down alleyways, between buildings or behind cover. They continued to fight in small groups without much coherence. At least one truck was intercepted on a road carrying an RPG and a mortar. Overall, resistance was not as fierce as expected. US forces clearly made maximum use of combined arms teams.

Some US Army elements that penetrated ahead of the main force on the opening day's assault found themselves isolated for a short period from the main force, whereupon they took fire from snipers concealed in the honeycomb of masonry buildings and rubble surrounding them.

Often search and destroy operations were reactionary, as US forces generally only knew of the whereabouts of the enemy once they had been fired upon. Unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) often vectored sniper-hunting teams to a specific location, whereupon whole buildings were targeted.

Enemy small arms, sniper and RPG fire came from rooftops, mosques (of which there are at least 200 in Fallujah), cemeteries, water towers, warehouses and apartment complexes. Contrary to the laws of war many mosques were used by the insurgents as command centres or for other warlike purposes. One such mosque saw several M1A1 Abrams main battle tanks (MBT) called in to fire at least eight 120mm rounds into its perimeter, followed by a dozen 155mm rounds from USMC M-198 towed howitzers.

US forces found it very difficult to locate insurgent snipers in buildings as they could effectively hide in the back of a room, able to pin down US troops without giving away their own position. By standing back 1.5–2 metres from the window in a darkened room, or one in heavy shadow, the muzzle flash was very hard to pick up even with thermal imaging gear. Because of this, vast

quantities of ammunition were expended by US troops trying to kill snipers.

Overwhelming displays of firepower by US forces were not limited to 'digging out' enemy snipers. To get at insurgents holed up in two three-story buildings along Highway 10, for instance, Marines called in two air strikes, which dropped 500lb bombs, an artillery strike which delivered some 35 rounds of 155mm projectiles, 10 rounds from the 120mm main armaments of M1A1 Abrams MBTs and an estimated 30,000 rounds from individual small arms.

Fire from rockets [RPGs], mortars and assault rifles would lash out at the Americans from seemingly deserted buildings until heavy return fire destroyed them one by one, leaving only smoking ruins. Then the firing would start from another direction.

(New York Times, 9 Nov 2004)

Entry to buildings was gained via the time-honored tradition of kicking the door in or with shotguns (probably firing slug rounds), door charges and sledgehammers.

On day two of the operation, USMC Hornets and AH-1W Cobra and US Army AH-64 Apache attack helicopters targeted insurgent strongholds and raked the streets with 20mm and 30mm cannon fire and 70mm unguided rockets just one or two blocks ahead of the advancing Marines. USAF AC-130 Spectre gunships were also used, targeting insurgent positions with 105mm howitzer and 25mm and 40mm cannon fire.

US Army M2/M3 Bradley infantry fighting vehicles and USMC LAV-25 8x8s used their 25mm cannons to kill and flush out insurgents behind cover, hardened structures and earth berms. HMMWVs (High Mobility Multi-purpose Wheeled Vehicles) equipped with M134D Miniguns firing at 3000 rounds per minute—a ground weapon system relatively new to the USMC inventory—were used extensively where available; responding to sightings of the enemy by blanketing a whole area with 7.62mm fire.

Artillery bombardments and air strikes were often halted during the night to avoid hitting friendly forces that may have taken up positions along the forward edge of the battle area. Secondary explosions that followed air strikes or artillery bombardments generally indicated that stocks of ammunition or explosives had been hit.

UAVs, artillery spotters and ground controllers tracked insurgents from above and ground level, co-ordinating and directing air strikes and artillery bombardments. UAVs relayed live video footage back to command centres for disseminating to Marines on the ground. To combat this, the insurgents attempted to disguise their movements and often used sheets or rugs hung between buildings or across alleys under which they could scurry unseen from above.

The mere perception that UAVs were overhead watching their every move at all times in all areas, irrespective of whether that was actually the case, was a key psychological tool used by US forces, and had the desired effect of modifying the modus operandi of insurgents at the tactical level. As part of dedicated psychological operations, US

forces made use of trucks playing various sounds and AC/DC tunes at full volume to irritate the insurgents.

Attached to USMC units and armed with AK-47 assault rifles, ISF troops were tasked mostly with clearance and security operations in conjunction with US Marines once fighting in the immediate vicinity had ceased. The ISF troops were particularly valuable in being able to instantly recognise insurgents and the nationality of individuals without hearing them speak and were preferred when a mosque had to be cleared.

Estimated to have been 2000–3000 strong, the insurgents in Fallujah are thought to have comprised remnants of Saddam Hussein's Ba'ath Party and its military wing; foreign jihadis; Sunni fundamentalists; local tribal fighters; al Qa'eda operatives; agents from neighbouring countries; and criminal elements.

Insurgents appeared to prefer staying fluid, moving around the city to reinforce positions as they were attacked by US forces. It is not clear whether this indicated planning and organisation or its opposite. Tactics used by the insurgents include attempting to coerce US troops into ambushes, and classic hit-and-run, shoot-and-scoot tactics, although a number fought from well-prepared trenches. A small number were mounted in civilian vehicles (sedans and pick-ups). As an apparent deception tactic, some insurgents were found wearing Iraqi National Guard uniforms, prompting US troops to consider any Iraqi troops not seen with US soldiers to be hostile.

During night fighting, the insurgents fired red and blue flares to temporarily blind those US troops using night-vision equipment (NVE), giving them a chance to change positions or withdraw. Many insurgents initiated contacts in the dimly lit hours around dawn and dusk, where the weak natural light offset their opponent's heavy use of NVE.

The challenge is that the battlefield is three-dimensional. Not only do you have to look in front of you and behind you, but also above you and below you, even subterranean.

(USMC Captain, *New York Times*, 8 Nov 2004)

Aptly described as a warren of debris and rubble-strewn streets, the city concealed extensive tunnel systems used by the insurgents to dart between safe houses out of sight of UAVs on watch overhead. US forces located a bunker with reinforced interconnecting tunnels, which led to stores of ammunition and weapons, including an anti-aircraft gun (which presumably could also have been used in the ground-to-ground role if required), bunk beds and a truck.

In a 10-day period, a single Marine unit found 91 weapon caches and 431 IEDs in just one sector of Fallujah. The commercial–industrial Sinai neighbourhood in the south of the city, with its auto repair garages, workshops and light engineering shops, was found to conceal innumerable weapon caches and bomb-making facilities.

Some insurgents appeared to be better equipped than others and were wearing flak jackets; a number wore vests packed with explosives. On numerous occasions, insurgents appeared not to have suffered from a shortage of ammunition, with reports citing tens of thousands of rounds incoming at US troops from heavily defended positions. Insurgents also made prodigious use of mortars, both makeshift and conventional, with one Marine foot patrol in search of weapon caches turning up no less than 200 mortars of various calibres.

Insurgents often waved white flags to signal their surrender, but as US troops approached would pick up weapons again and open fire. Black flags were used as a means of communicating and to call forth fighters to mass for an attack and concentrate fire on US forces.

Loudspeakers were used by the insurgents at mosques throughout the city to encourage their comrades, blaring 'Prepare for jihad!' and 'God is great!'.

In almost every single mosque in Fallujah we have found an arms cache. We have found IED-making facilities. We have found fortifications. We've been shot at by snipers from minarets.

(Maj Gen Richard Natonski,
Commander 1st Marine Division)

As expected, booby traps were prolific. Walls were set with explosives and entire buildings laced with booby traps, particularly around traditional entry points such as doors and windows. IEDs were everywhere and the threat they posed ever-present, with many found buried in the ground, concealed in debris, car hulks etc.

As late as 12 days after the start of operations, reports indicated that Marines were engaging insurgents who had earlier escaped the city and then re-entered it by swimming across the Euphrates River to the west and into the previously die-hard insurgent district of Jolan in the northwest sector. One group of insurgents were intercepted fleeing the city by boat and were killed by armed helicopters.

An estimated 1200–1600 insurgents had been killed in Fallujah by 16 November. Some 500–550 insurgents were captured, including 10 Iranians, a Saudi, a Sudanese, an Egyptian and a Jordanian.

At time of writing, 54 US and about 10 ISF personnel had been killed. This total includes two Marines who drowned when the bulldozer they were driving overturned into the Euphrates River. At the height of the fighting, hospital staff at the US military's Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany received 69 wounded US personnel on 10 November and 102 wounded on 11 November. By 25 November US wounded in Fallujah totalled 850. ♦

Ian Bostock is an independent defence analyst and the Australian correspondent for Jane's defence magazines. He is also on the Board of Directors of the ADA.

Goodbye Cobber, God Bless You: The Fatal Charge of the Light Horse, Gallipoli, August 7th, 1915

John Hamilton

Reviewed by Dr Michael McKernan



Is there a sadder Australian battlefield anywhere in the world than the Nek? On a good day it is also one of the most beautiful. Flowers in profusion, a bit of lawn, trees. A view down a long narrow gully to Anzac Cove, or, to the right, across a patterned plain to Suvla Bay. The plain framed on one side by low, gentle, blue hills. Yet even now, it seems, few people go there. They'll make a beeline for Anzac Cove, walk up to Lone Pine, walk along the road to Quinn's Post, but perhaps not the Nek.

Apart from the beauty there is not much to see at the Nek. There are only ten gravestones in the little cemetery there, in two sets of five. Nothing dramatic here, nothing to catch the eye of the visitor, but for the beauty. I have stood there reading aloud to those who have travelled with me Charles Bean's account of the futile charge on 7 August 1915 and I have seen people flinch, as if someone is about to hit them. The place does that, and the story. The sheer physical beauty of the place and the awful reality of the senseless slaughter that happened there. The senseless slaughter of lovely young Australian soldiers.

But any visitor to a battlefield must come prepared to confront young death. What makes the Nek stand out from all the rest is the awful inevitability of it all. The sense, even now, that somehow we can call it off, stop the slaughter, the useless waste of innocent life. In the last image in Peter Weir's *Gallipoli*; a pocket-watch moves to the appointed time, a whistle blows, men run to their death. And again; and again. Someone I know laughed at the scene in the cinema. It is so terrible that it is simply confusing to know what to do. Stop that, you want to say, as if talking to a child about to grab something hot.

I would hate to write a book about the Nek. Peter Burness, of the Australian War Memorial, did and very well, too, in 1996, and now John Hamilton, a journalist has. Like Les Carlyon, Hamilton is very good on sense of place, and very good on straightforward narrative. This is not a hard book to read, but the foreboding of the inevitable horror to come saw me putting it to the back on the pile of books to be read. But that's silly, this is a book well worth reading.

The trouble was this beautiful bit of land. The Turks had tried a charge there against the Australian trenches at the end of June 1915. It had ended for them disastrously,

at least 255 dead lying in the small bit of no-man's land. A warning—Charles Bean, as usual, gives us the clue: 'going forward here would be like trying to attack an inverted frying pan from the direction of its handle'. The land was just too narrow to sustain an attack. The attackers would be funnelled into a narrow defile and machine guns could just mow them down. Anyone could see that.

And they did, those on the ground itself. But those planning this battle did so from a distance. As Australia's best military planner from that war, Brudenell White, told Charles Bean after the war was over, the plan was brilliant 'but it totally disregarded the almost impossible nature of the country'.

One of the strengths of Hamilton's book is the detail he gives about the men and officers of the Light Horse, who would carry out the attack. He takes more than half the book even to get the Light Horse to Gallipoli. By the time they have landed we know a dozen or so quite intimately. Well-loved, well-developed characters, like the regimental medical officer, Sid Campbell, who is killed off even before serious planning for the charge at the Nek commences. We come to know such men through their letters and diaries and this increases the sad expectation of impending disaster. These are men we care about.

But not their most senior officers. Burness had little good to say about Hughes and Antill, and Peter Burness is a gentle man; Hamilton has found even less to warm to. Hughes, 57 years of age, a stickler; his idea of soldiering, one of his lieutenants reported, 'was to salute smartly, roll a great coat correctly and note the march discipline'. Antill was just a bully. 'Push on' was all Antill seemed to be able to say once the tragedy began to unfold.

The charge should never have been ordered and should certainly have been called off when a series of failures elsewhere conspired to turn its chance of success from extremely unlikely to suicidal. It is hard to read Hamilton's account, accurate and measured, without deep anger and sorrow. This book is a fine tribute to the many hundreds who died there. ♦

John Hamilton, 'Goodbye Cobber, God Bless You: The Fatal Charge of the Light Horse, Gallipoli, August 7th 1915', Macmillan, Sydney, 2004, Softback, 365pp., RRP \$30.00

A Great Feat of Australian Arms: National Memory, Command and Papua and New Guinea



Kokoda

Paul Ham

Kokoda Commander: A Life of Major General 'Tubby' Allen

Stuart Braga

On Shaggy Ridge: The Australian Seventh Division in the Ramu Valley: From Kaiapit to the Finisterres

Phillip Bradley

Review essay by Dr Malcolm Kennedy

The present frequently mimics the past. The three books reviewed here describe important historical events, but they also mirror crucial problems in the war in Papua and New Guinea, which continue to bedevil the Australian Defence Force today.

The authors, Ham, Braga and Bradley, all posit strong views on the importance of the historic memory of Australia's involvement in these crucial military campaigns and stress the unnecessary degree of sacrifice that was made.

The five fundamental lessons for today include the utterly inadequate government efforts to prepare Australia's troops for combat. They stress how the resilience and bravery of our troops were consumed in battle because of a slow and niggardly build up of the equipment and materiel needed to give victory. The authors give blunt accounts of how poor political–military relationships prolonged the PNG war and caused far higher casualties than necessary. They demonstrate how the lack of knowledge and fixed mindsets blinkered strategic thinking and the conduct of operations; and how the vanity, of the remote commanders, Blamey and MacArthur, was unfairly exercised in their envious and deadly treatment of several successful field commanders. The repeated gainsaying of the skilled field-commanders and the rejection of their expert advice needlessly cost lives.

These books glory in the heroic spirit of mateship, which characterises the officers and men who fought in PNG, but this is tempered by being confronted by the base and petty behaviour of those who so many believed worthy of loyalty and respect. One is repeatedly reminded of the ancient Greek warning of the inescapable nature of hubris in human affairs.

It is foolish to try to compress different events in different times into a simple parcel for the purpose of comparison. In recent years, there has emerged a lively

debate about the importance of various Australian episodes in war.

Gallipoli has become the focus of memorial pilgrimages by thousands of Australians each year. Visitors to the battlefields in France, so moved by the record of loss, failure, success and triumph of the men of the First AIF, demand greater recognition given the efforts of our troops who fought there.

The vital Australian contributions at Tobruk and Alamein also bid for recognition as singular feats of human and military skill. Each of these campaigns has its magnificent share of heroism and valour; and tragically, considerable loss of life. Passionate calls to the government and the media demand the nation be made more aware of the vital role Australians played in first halting and turning around the long victorious Japanese forces on the Kokoda Track. The savage battles won by Australians at Milne Bay, Gona, Buna and Sanananda are also exceptional efforts that deserve public recognition.

The difficulty in trying to identify the most heroic, important or crucial battle or campaign is that differences in time and place negate the basis for comparison. The current debate focuses on land battles, but there is justification to seek recognition for our naval and air units in significant actions. The naval units in the Coral Sea battle and the enormous contribution of Australian aircrews against Germany both merit celebration.

The public's search for the nation's military history, so clearly demonstrated by the increasing numbers attending ANZAC Day services and in the larger numbers trekking to Gallipoli, France and PNG, can be satisfied in the fine scholarly writing of Ham, Braga and Bradley. These authors have gone to great personal and financial lengths, to become the masters of the histories they relate; and have produced narrative history at its best. If young Australians were to

have better access to historical writing of the quality reviewed here, the teaching of history in our schools and universities would boom.

Paul Ham's *Kokoda* is much more, and somewhat less, than the title suggests. In a journalistic style, he sweeps across the whole of the 1942–43 Papua campaign. He draws extensively on Australian archival material and the extensive recent work by historians. This is supplemented by Japanese documents and interviews of the tiny handful of Japanese survivors. Given the huge scope of the topic, he has divided the book into five parts, which cover the preparation of Japanese and Australian forces, their movement into the theatre, and the subsequent phases of the war in Papua until the Japanese forces were finally destroyed in detail.

Ham's style has strength in that he provides vivid and powerful snapshots, which provide sharp and dramatic pictures of crucial features of the campaign. Some of his story has charm, but most confronts the reader through Ham's intimate descriptions of select players and features of the brutal, harsh and tragic nature of the war. He highlights the local people pressed into service as carriers, officers and men of the American, Australian and Japanese forces, physical conditions, the nature and outcomes of battles, the clashes between commanders, the desperate plight of the sick, wounded and exhausted, the role of malaria, the impact of more powerful weapons and the vital importance of human pluck and endurance.

The snapshot approach has its weaknesses. The fifty-seven chapters that make up the book often treat very complex issues too briefly, and with a tendency to rush to judgement. Good maps, numerous illustrations, a good bibliography and a useable index support the text. A lack of consistency in the use of military terms and the faulty description of weapons and equipment will irritate some readers. Ham's potboiler intensity leaves no bad anecdote untold, but often ignores the full explanation of context, circumstance and actual limitations on people and resources.

This book is a racy good read and the material drawn from the Japanese sources and interviews is of great interest and provides sober insights into our versions of events. It has a role to excite interest in the war but it does not match the scholarly depth and masterful treatment given in Peter Brune's *A Bastard of a Place*, so ably reviewed by Peter Ryan in the Autumn 2004 *Defender*. Nonetheless, Ham has written a useful introduction, which should excite public interest in the great issues and events of this period.

Stuart Braga and Phillip Bradley have laboured long to produce excellent additions to the very high quality Army History Series. Handsomely produced volumes, they include excellent maps, illustrations, notes, an extensive bibliography and index.

The sober historical style adopted in these volumes is in contrast to that of Paul Ham; however, this makes them more compelling and convincing. The authors have spent many years in painstaking research, exploration of the terrain, mastering the secondary sources and collecting and digesting a huge range of primary source materials. Their

texts and notes reveal that they are deft users of this material, having immersed themselves in this corpus of hard data they are sure in their own judgements and defer to no fashionable views or assertions. The crisp narratives penned by Braga and Bradley carry the reader along through stories that range from delight in human triumph to the horror of violent death.

Braga has painstakingly built a thorough and highly nuanced study of a remarkable soldier, leader and man. He opens his study of Arthur 'Tubby' Allen with the challenge that he is not just writing military history, but '... also a book about the abuse of power'. In a highly readable and scholarly manner, he does even more.

Allen was the quintessential product of an Australian society that sought to foster betterment in its children. Born in 1894, Allen came from a working-class background, but one, which imbued a powerful drive to achieve in all possible fields of endeavour. Allen, a keen sportsman, was committed to self-improvement and put hours of reading aloud into overcoming a stammer. Studying accountancy after hours, he still found time to serve in the Senior Cadets after they began in 1911. Aged nineteen he joined the CMF, passed his officer training course in 1913, and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the 38th Battalion. He had to wait until June 1915 when turning 21 he took his commission in the 13th Battalion of the first AIF and in August 1915 sailed 'for service abroad'.

Allen's military career was a considerable success, by 1918 he was a lieutenant-colonel and as Braga notes Allen '... had proved to be a fearless and capable leader in battle. ... He was firm, blunt, and direct in his dealings with superiors and subordinates, all of whom liked him and had a great respect for him as a man and a soldier.' A leader who '... adapts himself to new ideas'.

Allen was promoted to Brigadier and command of the 14th Brigade in 1938, but quickly enlisted in the AIF. He commanded the 16th Brigade in outstanding victories at Bardia and Tobruk, played a key role in preventing the German capture of the ANZAC Corps in Greece and commanded the 7th Division in the short and bloody Syrian campaign. During 1941, he had fought three enemies, on three continents in less than six months and yet by the end of 1942 his career was in tatters. What had happened to this gifted and accomplished leader?

In the hot-house environment of higher political–military control of the South West Pacific war ruthless struggles for prestige and power put even successful field commanders' careers and reputations at risk. Although Brigadier Potts had skilfully conducted a fighting withdrawal, perhaps the most difficult of all operations, back across the Kokoda Track under the most difficult tactical, logistic and topographic circumstances he was summarily sacked and Allen was thrown into the task of pushing the Japanese back to the northern beaches.

Allen conducted the campaign with great skill, even though he had to struggle for every scrap of material to conduct the fight. On the brink of success and the recapture of Kokoda, he was relieved of his command and never again

held an active field command. Allen had his great strengths and his obvious faults, however, as Stuart Braga demonstrates in this unvarnished account of the man, Allen rightfully deserves his reputation as one of Australia's best combat commanders.

Phillip Bradley's book is one of the best unit campaign histories I have had the pain and pleasure of reading. In the opening pages of this book, the reader is given a taste of the real tragedy of war. In the most frustrating form of senseless wartime loss, a company of Australian troops, fully equipped and loaded down with ammunition is waiting in their trucks to be emplaned and flown from Port Moresby to the Ramu campaign. They are capriciously killed, wounded and scarred, when a Liberator on take-off clipped a tree and crashed. In seconds, from one company of the 2/33 Battalion, 15 men were dead, a further 45 died from burns and 92 soldiers were left hideously wounded.

In this fine history, Bradley takes the reader into the war after the Japanese have been defeated in Papua but still control most of New Guinea. The overall tempo of the Pacific war has accelerated in terms of the machines and materials. The Australian and American forces in the area have won significant victories and now draw upon seasoned, well-trained and well-equipped units. The allied troops had considerable advantages with the ready supply of tanks, artillery, aerial transport, bomber and fighter support, more effective logistics and far greater expertise in preventative medical care and casualty evacuation.

Bradley brilliantly captures the apparent changed nature of the war, when he notes that on 4 September 1943, the Australian Ninth Division had made the first Australian amphibious landing since Gallipoli near Lae and the next day MacArthur gave the Japanese a display of Allied military power.

The attack on Nadzab began with six squadrons of B-25 Mitchells, which strafed and bombed the landing zone; followed by six Bostons laying smoke, then 96 C-47 Dakotas carried the US 503rd Parachute Regiment and two 25-pounder guns from the Australian 2/4th Field Regiment. Three groups of fighters screened the transports and five B-17s dropped supplies. Nearby 28 bombers struck Japanese positions.

This massive aerial attack was in stark contrast to the nature of the land combat and the eventual battle for Shaggy Ridge. In the push out from Nadzab, the Markham-Ramu Valley offered the Allied commander's opportunities to open new airfields, which would let them, use airpower to attack the large Japanese bases north-west at Madang, Wewak and Hollandia.

Bradley describes the long and difficult fighting against the Japanese, who used every possible trick, ploy, and tactic. In contrast to the Kokoda campaign, allied aircraft were quickly brought in, as airfields were captured or built, to replenish supplies and carry out the wounded.

A savage corrective to the mobile form of warfare that had been employed on the advance to Shaggy Ridge slammed into place. The terrain, or the beast of the ridge, as Bradley calls it, once again dictated tactics and the use

of weapons. So precipitous and narrow was the feature that attacks often had to be made on a front measured in feet and much of the battle was carried by hand-to-hand fighting. Nonetheless, aircraft and artillery were used in clever ways to help dislodge and defeat the Japanese.

Bradley's detailed and gripping account of the battle is supported by excellent photographs, which give the reader a fuller grasp of the incredible geographic conditions faced by the Australians. His acute word pictures carry the account through to January 1944 when the Japanese had been driven from Shaggy Ridge and Crater Hill. Although there was still extensive fighting, this was the beginning of the end for the Japanese war effort in New Guinea.

The three authors provide us with ample evidence to insist that the Kokoda, Milne Bay and New Guinea campaigns merit public reverence and recognition similar to that of Gallipoli. The overall contribution of the Australian forces was far more than to be the first to halt the Japanese Imperial forces' sweeping advance across the Asia-Pacific region, it was the first time they were defeated in detail and these victories can rightfully be claimed as a turning point of the war.

These books should inspire all Australians to demand that the defence force ought not have suffered the ignorance, incompetence and poor support, or the senior political and military leadership abuse recorded here. Unfortunately, the ADF still answers to a parliament in which few members consider defence the most important duty of government and fewer still seek to learn and objectively apply the lessons of military history. The defence force also remains shackled with unclear whole-of-government strategic assessment and command arrangements, and a Department of Defence bureaucracy that continually interferes with the effective practise of command, at the strategic and operational levels, in both peace and war. Unless these situations are reformed we risk repeating the debacles of 1941-43.

For the 200,000 Japanese who fought in the campaign, Papua and New Guinea was worse than Gallipoli, since ninety-five per cent died there. In inflicting that great defeat thousands of Australian troops were brutally used and hundreds destroyed by a senior leadership, which seemed almost constantly deaf to accurate reports of the reality of the war in the field. These readings excite both great admiration for our men's valour, but also quiet fury that there is no record of shame from those who so badly wasted their lives. To paraphrase the words of a bard—'where ignorance was bliss it was a folly to be wise'. ♦

Paul Ham, 'Kokoda', HarperCollins, Sydney, 2004, Casebound and jacketed, 602pp., RRP \$45.00.

Stuart Braga, 'Kokoda Commander A Life of Major-General 'Tubby' Allen', Oxford University Press, South Melbourne, 2004, Casebound and jacketed, 374pp., RRP \$59.95.

Phillip Bradley, 'On Shaggy Ridge The Australian Seventh Division in the Ramu Valley: From Kaiapit to the Finisterres', Oxford University Press, South Melbourne, 2004, Casebound and jacketed, 284pp., RRP \$55.00.

Chester Wilmot Reports

Neil McDonald

Reviewed by Matt Brown

Chester Wilmot was one of the renowned Australian war correspondents of World War II and his 766-page 1952 history, *The Struggle for Europe*, is still acknowledged as a major overview work of the period. *Chester Wilmot Reports* is comprised mostly of the scripts of Wilmot's wartime broadcasts intermingled with vital notes from Neil McDonald explaining their context, insights into Wilmot's motivation and background to his struggles to report the war as he saw and understood it.

The nub of the book is first-hand reporting at its best and it should be compulsory reading for every strategic policy maker or analyst—and especially every journalist who considers reporting on armed conflict. Both the general reader and the military buff will enjoy reading Wilmot's scripts for the lucid descriptions of battle—and his appreciation of its significance.

Wilmot repeatedly offered a strategic, or at least a heightened, tactical overview even amidst the mud, dust and din, observing and describing the hardships and flow of battle on the ground. From a journalist's point of view, this is a major achievement and he does it with empathy for the fighting men he mixes with, interviewing them in the field and bringing their experiences to life.

Photos of the key players, Australian soldiers and Wilmot working on location are used a little too sparsely for this reviewer's hungry eyes. The picture of Wilmot broadcasting from Syria, a cloth wrapped around his microphone to protect it from the wind, his elbows propped on the back of a truck, demonstrate how little things have changed in sixty-odd years. It's almost the exact pose you could have seen several radio reporters adopting during the recent election campaign.

In the context of the present day debate about the value of 'embedded' journalists, Wilmot's 'embedded' but detailed and balanced accounts of battles in Papua New Guinea, Greece and Syria are instructive. In the context of the apparently perpetual 'war on terror' the book also provides real insights into the dilemmas of reporting conflict, in his case, a conflict that struck at Australia's sovereignty and very survival. How far should a journalist be allowed to go with a critique of the campaign being waged by those ordering their fellow Australians into battle? What are the costs of silencing critics in the name of preserving 'public confidence' and the 'morale of Australian forces'?

Some truly contentious material is included, such as Wilmot's overt and covert battle against General Blamey as the New Guinea campaign grinds on. Imagine an ABC reporter today telling John Howard to sack General Peter Cosgrove! But also imagine the looks on the faces of Blamey and Curtin when they read Wilmot's opening words

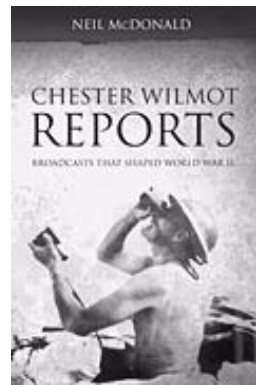
to a landmark report headed Observations on the New Guinea Campaign 26 Aug–26 Sep 1942: 'The situation, which resulted in the Japanese getting to within 35 miles of Port Moresby, appears to have been one which should never have arisen if enough troops, adequately trained and equipped, had been sent to New Guinea in time'. Wilmot's high-quality work is a timely reminder in this age of shrinking budgets, but increasing pressures for immediate news, of the value of having reporters in the field. *Chester Wilmot Reports* also sets a very high standard for modern journalists who produce books claiming to offer some insight or other into the events they have been privileged to observe. In comparison to Wilmot many of these latter-day compilations are just so much dross, even allowing for the usual claim that journalism is the first draft of history.

While Wilmot's broadcasting gear was heavy, cumbersome and technologically limited, he didn't let this hamper his performance and Wilmot's scripts remain great reading. In comparison, in this era of digitisation and miniaturisation in Baghdad this year, cameraman Tony Conolly and I had laptop computers and three satellite telephones to stay in touch with the rest of the world and send high quality video images and voice transmissions daily to the ABC in Sydney. The timeliness and technical quality this allows are hallmarks of modern broadcasting but the kit does not generate the pictures or words necessary to tell the story. Our computers cannot organise the thoughts or provoke the insight necessary for a good report. Wilmot's mastery of his craft, using only the basics, still provides great lessons to journalists and on-scene analysts of all types.

Wilmot's work isn't perfect and his relationships with key commanders, his contact with John Curtin and others, and his willingness to act as a sort of quasi-military intelligence analyst in some instances, warrant more attention. But, after reading this compilation of reports you'll feel that Ernest Hemingway's test of a good book has been met, 'you will feel that all that happened to you and afterwards it all belongs to you; the good and the bad, the ecstasy, the remorse, and sorrow, the people and the places and how the weather was'.

That is as good as Wilmot's audience at the time could ask. Today, we could have done with a little more analysis of Wilmot's choices, his motivations and foibles. This reviewer was hungry for more detail about Wilmot's way of working, his dealings with politicians and military commanders and context about his life and times. Hopefully, these gaps will be filled in McDonald's forthcoming Wilmot biography. ♦

Neil McDonald, *Chester Wilmot Reports: Broadcasts that Shaped World War II*, ABC Books, Sydney, 2004, Casebound and jacketed, 401pp., RRP \$49.95. Matt Brown, a federal political reporter for ABC Radio, reported from Baghdad on the transition to Iraqi sovereignty in June and July this year. He is shortly to take up the position of ABC Middle East Correspondent in Jerusalem.



Other People's Wars: A History of Australian Peacekeeping

Peter Londey

Reviewed by Neil James

This reviewer must declare several interests in this excellent book so his review can be judged objectively. First I am thanked in the preface and was thanked at its launch. Second, in the late 1990s I was one of only two uniformed members on the Army Military History Projects Committee which encouraged and partly funded the research involved. This became something of a running joke between us over the years as to why he was taking so long to finish it.

Dr Peter Londey, a longstanding member of the Military History Section of the Australian War Memorial (AWM), has been recently appointed to the team writing the official histories of peacekeeping and post-Cold War operations. Normally a summary history would follow not precede the publishing of the official histories, but this by no means detracts from this book's authority or relevance. The ADF and AFP in particular have long needed such a summary account, both to record their long and complex service in many missions, and to counter the numerous myths and misapprehensions concerning peacekeeping still held in some political and bureaucratic circles.

During 1989–90 I managed the Army Headquarters operations room in Canberra. This was the period when the Army first began deploying formed units overseas in multinational peacekeeping operations, and indeed for the first time since the end of the Vietnam War 17 years before. During the planning and day-to-day supervision of such operations AHQ was bombarded with questions from ministerial, bureaucratic and general quarters about the history of the ADF's involvement in peacekeeping.

No historical accounts existed. The then Army Historian was absolutely no help and showed no interest. I ended up preparing a ministerial brief that later metamorphosed into *Australian Defence Force Journal* articles in 1990 and 1994, a chapter in the proceedings of the 1993 Chief of Army Exercise, and later again into the relevant Army and ADF doctrinal manuals.

The basic problem in the 1980s and early 1990s was a familiar one in Australian military and social history. Beginning with World War II, each succeeding group of veterans has been regarded by the preceding generation as 'having not been in a real war'. In the case of peacekeeping operations, the Vietnam veteran generation, then totally dominant among the Army's senior ranks, were quite ignorant as to their nature and sceptical about their value, not least because peacekeeping did not appear to involve combat and had been mainly undertaken by Army Reserve individuals in the 1950–1974 period. This resulted in three serious problems. First, the ADF and Army possessed no coherent doctrinal

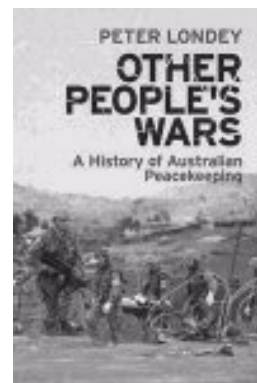
vision on where peacekeeping fitted in the spectrum of conflict. Second, there was no doctrine on how it should be conducted and this translated into numerous command, planning, training, equipment procurement, logistic and welfare difficulties. Third, the Army leadership saw no value in such operations in terms of operational capability maintenance or the development of its leaders in challenging command positions. One Chief-of-Operations even stated that we would never bid for a UN command position while he had anything to do with it, and that Kangaroo series exercises offered far better value.

Dr Londey, who had joined the AWM in 1991, had no background in this area until appointed to stage the memorial's first peacekeeping exhibition in 1993. *Other People's Wars* is the product of his long involvement, interest and intellectual engagement in the subject ever since. If only a book such as this had been written 20 years ago.

Other People's Wars is very well written, structured and argued. It begins with a short, clear and balanced explanation of what peacekeeping is and probably isn't, how it has evolved, how it fits into the wider spectrum of conflict, and how the ADF's approach to it is firmly grounded in the Australian way of war. Peacekeeping is a definitional minefield and this introduction adroitly avoids the two common pitfalls of the amateur ideologue regarding peacekeeping, which are to mouth the platitudes that impartiality of motive and neutrality of force application are synonymous, and that *all* peacekeeping *always* requires the consent of *all* belligerent parties. The rest of this highly readable book is mainly organised into 14 chapters covering the various peacekeeping commitments in both chronological order and by region. Each individual operation is succinctly described with judicious and often penetrating use of participant quotes, documentary sources, and comments on both the historical and contemporary issues involved.

Finally, the book ends with a seven-page conclusion of pithy observations and insights on the expectations, benefits and failures of peacekeeping. The maps are clear and support understanding of the text, there are five pages of the numerous acronyms and abbreviations that litter peacekeeping, 14 pages of notes arranged by chapter, six pages of sources and an efficient 19-page index. *Other People's Wars* is a credit to its author and publisher and augers well for the standard of the forthcoming official histories. ♦

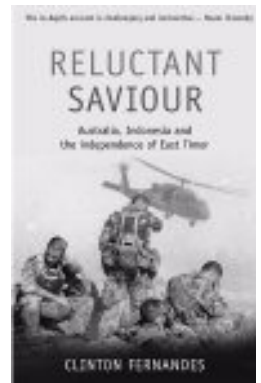
Peter Londey, *'Other People's Wars: A History of Australian Peacekeeping'*, Allen&Unwin, Crow's Nest NSW, 2004, Softback, 312pp., RRP \$35.00.



Reluctant Saviour: Australia, Indonesia and the Independence of East Timor

Clinton Fernandes

Reviewed by Dr Brian Ridge



This book, despite its ringing endorsement by Noam Chomsky as ‘... challenging and instructive,’ is a quite skewed and narrow-minded explanation of events that led to independence for East Timor. In its sketchy analytical frame of Indonesia, it uses the unfortunate and now woefully outdated frame of class warfare, all coloured with frequent references to ‘worker and peasant movements,’ or to ‘landless peasants’, and the ‘repression of peasants and workers’; and then proceeds to mount a series of tantalising conspiracy theories that run the risk of effectively devaluing the eventual move towards early independence for East Timor.

All this semblance of analysis is clouded by that other demon—capitalism—and there is a steady series of claims tying in successive Labor and Coalition federal governments as being ‘committed to the same systemic interest—that of Australian capitalism’. Fernandes sees the Jakarta lobby running in tandem with the Washington lobby in crafting key components of Canberra’s foreign policy. This account is surprisingly benign about the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), although is necessarily critical of the subsequent bloody destruction of the party and its associated organisations.

Given the book’s fairly restricted view of the world and its general ahistorical approach, it takes little or no account of the 1974 context surrounding the collapse of the Salazar regime in Portugal, and the impact of the sudden Portuguese retreat from East Timor in 1975—after Portugal had let it fester and smoulder in a stagnant backwater for centuries. But in the unholy haste to leave in 1975, the local Portuguese military had promptly turned much of its weaponry over to East Timorese activists. Not unnaturally, Indonesia was bound to be a little concerned, as were others in the region, especially as the regional version of the Cold War was still being played out. After all, it was only about seven months earlier in 1975 that Moscow’s proxy had prevailed in Vietnam, and Cambodia too was entering its darkest phase of ‘liberation’ under the Khmer Rouge. In a remarkable way, none of this features in Fernandes’ backdrop to East Timor’s path to independence, nor in his assessment of players and their roles.

In its middle chapters, the book sweeps through the growing discontent in East Timor and the huge pressures facing Jakarta as it struggled with the economic meltdown of the late 1990s. This ferment, which produced heavy political pressure for Indonesia generally, was critical for the eventual rapid series of events that led to East Timor’s independence, including the Nobel Peace Prize for Jose Ramos-Horta and Bishop Belo,

followed by the independence referendum and 1999 peacekeeping force, and later interim UN administration.

All this had an effective and brutal backdrop in the 1991 Dili massacre. There was also an inexorably growing lobby in the Indonesian political elite to let East Timor go as an independent state—but this was not initially, or perhaps ever, a majority view. The rapid rise of militias in East Timor, most of which had Indonesian military links, did not help keep East Timor off the political horizon, although it is an error to assume that the Indonesian military is a smooth-running, single and unified force, and this misguided view is often at the heart of the author’s heavy condemnation of all things to do with the Indonesian military. The initial Australian-led peacekeeping force, INTERFET, had to work rapidly, and while not acknowledged by the author, its work was often made easier by senior Australian commanders having had prior personal contact with some of their Indonesian counterparts. Given the book’s focus, of necessity, there is little account taken of what might have happened if INTERFET had had to sustain high-level combat for any length of time.

Overall, this book is not solely about independence in East Timor, but is in many ways far more focused on Indonesian politics, with particular venom directed at the military and how it ‘has continued to increase its repression of peasants and workers’. This in turn means that a major subplot for this volume is a highly critical appraisal of defence links between Australia and Indonesia, with required frequent references to the Jakarta lobby in Australian diplomacy and academia.

But one very unfortunate feature is the author’s criticism of the current East Timor leadership and its backing of closer relationships with Jakarta. As well, there is heavy complaint concerning the now independent government of East Timor’s support for the war on terror. Fernandes sees Jose Ramos-Horta, East Timor’s first foreign minister, as ‘hitching his country’s fortunes to the whims of the US foreign-policy establishment’. Naturally, this is painted as a ‘new’ government exhibiting an inability to function in a truly independent way—an odd commentary after all the rhetoric about independence and self-determination. It is almost as if Fernandes sees such self-determination as authentic only if subsequent government decisions run precisely in the same direction as his own preferences. ♦

Clinton Fernandes, ‘Reluctant Saviour: Australia, Indonesia and the Independence of East Timor’, Scribe Publications, Melbourne, 2004, Paperback, 138pp., RRP \$22.00.

Indonesia's Struggle: Jemaah Islamiyah and the Soul of Islam

Greg Barton

Reviewed by Tony LeRay-Meyer



Since 9/11 there has been a distinct genre of books seeking to provide an insight into the 'new terrorism'. Very few have been able to balance readability and the complex nature of the phenomenon and Greg Barton's *Indonesia's Struggle* is one of them. The book is an insightful and succinct analysis of the ideological origins of Jemaah Islamiyah and the nature of radical Islam in Indonesia. Barton argues that whilst the initial response to Jemaah Islamiyah (since Bali) has been adequate, there remains considerable potential for further extremist violence within Indonesia.

Barton is a senior lecturer in the School of Social and International Studies at Deakin University and a respected commentator on Indonesian political affairs. He recently authored a biography of the former Indonesian President, Abdurrahman Wahid. The depth of his understanding of the cultural, religious, and political aspects of Indonesian society is reflected in the well-argued approach he uses to tackle the complex subject of Jemaah Islamiyah. While he clearly synthesises the work of several other experts, he is much more successful than most at addressing the socio-cultural context of militancy and radical Islam in Indonesia.

Barton uses an easy story-telling style that avoids a common pitfall in the genre for complex detailing of names, locations and incidents. The book's readability will be appreciated by both the counter-terrorist practitioner and the general reader. He begins with a brief review of the Bali investigation, establishing the context of his analysis. Barton then develops an understanding of exactly what constitutes radical Islamism, arguing that understanding its Indonesian sub-context, is central to understanding Jemaah Islamiyah.

Based on his understanding of the group's antecedents and history, Barton's premise is that whilst there has been progress in responding to Jemaah Islamiyah since the Bali investigation, it has not been as effective as commonly assumed. As analysts began to look more closely at radical Islam in the region after 9/11 it became evident that Jemaah Islamiyah had been developing its militant pan-Islamic philosophy since 1982—under the guidance of its founders Abu Bakr Bashir and Abdullah Sungkar. Both had been involved with the Darul Islam movement that sought an Islamic state in Indonesia during the 1950s. A combination of events created the conditions for a radical Islamist movement to emerge, including the general repression of Islamic activism under Suharto, incidents such as the Tanjung Priok killings in 1984 (in which dozens of Islamic activists were killed by Indonesian troops), disenchantment

with the corruption of the Suharto regime and rising anti-Western sentiment.

Bashir and Sungkar developed a multi-dimensional network of militants that gained experience as Mujahideen in Afghanistan, established links with transnational entities such as the Jordanian group Hizb-ut-Tahrir, and were exposed to radical transnational Islamist factions such as al-Gama'at al-Islamiyah from Egypt. Barton outlines this evolution coherently and without unnecessary complexity.

The key to the entire book is the discussion in chapters 3 and 4 that moves beyond the history of Jemaah Islamiyah. Barton highlights two key contemporary developments that characterise the impact of Jemaah Islamiyah today. Drawing on the work of the International Crisis Group (ICG) he emphasises the importance of the 'Ngruki Network' of pesantren (Islamic boarding schools) in providing the basis for Jemaah Islamiyah's operational structure. The creation of the Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI) by Bashir in August 2000 provided a political structure aimed at uniting all radical Islamists and integrating Jihadi Islamism and radical political Islamism. Barton argues cogently that understanding the nature of both the Ngruki Network and the influence of MMI are essential in understanding Jemaah Islamiyah.

In the final chapter, Barton argues that the threat from radical Islamism transcends the threat from Jemaah Islamiyah. The influence of MMI in harnessing militant religious extremism through Jemaah Islamiyah and its network of affiliate organisations (such as Lashkar Jundullah), as well as increasing support from mainstream Islamist parties, is indicative of the broader threat posed in Indonesia from radical Islamism. Barton draws a comparison with Pakistan, in which militant minorities have steadily accrued undue influence over the ruling 'moderate' majority. Barton considers the key to any response is to recognise and understand the reality of radical Islamism in Indonesia—and one senses he is unconvinced that this has been achieved.

This book is a valuable contribution to understanding the phenomenon of radical and jihadi Islamism in Indonesia. Whilst it does not necessarily offer extensive or original research, the book's value is in the illustrative story it tells. This is a 'must read' for those seeking an insight into the actual threat from Islamism in our region. ♦

Greg Barton, *Indonesia's Struggle: Jemaah Islamiyah and the Soul of Islam*, UNSW Press, Sydney, 2004, Softback, 118pp., RRP \$16.95.

The Geopolitics of East Asia: The Search for Equilibrium

Robyn Lim

Reviewed by Neil James

Professor Robyn Lim, an Australian, holds the chair in international relations at Nanzan University in Japan. Prior to this she held posts with ONA, PM&C and DFAT and at various Australian and South East Asian universities.

In a time of strategic flux and the relative decline of ideology as a major cause of strategic friction, *The Geopolitics of East Asia*, and the message of its subtitle, provide a timely reminder of the geo-strategic tectonic plates underlying the East Asian region irrespective of the ideologies, personalities or diplomatic fads of any particular time.

The book's thesis is that the geopolitics of East Asia has several underlying themes of geostrategic continuity underwritten by geography, economics, culture and the continual search for strategic balance between the great powers since the 17th century. A key argument deployed is that there is an East Asian quadrilateral compromising Russia, China, Japan and the United States, and that the tensions between them result from the quest for equilibrium irrespective of their comparative strengths or the ideologies governing each one at any particular juncture.

This is a daunting task in a book the publishers specified must come in under 80,000 words. Professor Lim accomplishes her aim with an introductory essay, five historical chapters, a chapter covering contemporary issues and a conclusion. All include the broad perspectives, incisive analysis and forthright language that make Professor Lim stand out among what often passes for contemporary tenured academic thought and discourse. While a book of this length on such a broad topic must, of necessity, include much synthesised content her summaries also feature original observations that add to our understanding of the broad and bold themes explored.

Chapter 1 discusses East Asian history from the beginning of the 16th century to the Treaty of Portsmouth in 1905 following Japan's defeat of Russia. In her second chapter, Professor Lim discusses the unstable balance in East Asia between 1905 and the mid 1930s that led, almost inexorably, to World War II. The strategic contest between Japan and the United States, egged on by Stalinist Russia, is covered in Chapter 3 with most of the discussion centring on the contests of the 1935–41 period, rather than the detail of the cross-ocean maritime campaigns that destroyed Japanese power over the ensuing four years.

The final two chapters cover the Cold War. The first summarises the myriad political currents swirling round decolonisation, the rise of communism and the resultant offensive and defensive wars to contain it. The second discusses the latter phases of the Cold War from the West's defeat in Vietnam to its eventual triumph over the Soviet Union

(and belligerent Maoist zealotry) in the late 1980s.

In the final chapter, Professor Lim touches with a sure hand on most of the major contemporary strategic issues, developments and trends. In her conclusion she neatly pierces several recurring myths and delusions that reinforce the quest for diplomatic certainties and comfort rather than a propensity to confront reality.

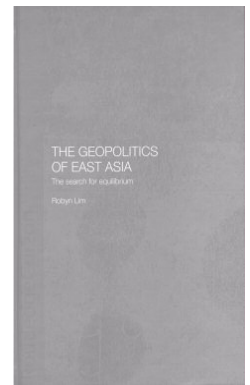
The 14 pages of notes buttress the high standard of the book overall. As well as the usual citations they include numerous brief explanations and the background to issues that would otherwise clutter the main text. The five-page bibliography is comprehensive. It is also laid out in a format that is easily readable, an increasingly uncommon phenomenon in modern publishing. Finally the eight-page index is effective in a work of this length, especially in a subject area bedevilled by changes in the historical usages of spelling foreign names among two alphabets and three character systems.

Professor Lim has, however, been badly let down by her publisher in regard to the only two maps, both small but large-scale, monochrome versions. One covers, on one page, the region bounded by northern Australia, the Arctic Ocean, Moscow and the Aleutians. The other depicts the North-East Asian region centred on Manchuria. Both maps are marked with small print but still fail to detail or otherwise easily indicate many of the locations mentioned in the text. A work on geopolitics requires clearly drawn, readable and comprehensive maps not the third-rate versions offered here.

The Geopolitics of East Asia, within its limitations of size and requirement for summary rather than detail, is a masterful work. Its occasional oversimplification invokes the odd twinge of reflexive counter argument but the book contains no obvious or serious errors of fact. This is a book that has the sure touch of both an unbowed practitioner and a scholar, and in each case one comfortable with the milieu of debate in North America and North Asia rather than just Australian perspectives. It should be required background reading for Australian diplomats, strategists and senior commanders and those who aspire to otherwise comment on Australia's national strategy.

One final question the book generates is why Professor Lim has not been snapped up by a university or think-tank in her own country. She would certainly be a breath of fresh air in a country where strategic debate at an academic and wider level has greatly suffered from an insufficient turnover of participants over the last three decades, and more recently a marked degree of intellectual atrophy. Perhaps her reputation for being a somewhat hard-edged critic of the academically complacent has told against her. On the evidence of *The Geopolitics of East Asia*, Australia is much the worse for her apparent intellectual exile. ♦

Robyn Lim, *The Geopolitics of East Asia: The Search for Equilibrium*, Routledge, London, 2003, Casebound, 198pp., RRP \$89.00.



Australian Defence Almanac 2004–2005

Raspal Khosa

Reviewed by Neil James



In reviewing the *Australian Defence Almanac 2004–2005* the ADA needs to disclose that when the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI) first advertised in May 2003 for temporary in-house staff to produce this almanac, the Association unsuccessfully proposed instead that it be written as a joint ASPI-ADA multi-disciplinary project.

There is no doubt such an almanac has long been needed to further informed public debate on defence issues. As but one example, the often poor standard of public and departmental debate (and process) involved with the Defence green and white papers in 2000 would have been improved considerably by this almanac. This is especially so if it had been available in tandem with ADFP-D, the ADF's new capstone doctrine publication, (which was finished by September 1999 but whose publication was inexplicably delayed by the then CDF and which unfortunately did not appear until April 2002).

Virtually all of the information in the almanac is published somewhere else but that is the very point. The *Defence Annual Report*, for instance, has generally improved its reporting of statistical detail and its recording of major ADF activities over recent years but not in a generally readable format. Both SDSC and the former ADSC have produced compendiums of long-term defence statistics but not recently. In April 2003 Defence produced a useful stand-alone booklet optimistically entitled *The ADF Capability Fact Book*.

Largely the work of Raspal Khosa and Dr Mark Thomson from ASPI, the *Australian Defence Almanac* records, updates and integrates information that has previously been

spread across a range of official and semi-official sources, and also includes some of the explanatory background detailed in ADFP-D. The almanac is structured in seven chapters plus a useful seven-page list of defence acronyms and abbreviations and a three-page list of the documentary and online sources used.

The first chapter attempts to provide an overview of defence organisation and strategic policy matters. There are several obvious gaps or arguable points, especially in its coverage of the constitutional and legal basis for defence matters. Some of the explanations throughout also appear weighted in favour of viewpoints held in the higher reaches of Defence's civilian bureaucracy rather than ones commonly agreed. The only two maps in the whole volume are disappointing. One shows Australia in the Asia–Pacific region but strangely occupies only half its page. The world map uses a squashed and barely readable example of Mollweide projection.

In chapter 2, the structure, weaponry and basing of the ADF are covered in comprehensive and generally well-explained detail. This would be improved by the addition of information such as the characteristics of warships (length, tonnage, crew size, etc.) and clear designation of which units in all three Services comprise reserve, regular or mixed elements. There are some errors, for example, all the RAAF units in 41 and 42 Wings are not listed and the RAAF's 65 PC9 training aircraft are missing (as they also are from this year's Defence Annual Report). Minor glitches with nomenclature and designations will also grate with

Kokoda

professional readers. Examples include 'service' being spelled without a capital 'S' throughout, anti-armour weapons described as 'anti-tank', and pennant numbers on warships incorrectly described as hull numbers.

Chapter 3 briefly details the structure of the Department of Defence and lists senior personalities and the programs into which defence 'outputs' are organised for financial management purposes. The fourth chapter provides 20 pages of comprehensive charts covering personnel and associated matters. Some aspects are presented in a potentially misleading format, such as the numbers of civilian staff over time, and while there is a table showing ADF numbers broken down by rank, its equivalent civilian staff table strangely details only SES-level officials.

The following eight-page chapter on financial aspects is well presented but has some traps for the unwary. The table showing defence outlays since federation catalogues the general record of neglect, but shows outlays only, because the data on other spending (such re-investment from asset sales) is not available from earlier years. The chart showing comparative defence spending in our region (based on DIO reporting) should also be interpreted carefully as it is presumably based on official reporting and under-estimates the actual spending by totalitarian countries. The chart showing comparative federal spending between defence, public order, education, health and social security only begins in 1998–99. This is a pity as a start date in the mid 1970s would present the significant increases in the latter three categories, against the declining or relatively static figures for defence, even more starkly.

Chapter 6 outlines the international treaties and organisations Australia is party to in the defence and associated arenas. It also lists significant ongoing regional conflicts (whether they involve Australia or not), recent terrorist incidents in the region, ADF deployments 1947–2002, ADF operations in 2003–04, the amounts spent on defence assistance to regional countries 1987–2004 and the amounts of other developmental assistance in 2003–04. The coverage of treaties, alliances and organisations is always problematic and there are several obvious omissions such as intelligence exchange agreements. The vexed question of whether Australia has an alliance with the UK is also left hanging. The listing of ADF operations has numerous puzzling errors and omissions, most of them concerning detail readily available and, even in the more obscure cases, certainly known by the Service history units or the professor of ADF history at ANU.

First there are many simple errors of fact such as the first Australian to command a UN peacekeeping operation (UNMOGIP 1950–1966) was Robert not Richard Nimmo, and the UNIIMOG contingent were ceasefire observers not NBC specialists. Second, there are claims of unknown data, such as the number of observers with UNYOM in 1964, when even the names of the four individuals are known. Finally, there are numerous operations simply not mentioned, such as the

evacuation of orphans from South Vietnam in 1975, or the EW detachment deployed to the then New Hebrides in 1980 to track down the French Secret Service transmitter supporting secessionist rebels. The real tragedy here is that simple proofreading by any one of a dozen ADF history experts would have alerted the authors and prevented the problem.

Counter-terrorist structures and processes are covered well in chapter 7 but again there are terminology errors and much of the explanatory detail, especially on the National Security Committee of Cabinet and the intelligence and security agencies, may have been better placed in chapter 1.

Overall the *Australian Defence Almanac 2004–2005* is a welcome first attempt at producing a tool to further informed public debate of defence issues. However, more consultation with subject matter experts, more fact checking and greater care with terminology and in some cases layout, would have resulted in a more accurate, comprehensive, usable and therefore reliable publication. Fortunately, these are all matters that can be readily rectified in the next edition. ♦

Raspal Khosa (editor), 'Australian Defence Almanac 2004–2005', Australian Strategic Policy Institute, Canberra, 2004, Softback, 109pp., RRP \$29.95

Co-op