

defender

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● Salute to Michael O'Connor

this issue

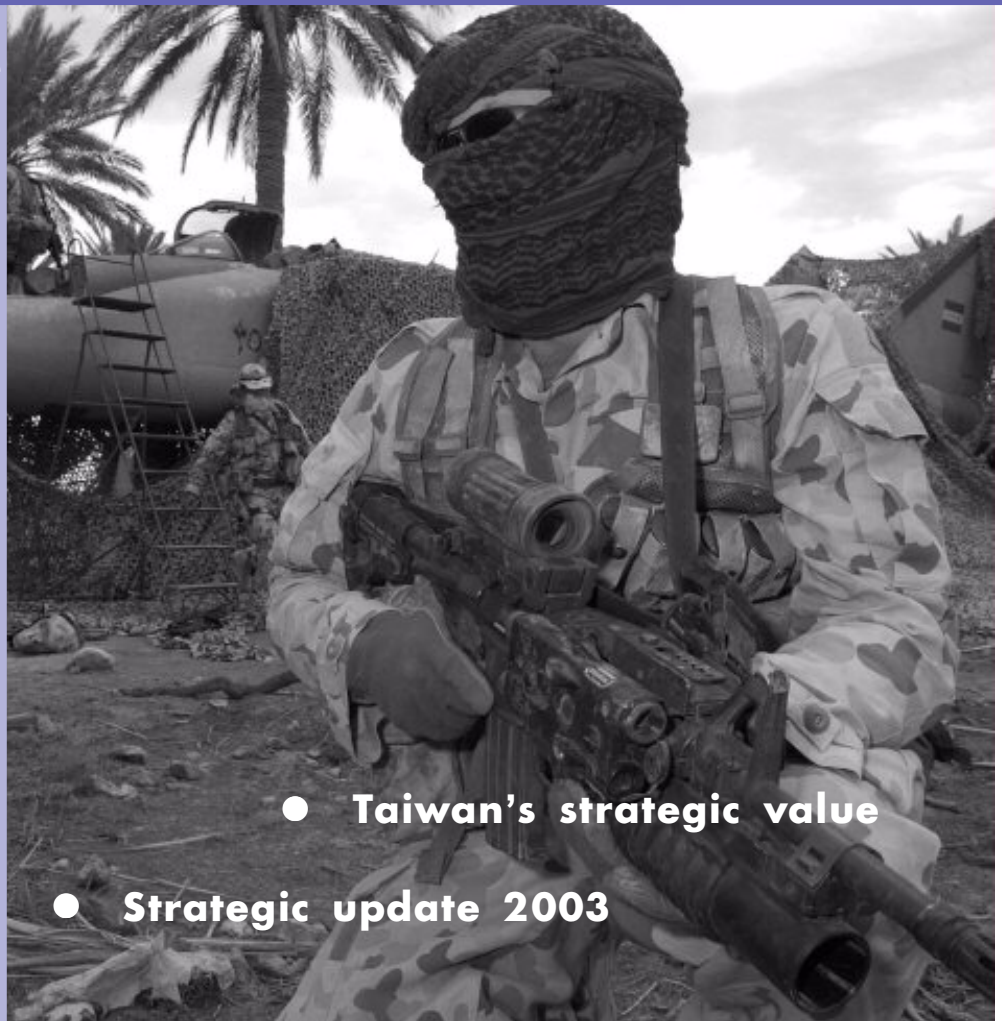
● Defending the unprepared

● Changing of the guard

● Integrated approach to national security

● Lessons from the Iraq war

● An Indonesian perspective on terrorism



● Taiwan's strategic value

● Strategic update 2003

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THE NATIONAL JOURNAL OF THE
AUSTRALIA DEFENCE ASSOCIATION

(ABN 16 083 007 390)

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AUSTRALIA DEFENCE ASSOCIATION

(ABN 16 083 007 390)

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 bipartisan community watchdog and 'think-tank' on national security issues. To preserve its independence and transparency the Association is organised as a company limited by guarantee and registered under the Corporations Law.

The ADA seeks to promote, foster and encourage the best form of defence for Australia. In particular, the Association seeks the development and implementation of a deterrent national security policy directed at:

- a security strategy based on the protection of identifiable and enduring national interests;
- the development of adequate forces-in-being capable of executing such a strategy; and
- the development of manufacturing and service industries capable of sustaining defence force operations.

The Association seeks the support by subscription of all Australians and the categories of membership and support are detailed on the back cover of this journal. ADA members are spread across Australia and there are Association chapters in many of the larger cities and towns.

On a national basis, the ADA publishes a quarterly journal and a monthly briefing paper, and also maintains a website at: <www.ada.asn.au>. The Association is frequently called on to contribute to public, academic and professional debates on national security issues. The ADA is also invited to make regular submissions to parliamentary inquiries conducted by the all-party Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade.

The Association maintains regular contact and cooperation on security and related matters with individuals, research institutes and public bodies in 12 allied and friendly countries in the Pacific Basin.

OUR COVER

Australian soldiers from the 4th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (Commando) patrol and clear buildings and infrastructure in a major Iraqi airbase in western Iraq.

Photo courtesy DoD.

Capability, capacity and sustainability

The ADF has again demonstrated that it has the capacity to provide high-level skills and competencies to the battlefield. The work of naval units, SAS, commandos, fighter pilots, logistic, intelligence and command staff, and support units all demonstrated that we have personnel of the highest calibre and skill in military operations.

This high-level proficiency in the skills of arms also continues to be shown in the longer-term commitment in East Timor, however, in both cases the size, duration and sustainability of our forces in these and future operations is at critical risk.

The public has joyfully taken the ADF to heart and perhaps shown minimal resistance to the idea that more money should be spent on the ADF and national security as a whole. At no time in the last several decades has a government had such an opportunity and open support of the electorate for a substantial increase in defence funding.

The hidden side of the successful deployments in Iraq and East Timor must, however, be given critical exposure. The small numbers and short term of our contribution to

Iraq was a direct result of our lack of adequate troop numbers overall. The ADF does not have the ability to deploy or maintain more than small forces for anything but a short time. We did not have the capacity to rotate the Iraqi force and could not join the occupation with the numbers required. Our shortage of troops means that our specialist units are overworked in order to generate the essential success stories.

In defence the greatest waste of funds is found in the bloated and byzantine world of the Department of Defence. In every attempt to reform the department in recent years the result has been worse than the existing monster. Command and control in Australia continues to suffer from bureaucratic cancers not encountered in any comparable Western country. The layers on layers in the Department of Defence, and the continued delay in integrating our single-Service structures into true joint headquarters, cannot be sustained. No business can tolerate such duplication and waste of resources and survive global competition. The proposed increase in ADF numbers is essential, however, we need to heavily rationalise the huge top-heavy structure.

The endless squabbles over the division of funds between personnel, maintenance, operational and equipment costs must be ended. Increased troop numbers will increase costs and they will need increased expenditure on weapons and material. There is no possibility that this can be done without slashing the size of the departmental bureaucracy and moving the real expenditure on defence to at least 2.5 per cent of GDP.

The magic of new systems and weapons is being cited as a basis for smaller, heavier-armed, more mobile, information rich and lethal forces. Indeed, Australia must move even more quickly into the mastery and extension of the new means of warfare, however, the cost of obtaining and maintaining sufficient stocks for training and operations will demand increased outlays.

The apparent tectonic shift in the means and form of waging war is open to dangerous misconceptions. The new technologies offer and will continue to offer huge advances in the more accurate application of deadly force. There are, however, a number of obvious advantages that remain in the hands of those who do not fight by the rules of the technological leader.

The limited urban combat in Iraq showed how deadly it remains for combatants and especially civilians. In our region the geographic realities of the SW Pacific, Southeast and East Asia emphasise the benefits and the distinct disadvantage of the new technologies. In operating with two large and powerful military allies, the short run to goal in Iraq is highly misleading as a model for ADF tasks in our region.

CONTENTS

Editorial	3
Letters	4
A tribute to Michael O'Connor	5
Defending the unprepared	7
The changing of the guard	9
Current comment	12
Major Furphy	24
Lessons from the Iraq war	25
Securing Australia in 2003: The need for an integrated approach	27
An Indonesian perspective on terrorism	36
Strategy from the armchair	40
The strategic value of Taiwan	41
Book reviews	45

letters



Dear Editor,

I would like to comment on the ADA submission on Australia's Maritime Strategy (*Defender*, Autumn 2003).

You state: Pursuing a strategy that allows an adversary to develop bases in the region for assault on Australia is a faulty strategy. Do you seriously suggest that Australia should acquire the military means to oppose, by military force if necessary, the development of military bases on the sovereign territory of other nations in our region, where such bases are seen as a possible threat to Australia? If so are you not dreaming the impossible dream? The military wisdom of such a course may be compelling; the political risk of even contemplating such a course would be catastrophic.

Few would deny the importance to Australia of our seaborne trade, or that its protection has not been realistically considered by our defence planners. However, given the spread and extent of this trade, its complete protection is also an impossible dream, even with a substantive increase in the Defence vote. While the whole issue demands closer attention, the answer may well be a considered balance between threat and the cost of full protection.

Certainly, a serious military attack on Australia's territory is highly unlikely. However, part of the reason that this is so is the fact that Australia currently possesses a not inconsequential capability to defeat such an attack. At the core of this capability is our submarine, air strike and air intercept forces.

I note that your Sea Denial Forces do not include any interceptor aircraft, or other means of ensuring the control of the air over the remainder of the force. Do you consider that control of the air is of little importance, or, maybe, that our control of the air is unlikely to be challenged?

Is the ADA seriously advocating the acquisition of an aircraft carrier, or carriers, by Australia, even with the substantive increase in the Defence vote? Surely, a fully capable aircraft carrier for the RAN is another impossible dream.

**Yours sincerely,
Norman Ashworth.**

Dear Editor,

As Michael O'Connor is to retire shortly as National Executive Director of the ADA after 22 years, I believe a public word of 'thanks' is in order from the many long-standing members of the association who witnessed the many years of personal effort and sacrifice made by Michael over that period.

On behalf of the membership, I offer our gratitude to Michael. Although building the ADA from its conception here in WA to a national organisation was always the objective, maintaining the resources and momentum of the national Association was always a hard slog that required a sustained personal dedication.

Defence is always 'somebody else's business', and not a subject of the Australian public's concern or indeed a topic which the community felt it could achieve valid input.

To encourage every Australian, and provide a vehicle of opportunity and forum was the objective of the ADA as a public and community association. For many years Michael O'Connor was able to ensure the ADA satisfied these aims by providing media coverage and support to state branches.

After the cold-war period, defence issues were a long way from being a common topic of discussion within the general Australian public. Most people did not want to know about the issues. Indeed the time was seen by many in the community to justify substantial cutbacks to Australian defence spending.

This was a particularly tough time for the Association. Those who understood the long-term responsibilities of National defence were a minority. It was no use preaching to the converted, who were few. Many State groups were failing to attract interest and maintain numbers.

Michael O'Connor successfully lead a consolidation of the ADA to a corporate status, enabling the survival of the Australia Defence Association to continue its goals in the fickle changing climate of public thought.

Thank you Michael O'Connor, for those 22 years.

**Yours sincerely,
Andrew Fraser Hobday,
Western Australia.**

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nearest Legacy office.**

A tribute to Michael O'Connor

Dr Brian Ridge



Michael O'Connor and Victoria's Governor John Landy, at Mike's investiture as a member of the Order of Australia.

Michael O'Connor was living as a child in Darwin when it was first bombed by the Japanese in February 1942. In the mid 1950s he enthusiastically underwent his turn at national service with the Army, and then stayed on in the Army Reserve throughout the late 1950s. After working for a decade serving the people of Papua New Guinea as a 'Kiap' (patrol officer) and district officer he returned to Australia for family reasons in 1966. He had joined the Royal Australian Navy Volunteer Reserve when on leave from PNG, and later served a long period of full-time service with the Navy in the late 1960s and early 1970s. All these experiences gave Mike a keen sense of the need for adequate national security planning and preparations. Many of the lessons and observations were incorporated into his very well received 1985 book on Australia's defence, *To Live In Peace*, which was willingly launched by retired Foreign Minister and Governor-General, Sir Paul Hasluck.

Mike has been a member of the Australia Defence Association from soon after its foundation in 1975. Since 1981 he has been at the helm of the Association as its Executive Director, first in a part-time capacity and then full time from 1989. Over the last 22 years he has effectively never taken annual leave. Being at the helm of a national body is, of course, never easy and is a far more an activist role than the simple phrase 'being

at the helm' might suggest.

Australia and ADA have been most fortunate to have someone of Mike's calibre actively involved in the debates, musings and action that have been, and continue to be, part and parcel of public policy making concerning Australia's national security. Mike has been a prime force in having defence taken seriously at all levels, but would no doubt modestly see his work as being part of a joint operation involving myriad groups all linked by the desire to see defence gain its proper standing in the Australian body politic. In the Australia Day Honours List this year Mike's sterling efforts were recognised when he was accorded membership of the Order of Australia for his services to Australia and the Association. Last year the Chief of Army awarded him a commendation for similar reasons.

Of course, there has been nothing insular about his approach and over the years Mike has honed links with many individuals and organisations overseas. All this has meant that ADA has remained truly global in its appreciation of what are the critical factors for the evolution and implementation of a credible defence policy.

Mike has also been tireless in making himself available for the press in order to sell the ADA's message. His patient and careful counselling of generations of journalists has made him the frequent



Mike and Colleen enjoy the garden party at Government House following Mike's investiture.

first point of call when defence issues arise. With the apparent muzzling of ADF spokesmen over the last few years Mike has had to take up an even greater burden as de facto ADF liaison officer to the media on many matters.

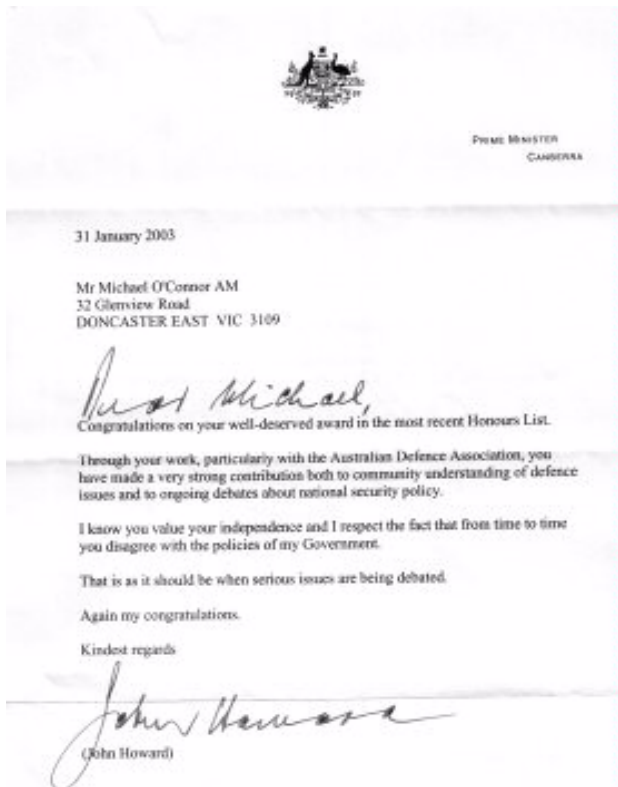
In the background Mike has also been able, in a very effective non-partisan way, to provide objective input and expertise to the major political parties when they periodically re-think their own stances on national security. This non-partisanship has been crucial for maintaining and enhancing ADA's overall public credibility. This credibility could not have been built or maintained without Mike's special insights, skills, mental flexibility and leadership.

A final sign of his basic farsightedness is the way Mike kept the Board on track in planning for his 'retirement' and searching for a successor. As well as facing the inevitability of retirement, Mike realised that the ADA, and ongoing debate and thinking on defence policy generally, needed to be handed on to the next generation. Mike is not giving up the fight entirely, however, and is remaining on the national board of the Association.

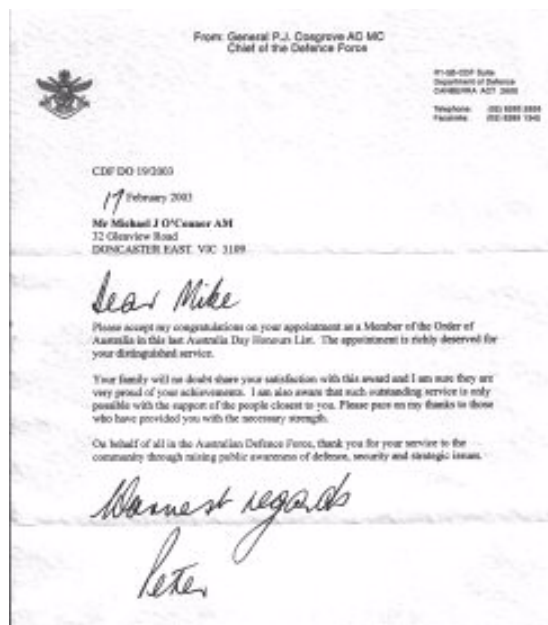
Mike's dedicated service to ADA has been greatly assisted by the support of his wife, Colleen, and his children: Joe, John, Catherine, Helen and Brian. The Association has always preserved its objectivity, independence and professional integrity, but this has, however, usually come at the price of limited financial resources. This, in turn, has unfortunately meant many and sustained personal sacrifices at times by Mike and his family. They would not have had it any other way but this in no way lessened the impact on them or lessens the moral debt we owe them.

The Australia Defence Association, in particular, and Australia generally, have much to thank Mike for. We wish him and Colleen good health and a very satisfying retirement — they have both earned it!

Dr Brian Ridge is the National President of the Australia Defence Association.



Mike's letters of acknowledgement from Prime Minister John Howard and General Peter Cosgrove.



Defending the unprepared

Peter Ryan

When Australian really get stuck into fighting a war, few nations do it better. The valour and effectiveness of our fighting men are acknowledged, and most acknowledged where it matters most — by their enemies who meet them on the battlefield. That is, after we have properly got stuck into it, which is usually about two years after the conflict began.

During that ‘warm-up’ period, we are likely to get belted up all over the place, suffering defeats, withdrawals, brave stands to the last man, and the futile death and maiming of thousands of the best young men of that generation.

These disastrous starts are our own fault, because we’d rather think about the footy than the future. ‘She’ll be right, mate! She’s apples! is not too cruel a caricature of Australia’s traditional approach to foreign policy and defence.

Why do we go on acting though the world were a safe and friendly place? Or as if the envy, cruelty, greed and violence that are part of essential human nature have softened over the last few thousand years? They haven’t, of course; every front page and every television screen daily spread before our eyes the compelling and repellent evidence that the Old Adam (and the Old Eve) are continuing to replicate the inexorable pattern of their genes.

Some of those few who bother to think at all about defence find it all too hard: ‘What’s the use?’ Here we are, a small power, balanced over the edge of a vast cauldron of unpredictable Pacific instability — we’re beaten even before the balloon goes up.’

This view is as dim as it is demeaning. History tells us of many small, tough-nut nations which have maintained their integrity for centuries simply by being formidably armed and trained. What about Sweden and Switzerland? In ordinary life, bullies rarely attack the little kid who is known to be capable of inflicting a nasty black eye or blood nose before he goes under.

And the converse is true: Nothing tempts aggression more than the spectacle of weakness.

It may be a cruel paradox, but military weakness tends to be a product of democracy, the polity which

we would all, in the end, fight to preserve. But an electorate ever greedy for free health, free education, free welfare is naturally against money being spent on guns.

With their exquisitely tuned ears for the cracked note of a lost vote, our politicians of all parties connive at the decayed state of our national defence. If the price of unpreparedness has to be paid in the blood of young soldiers — well, sorry about that, but at least it’s better than our party having lost the last election.

In the threatening circumstances of today, we should all send our leaders regular reminders of the biting lines of Kipling, whose own son died fighting in the Irish Guards in the First World War. Kipling wrote of a then lately dead political figure:

*I could not dig: I dared not rob:
Therefore I lied to please the mob.
Now all my lies are proved untrue
And I must face the men I slew.
What tale shall serve me here among
Mine angry and defrauded young?*

Australia, comfortably set up with one of the highest standards of living in the world, spends a contemptible 1.8 per cent of its gross domestic product on defence, and makes itself an international joke.

These sombre thoughts were provoked by news of the retirement — or semi-retirement — of Michael O’Connor, national executive director of the Australia Defence Association. That admirably voluntary organisation is itself a case study in the virtues of democracy, where citizens may freely come together to promote any lawful objective which to them seems important. The ADA may be a special case of this, because it does not promote simply fringe enthusiasms like mid-winter surfing or steam railways. Its concern is the continuing life of our nation.

The Association was formed at a fateful turning of the hinge of our strategic history — the fall of Saigon in 1975. Its prime movers were three West Australians — a retired air marshal, a director of a chamber of commerce, and the secretary of a trade union. That odd

assortment — as some may think it — is a further pointer to the virtues of democracy: under our system, a true concern for the country's future can bridge all manner of differences of class, background and economic interest.

The choice of Michael O'Connor as national executive director in 1981 was inspired. As a former naval officer he understood the niceties (and nasties) of Service life, protocol and prejudice; as a retired 'kiap' from Papua New Guinea he had mastered the task of what the great Sir Hubert Murray called 'the outside man' — the poor devil away 'out there' who, against which 'head office' can invent, somehow makes the system work in the field.

As an author, O'Connor has shown the wisdom, vision and intellect required to analyse and expound larger ideas. His book *To Live in Peace* described in plain language where Australia's national defences stood on the eve of the twenty-first century, and suggested what we might do about it. The book so impressed retired Governor-General Sir Paul Hasluck that he made a special trip from Perth to Melbourne to launch it for the old Melbourne University Press.

Hasluck and O'Connor had met once before, in what was almost another world, when Mike was in charge of a God-forsaken patrol post deep in the swamps of the Fly River. Hasluck overnighted with him in the bush when making one of his inspections as Minister for Territories. To O'Connor, this long remained one of the best night's conversations he had ever enjoyed, and I mentioned the fact to Hasluck when I wrote inviting him to do the launching. His formal note of acceptance carried two handwritten, dry lines at the foot: 'Don't tell the author this, but when you've been at Kiunga for a while, any conversation might seem good'.

One of the ADA's most useful accomplishments is its journal, *Defender*. This plainly written, no-nonsense quarterly leads us through the gobbledygook jungles of government white papers, strategic reviews, ministerial statements and departmental handouts. And if you seek enlightenment on whether our new Collins-class submarines are any good; on what is happening in Taiwan; or what the breakdown of civil government in Papua New Guinea might portend for Australia's strategic comfort — read *Defender*.

I confess that I turn first, each quarter, to the page contributed by Major Furphy, the wide-eyed innocent who is staff officer to Air Marshal Barney Stoush, Vice Chief of the Defence Force. Like Hans Andersen's child asking about the emperor's new clothes, Furphy artlessly lifts the gold braid, and gives us glimpses of the high-ranking humans underneath it. How does Major Furphy get away with it? My fear is that, when I open *Defender* one day, Furphy will at least have gone too far, and Stoush will have had him court-martialled.

I am of the dwindling generation which recalls at first hand Gull Force, Sparrow Force and Lark Force, 'penny-packets' of men (as our Chief of the General

Staff called them) scattered through the island chains to oppose the Japanese juggernaut of 1942. Lost, almost to a man, I remember the gallant 39 Battalion, teenagers rushed to stem the enemy at Kokoda. The first modern machine gun, they ever saw was delivered to them on the track, where they had to unpack it and work out how it operated.

Do we have to face all this again, perhaps in only a few years time? The answer is Yes, undoubtedly we do, unless an informed and resolute electorate insists that their government (of whatever persuasion) accepts the basic burden of rulers — that they are there to provide the safety of the people. If they fail in that, nothing else counts. The doctrine of *Salus populi suprema est lex* was already old when Cicero pronounced it in ancient Rome.

Editor's note: Peter Ryan's article has been reproduced courtesy of 'Quadrant' and is reprinted here as part of our tribute to Mike O'Connor on his retirement. The results are also testimony to the respect 'Quadrant' readers hold for Peter, as it has brought new subscriptions for 'Defender' at the rate of at least one per day.'

As most 'Defender' readers do not read 'Cicero' in the original, if at all, the translation from the Latin is 'the safety of the people is the supreme law'.

The Army is not like a limited liability company, to be reconstructed, remodelled, liquidated and refloated from week to week as the money market fluctuates.

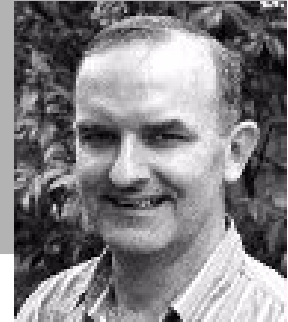
It is not an inanimate thing, like a house, to be pulled down or enlarged or structurally altered at the caprice of the tenant or owner; it is a living thing.

If it is bullied, it sulks; if it is unhappy it pines; if it is harried it gets feverish; if it is sufficiently disturbed, it will wither and dwindle and almost die; and when it comes to this last serious condition, it is only revived by lots of time and lots of money.

**Winston Churchill, Daily Mail,
17 December 1904.**

The changing of the guard

Patrick Gallagher



Many ADA members and supporters have expressed natural curiosity about Mike O'Connor's successor as Executive Director of the Association — Neil James. Some of us already know him well so I was asked to trace a quick pen picture. Neil certainly seems to appreciate the size of the shoes he is now attempting to fill in following on from such a well-known public figure as Mike.

'I have a very similar challenge to that faced by Peter McDonald when he succeeded Eric Risstrom at the Australian Taxpayers Association (now Taxpayers Australia) in the mid 1990s. Taxpayers Australia is a body that is very like the ADA in many ways, especially in being a community-based, apolitical, nationally-focused interest group providing independent and informed comment in an area of considerable public importance.

Eric had been in the TA chair for several decades, even longer than Mike at the ADA, and was widely respected in economic and fiscal debates. Mike's similar long service as the public face and voice of the ADA made him very well respected in the national security arena. Such men are not easy to replace but everyone is eventually succeeded if not always actually replaced.

Interestingly, both of them foresaw the need for generational change as part of the reinvigoration both public debates required. I can only hope that I am eventually somewhere near as successful with the ADA as Peter has been at Taxpayers Australia.'

As to his motivation for leaving the ADF after

three decades, Neil commented that 'all good things must come to an end' and that he came from a family tradition of active participation in community organisations.

'My Dad has been very actively involved all his life in a wide range of charity, sporting, church, business, professional and general community bodies. As a World War II veteran, he was, until recently, also secretary of the Victorian branch of his regimental association since the war. My late mother was a tireless Church and charity worker. Both my brothers were or are extensively involved in various professional and community organisations at state and national level.

Dad has always emphasised to us a simple rule about community service. When asked to do something, don't ask yourself why should you do it but is there any good reason why you shouldn't? I'm certainly not doing it for the money.'

Neil has been an ADA member for some years. He was attracted to the Association because it alone seemed to be trying to take a holistic approach to lobbying for more attention to Australia's defence.

'My time in New Zealand really brought home to me the vital role the ADA plays. The NZDF, and the Kiwis generally, greatly suffer because there is no New Zealand equivalent to effectively keep the politicians and government machinery honest on defence issues.

In Australia, the RUSI does good work but rarely attracts support outside the ADF, ADF retirees and

those few academics with a real interest in national security. The RSL quite naturally is heavily focused on the needs of veterans although it does have broader interests. The Defence Reserves Association quite rightly looks primarily to the interests of defence reservists. The Navy League and the RAAF Association do good work but naturally concentrate on one Service. The Army, to its long-term detriment, has no national lobby but a myriad of tribally focused Corps and regimental associations. Only the ADA takes a modern, joint-Service approach to defence as a whole and is independent of sectional biases.

Even more importantly, only the ADA is broadly anchored in the Australian community at large. As a long-time swinging voter, and confirmed sceptic on any government's record in managing defence well, I was also attracted to the ADA because of its determined apolitical approach and structures. I was even more impressed when I learnt how the ADA did not depend on donations from defence contractors and saw this as the price of its objectivity and independence.'

Neil joined the Army in 1973 and graduated from Duntroon in 1976. He later obtained a Masters degree from ADFA. After regimental service with 1RAR as a platoon commander in Townsville and Malaysia he began over two decades of Intelligence Corps and non-Corps postings around Australia and overseas. He served in West Germany with the British Army, in Kashmir with UNMOGIP and as the first Australian instructor at the Canadian Forces Intelligence School (where he met his Irish wife, Anne).

In the mid 1980s Neil commanded the military intelligence and security staff at Victoria Barracks in Melbourne, a period that included the bombings of Russell Street Police Headquarters and the Turkish Consulate, and the Hoddle and Queen Street mass murders — the first three having significant ADF involvement in the investigations. Neil graduated from Command and Staff College in 1988 and returned to teach there in 1992–93. Over the last decade he was the foundation head of the Joint Intelligence Branch at Headquarters Northern Command in Darwin (where I followed him), served with UNSCOM in Iraq, and was the foundation director of the Army's 'think-tank', the Land Warfare Studies Centre at Duntroon.

He has authored several Army and ADF doctrine manuals but is probably most known for his comprehensive and controversial (in some quarters) Working Paper on higher defence management reform. Entitled *Real Reform of the Defence Management Paradigm: A Fresh View*, it was published in May 2000 by the Australian Defence Studies Centre at ADFA. The paper continues to attract wide support across the ADF and in defence

industry, and encouraging levels of support among progressive thinkers in the Department of Defence. It argues for root and branch reform of departmental bureaucracy to increase accountability and strengthen ministerial oversight. The paper was also partly responsible for Neil's posting to New Zealand. Some saw this as the exile of a critic, but it was more to protect him from the wrath of several senior figures in the Department of Defence who were somewhat uncomfortable with his informed and trenchant style of criticism.

From his trans-Tasman 'exile', In mid 2001 Neil also submitted an article to the Australian Defence Force Journal deftly criticising the Department of Defence's increasingly unworkable public affairs structure and procedures. The article was not published for reasons that have never been explained, especially by the departmental public affairs staff who can now veto what goes in the previously independent journal. A copy of the article was, however, leaked to the Australian Financial Review by someone at Russell Offices. Neil had absolutely nothing to do with the leak but copped a rocket from the CDF nevertheless — an injustice that still smarts. The article accurately predicted a disaster would happen if policies were not changed, and indeed the failure to reform Defence public affairs was a major contributing factor to the subsequent 'children overboard' fiasco.

Similarly, in late 2001 a very interesting essay Neil wrote on the 11 September terrorist attacks was approved by the Chief of Army for publication in the ADF Journal or *Defender*. This too was vetoed by departmental public affairs staff with no reason ever being provided.

His final ADF posting, in 2001–2002, was as the senior ADF officer on exchange with the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF). After leading the organisational design team within the NZDF's new joint headquarters project, Neil stayed on with the newly formed headquarters at Trentham, just outside Wellington. At the completion of his exchange he handed over as head of the joint plans branch (J5) to a Kiwi colonel who had been one of his students at Command and Staff College a decade earlier. This he says 'provided a fitting professional touch to the end of a posting and a career'.

Neil's time in New Zealand brought home several important lessons concerning the importance of informed public debate regarding national security issues, and especially of the importance of respected bipartisan community watchdogs.

'The defence debate in New Zealand is nowhere near as healthy as it is in Australia. Much of this is due to the smaller size of New Zealand's population. But there are other, often more subtle constraints, that do not apply at all or to the same degree in Australia.

The New Zealand political spectrum is markedly to the left of Australia and most OECD countries. Many New Zealanders also have, however unconsciously, quite isolationist views of the world. Furthermore, just like Ireland and Canada, many Kiwis think they can ignore defence as their big neighbour will worry about this for them. All these factors a mixed together in a relatively small political system heavily influenced by dominant personalities, a single-chamber legislature elected by a form of proportional representation, and comparatively large welfare and other single-issue lobbies.

The machinery of government oversight by the New Zealand parliament is also much more politicised and consequently less effective, not least because the absence of an Upper House means a much less disinterested approach by standing parliamentary committees.

This overall political atmosphere results in not enough spending on defence (under half what Australia spends on a per capita basis). While many, Kiwis recognise that this is a serious problem, there are significant difficulties in raising and airing these in public debate.

Not least of these are that there is no New Zealand equivalent to the ADA. When retired NZDF officers speak out they are either not sufficiently apolitical in their affiliations, or are brusquely dismissed as 'geriatric generals'. As New Zealand political society is much smaller and often everyone knows everyone, Kiwi governments tend to be less comfortable with public debate and often more vindictive towards their critics. As a consequence, many Kiwis fear speaking out and risking future government business.

My two years with the NZDF really brought home to me the importance of a bipartisan, independent community watchdog on defence issues. The parliamentary and bureaucratic processes cannot, and should not, be the sole input into national security debates.'

Neil hopes to give the ADA all his effort over the next few years.

'Mike has done an incredible job in keeping the Association going with such scant resources. He couldn't have done it without the membership, and particularly those members and supporters who have so generously kicked in far more than their fair share of the financial burden.

Mike has also put the national office together in such a way that it provides a superb foundation for future growth. I see one of my priorities as working with individual members and the local chapters to grow the membership. This is not so much to strengthen our financial base. Even more importantly the government, opposition and bureaucracy react to popular pressure. If everywhere

senior figures went in Australia they met even small numbers of determined and articulate ADA members they could not so easily neglect defence issues.'

Finally, Neil's thoughts on moving the ADA national office to Canberra may be of interest to ADA members and supporters.

'The move was not a decision the ADA Board took lightly. One of the particular strengths of the ADA has been its community base throughout Australia, especially outside the Sydney–Melbourne–Canberra triangle. There is always a risk of getting unduly influenced by 'Canberra agendas'.

This said, however, the ability to positively influence the defence debate is probably strengthened by a Canberra base. Ministers, Opposition spokespersons and parliamentary backbenchers gather together there regularly. The Defence Department and the headquarters of the ADF and the three Services are in Canberra, as are the three Service 'think-tanks', and the three principal academic centres focused on national security issues. Just as importantly, the national media networks report most defence issues from their Canberra offices.

We'll give it a try for a year or two and if a Canberra base does not work we can always move back to the real Australia.'

Neil and his wife Anne, a physiotherapist, have three children: Ashling, Maeve and Declan. Given the Association's relatively limited resources, taking over from Mike will be, to some extent, a challenge for the whole family. But as Anne and Neil have noted, 'if Mike and Colleen can so successfully bring up five children we can certainly bring up three'.

In closing, I must say that it is difficult to do Neil justice in such a short article so would encourage any ADA member or supporter to give him a ring if I have been unable to provide an adequate profile. I know I speak for many ADA members when I wish Neil and his family well for the future.

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

Thomas Sowell

by **Australis**

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

Gunsmoke and mirrors

Inadequate defence funding is a longstanding problem in Australia. It was not so long ago that several of the principal welfare, education and health lobbies were calling for massive cuts in supposed high defence spending. Major clamouring along these lines from one welfare lobby actually occurred only a fortnight before the ADF had to be committed to resolve the September 1999 East Timor crisis. As the crisis broke, the same organisation was then heard demanding urgent and unilateral armed intervention in East Timor in a 'damn the consequences' fashion. This vignette aptly illustrates the type of short-term and narrow-minded thinking, and uninformed and emotive inputs, that perpetually plague political debates on defence issues in Australia.

The current government on coming to power rightly deserves some credit for its foresight and disciplined record in not cutting defence spending when most federal programs were cut or capped to some extent. Indeed, our ability to help the East Timorese and rescue Indonesia from its own folly, would not have been achieved without the early 1999 decision to bring the second of our only two (and understrength) regular brigades to a higher state of operational readiness. The declaration in the 2000 White Paper to increase defence spending by around three per cent per year in real terms was also welcome, although not enough to reverse the effects of decades of comparative neglect under governments of both political persuasions.

The essential fact remains, however, that despite the ringing security rhetoric of the Treasurer's speech introducing the 2003–04 federal budget, Australia continues to allocate insufficient national resources to its defence.

In analysing this year's Commonwealth budget for defence we need to concentrate on the big picture over time. Hyperbole about relatively small items in any one particular year, such as \$22 million in 2003–04 for a new headquarters for Special Operations Command, only distracts us from the magnitude and longevity of the overall underfunding.

Even discounting the hype, the opaque way the

accounts are presented continues to hide or distort the reality. Even the welcome demise of the unnecessary distraction of the capital charge will not blast away the mists of confusion. It is especially worthy to note that the principal broadsheet newspapers in the days following presentation of the federal budget, and the following week's edition of the *Bulletin*, all had significantly different figures for Defence spending, and the size of supposed increases in both dollar and percentage terms.

There is an old business adage that you cannot manage what you cannot measure. The format and structure of Defence accounting does not assist ministers and parliament in understanding and prioritising ADF requirements, nor does it help to explain to the Australian people where the money goes and why. Furthermore, given the long lead times and five-year rolling acquisition programs to introduce or update ADF capabilities, Defence is a notoriously difficult function to fund. The technical accounting problems also cannot be resolved entirely until the overall accountability problems within the bloated Defence bureaucracy are solved by root and branch reforms.

The ADA has also always been firmly of the view that one-off costs, such as the \$650 million supplementation over several years to cover our participation in the Iraq intervention, should not be included in assessments of whether defence funding has increased. Nor should our additional \$100 million provision towards the rebuilding of Iraq. By their essential unpredictability, wars or major peacekeeping operations are really one-off events and impossible to fit into longer-term defence capability development and capability maintenance planning.

The one-off cost of the recent war is just like paying for unforecast but necessary repairs to national infrastructure after major bushfires or floods. Although clearly distracting to the overall federal budget strategy, especially the decision to aim for a budget surplus no smaller than \$2 billion, the cost of the war is really neither here nor there in terms of developing and sustaining the size and type of defence force Australia needs in the long term. This is especially so regarding the Defence Capability Plan, which, among other things, seeks to

manage in an orderly fashion the continuous and rolling need to adequately modernise and re-equip the ADF.

This budget's small increase in defence spending (around \$570 million at most depending on how you convert the figures) reflects only the limited three per cent real growth per annum promised in the 2000 Defence White Paper anyway. Our strategic circumstances have changed greatly since this White Paper was published three years ago and much greater defence spending is now even more essential. One illustration of the problem is that this year's defence allocation is actually \$41 million less than the last budget's forecast allocation for this year (\$13,970 m compared with the last budget's projection of \$14,011 m for 2003–04).

With defence spending down to well under two per cent of GDP (1.8 per cent by some calculations) we are not even treading water that well. The gap between White Paper assessments of what is needed and actual spending since 1987 is now over \$100 billion. Defence spending needs to be at least 2.3 per cent of GDP in order to catch up for decades of relative neglect. It needs to be even greater to pay for the modern, versatile, operationally ready and sustainable defence force we actually need.

However, the Association notes that before defence spending is increased to the level really needed, major organisational and corporate governance reforms are required in the Department of Defence. These are essential to ensure the money is used wisely, and that our defence strategy and ADF capability development processes are sufficiently robust.

Finally, ADA members and *Defender* readers are likely to meet fellow Australians who may mistakenly believe that defence spending is somehow too high or that Australia cannot afford to spend more. We all need to take every opportunity to explain instead the stark truth. One of the best ways of doing so is to present the uninformed with the stark comparisons. Defence spending is now only the fourth largest national outlay (it was actually fifth for a while until government debt was reduced). Australia spends at least 5 to 6 times as much on welfare, at least 3 to 4 times as much on health, and at least 2 to 3 times as much on education, as we do on defence. Even without acknowledging our current and foreseeable difficult strategic circumstances, this low spending on defence should concern all Australians.

The Commonwealth alone spends five times as much on social welfare as it spends on defence. Federal spending on health alone is now over twice that spent on defence even before the significant spending by the States (on what is primarily a State responsibility) is included. Federal spending alone on education (also primarily a State responsibility and about half of each State budget) is virtually the same as that spent on defence. The defence budget seems relatively high to some because they fail to realise that it is met solely by federal spending.

Whatever your views on the importance of social welfare, health and education spending we need to face up to our neglect regarding an issue at least as important — our national defence.

The darkening ecliptic

The apparently post-Modernist approach to public affairs continues in the Department of Defence's intriguingly titled Public Affairs and Corporate Communications (PACC) Division. Ern Malley would have been proud of them.

Over the last three years the number of queries to the ADA from the media has increased exponentially. As a rough rule-of-thumb about a half to two-thirds of these queries have primarily involved journalists seeking simple facts, basic explanations or historical background on various aspects of the ADF.

Prior to the advent of the highly bureaucratised, centralised and 'politically focused' PACC, such uncontroversial, security-neutral and/or basic queries were invariably handled, very promptly and efficiently, by uniformed ADF members working in the Directorates of Public Information answerable to the CDF and the three Service Chiefs.

The media appear to now often contact the ADA instead and increasingly regard the Association as a de facto Defence public-affairs body. On receiving such basic queries, journalists contacting the ADA are usually asked 'have they sought the information required from Defence'. Almost invariably the response falls into one or more of six categories:

- civilian PACC staff do not know the answer and/or how to find it out;
- the time that PACC staff have advised will be necessary to furnish an answer is either unknown or clearly exceeds filing deadlines for the story;
- PACC staff have simply not rung back;
- the answer provided by PACC staff has been irrelevant, incomplete or contradictory to other research of open sources;
- the journalist was referred to the ADA by Defence public-relations staff; or
- the journalist no longer believes it is worth the effort to seek the information from PACC in the first place.

Now the standard of question asked by many generalist journalists allocated a defence storyline to follow up is often very badly thought through. Questions from such defence neophytes frequently show only the most cursory understanding of defence issues, international affairs, Australian history and Australian governance. This is all the more reason, however, to staff Defence public affairs with experienced ADF officers and senior NCO/sailors from operational backgrounds like we used to do fairly well. Journalists need to talk directly to 'operators' in order to get timely and real answers to their questions.

However, for argument's sake, let us allow for the strictly controlled information flow theory inherent in the centralised bureaucratic model instituted through PACC. Let us also ignore for a moment the apparent preference to employ civilian staff with little understanding or knowledge of the ADF. Even ignoring these two aspects,

it still seems silly at best that media queries with no political sensitivity or security connotation cannot be handled efficiently and quickly. This approach also seems purpose-designed to exacerbate negative perceptions and stories rather than kill them during their gestation with the facts and/or an appropriate commonsense ADF perspective.

Some recent examples of other journalistic frustration with PACC include:

- A broadsheet journalist having to wait 28 hours when posing the simple query — what are the three largest ADF bases in Australia in terms of people stationed there?
- A broadsheet journalist wanting to write a ‘good news’ story on one Service’s recruiting activities in a certain State was continually fobbed off for some weeks from contact with the recruiting staff concerned.
- A television journalist seeking to interview ADF personnel, as to their professional judgement concerning the (non-controversial) mooted replacement for a certain weapon system, being refused all access to the units and individuals concerned.

Now we should not ignore that some parts of PACC work well. But the unprofessional chaos in ‘front office’ public affairs, and the flawed management philosophy and practices underlying PACC itself, are essentially caused by Defence ignoring three fundamental principles of military operations.

First, ADF public affairs is first and foremost a function of command, at all levels, and ADF commanders should be trusted to run their own public affairs. If they cannot be so trusted they should not be commanders at any level. If the commander’s staff do not know which public-affairs issues are sensitive and might require referral upwards to the minister, or horizontally to the department, they should not be ADF officers.

Second, in modern war, even more so than in the past, information is an essential tool of warfighting. It is an operational function and responsibility at all levels, not an administrative or bureaucratic one.

Third, the ADF fights as it trains and operates in peacetime. If ADF commanders and their staffs cannot handle their own public affairs in peacetime as they move up through the ranks, where do they gain the expertise to do so when deployed on operations with far greater public-affairs pressures and responsibilities?

The current structure and practice of Defence public affairs is riddled with serious moral, professional and practical contradictions. Many of Australia’s most experienced journalists invariably describe PACC as a nightmare or worse. Even excluding the lessons of the so-called ‘children overboard’ debacle still ringing in our ears, a fundamental commonsense rethink is urgently required. It is the ADA’s firm belief that the dubiously titled PACC would and should not survive such a review.

In the meantime, given the high workload for the ADA due to PACC’s apparent inability to do the job, the Association is now considering invoicing the

Department of Defence for its onerous public-affairs services on the ADF’s behalf.

Rooting out terrorists from the verbiage

The ongoing trials in Indonesia of the Bali bombers should bring many of our national security debates in Australia down to earth but we would not bet on it. Several of the terrorists have declared in open court they hate us because we are ‘white’ and ‘Western’ and believe our deaths do not matter because of this. The ideological material discovered by the Indonesian Police investigating the bombing is generally just as intellectually shallow, and is riddled with religious bigotry, racism, misogyny, homophobia and extremely puritanical views on socialising, alcohol consumption and sex. Put simply, they fear and loathe Western liberal democracy and its pluralism and tolerance.

If the terrorists understood our systems and beliefs well enough they might smile more often, especially when our way of doing things unnecessarily delays essential action to thwart their attacks. Given the yawning tolerance and accountability gap between them and us, the question of which terrorist groups should be proscribed in Australia, and what degree of counter-terrorist measures might be temporarily necessary, are essentially simple ones.

There are natural concerns about allowing the Government to just add terrorist groups to the proscribed list but some appropriate safeguard mechanism is surely not beyond the realms of reason. This is especially so as terrorist groups mutate and change their names with some frequency. A parliamentary vote being required each time such a mutation occurs seems clumsy and time consuming at best. Furthermore, given the record and views of some fringe parties in the Senate, it is also reasonable to harbour concerns about commonsense always being applied if a parliamentary vote is always necessary. Basing our list on UN processes is also not an option. The UN invariably fails to act quickly, or agree on the obvious, such as Hezbollah being a terrorist organisation.

Similar circumstances beset consideration of the new ASIO Bill becalmed in the Senate for the last six months. A major stopping point is the proposed, and strictly limited, provision to detain terrorist suspects for questioning for up to seven days. Other concerns centre on the proposal to limit access to lawyers in some circumstances during an urgent ongoing investigation, and the safeguards when detaining legal minors for questioning. Without denying Australia’s proud liberal democratic traditions, none of these provisions appear unreasonable in the current circumstances. The fact we are debating them at such length proves the strength of our system and why abuses of authority are unlikely. Such provisions are also similar to the draconian national security regulations that applied temporarily during both World Wars and these, on the whole, worked very well with minimal abuses occurring.

It is also worth noting a recent national security example where concerns about the potential for ASIO abuses proved quite unfounded. The claimed need for an independent 'Security Appeals Tribunal' was a major cause celebre for ASIO's critics in the 1960s and 1970s. They feared that public service advancement, and other rewards and rights, were somehow being wrongly denied on security grounds. After being set up during the Whitlam Government with much fanfare, the tribunal was later merged with other human rights bodies due to sustained lack of work.

The current impasses with the ASIO Bill and in how we list acknowledged terrorist organisations for proscription are inexcusable. Given the testimony in the Bali and Jakarta terrorist trials, all parties in Australia contributing to this situation should revisit their professed positions and expedite commonsense measures to protect Australia without further delay.

Counting them all out and counting them all back

As for all Australia's previous wars the Government committed the ADF to the war in Iraq using the millennium-old Crown prerogative conferred under Section 61 of the Constitution. Even if Australia became a republic, and even if the Westminster model of government was discarded, it is likely this power would not fundamentally change except for the term perhaps becoming 'executive privilege'.

While there was and remains some party-political controversy about the current government's decision to commit the ADF to military operations in Iraq, all the major and minor parties represented in Parliament appeared to express their support for the forces once they were committed. This is as it should be and the ADF deserves no less.

It has also been encouraging to see both government and opposition parliamentarians join the Australian community in the farewell and welcome home ceremonies for the forces deployed on our behalf.

Such ceremonies are truly national occasions. They are above partisan politics and inter-State or inter-Service rivalries. The time-honoured and tested traditions and protocols involved emphasise the importance of the ADF in Australian life as one of our oldest, most integrated and honoured national institutions. In constitutional and professional terms, such national ceremonies especially illustrate that the ADF is apolitical in function and history and that it serves all Australians equally. Such national ceremonies particularly emphasise that while the ADF quite properly always carries out the lawful orders of the government of the day, the defence force itself has a wider and longer-term reciprocal relationship with, and responsibilities to, the Australian people.

It has therefore been more than a pity that the farewell and welcome home ceremonies for the ADF elements who served in Iraq have not had the traditional 'above politics'

theme that would come with the presiding dignitary being the Governor General or the relevant State Governor.

Whether in truth or just common perception, and on this matter it does not much matter which applies, it seems both of the main parties have, at times, sought to make party-political capital out of such ceremonies or the associated media coverage. This is to be regretted. It is hoped the appropriate sense of constitutional perspective and professional decorum prevails in future.

After all, even Parliament is always opened by the Governor-General rather than a politician for similar reasons.

Structuring the ADF to sustain our enduring national interests

With the war in Iraq another generation of Australian Service personnel have seen combat in the Middle East. At least this time round we did not have to capture Damascus yet again.

Once again Australia's enduring national interests required the projection of force outside our territory and its immediate region. Once again we were a junior partner in a multinational coalition. Once again this coalition included several of the principal Anglo-Saxon democracies. This is at least the tenth time these national security criteria have applied over the last century or so.

Some commentators have expressed the hope that this latest lesson in the apparent folly of configuring the ADF primarily for semi-independent 'home defence' will be absorbed. The Association wishes it were so. Australian history, however, shows a perpetual swing of the pendulum between the 'home defence' and 'wider international interests' camps under various labels. What cannot be denied, by either camp, is that the pendulum swings have resulted in the ADF generally being too small to cope with the eventual calls made on our forces. Today is no different. The ADF faces increasing calls — and likely future ones — without possessing many of the capabilities actually required. At best, this needlessly risks casualties and/or strategic embarrassment. Even worse consequences need to be considered without being at all alarmist.

All three Armed Services continue to struggle with increasing capability development problems, especially in obtaining realistic numbers and types of modern equipment, and in closing the interoperability gap with Australia's major allies. The underfunded 10-year Defence Capability Plan continues to struggle with resolving the key problem that so many of our major weapons platforms are becoming obsolescent over the same short period. All three Services do not have sufficient people, not least because we too often quickly wear out those we have through high operational and training tempos.

The war in Iraq illustrated our much-reduced capabilities dramatically. The UK contingent was 45,000

strong with modern equipment. A proportionate Australian contribution would have been 15,000 not 2,000. One of the reasons we did not send a larger force was that we couldn't. Even if we had the time to scrape together a larger force, it would have lacked enough modern equipment to fight in a modern battlespace and we could not have rotated or sustained the force anyway.

The vehemence of the debate between the two camps, at least since the 1980s, is partly due to the defence debate having been unfortunately monopolised by a relatively small group of academics, bureaucrats and diplomats. Various governments, and the people of Australia, should have not permitted this sad state of affairs to arise, let alone to allow it to flourish like a noxious weed. At the very least, this latest strategic lesson for Australia over Iraq has (as did the East Timor crisis before it) emphasised a vital point. Public debates on national security issues should be just that — public and debated. What passes for a debate must never again be monopolised by self-selected, intellectually incestuous, insular and self-styled 'elites'. The results of strategic deliberations must never again be a supposed consensus foisted on us by such a flawed process.

Time for a national security Green Paper?

Any strategic deliberations have to grapple with the profound sea change gathering force in our global strategic architecture. Despite being rescued by the US, UK and Australia over prolonged Iraqi defiance of its strictures, the UN and its underlying concept of collective security continues to struggle for effectiveness and credibility.

As the UN and regional collective security organisations dither, debacles of national disintegration and horrific human rights abuse continue in west, central and southern Africa. North Korean brinkmanship is resurgent and Japan is now openly proposing a break with its post-World War II restraints concerning the projection of force. The macro- and micro-states of the Pacific basin continue to disintegrate socio-economically, although some optimism is beginning to revive about Fiji. Terrorism by Islamic fanatics threatens the West, delays resolution of the Israel–Palestine dilemma and destabilises central, south and South East Asia.

The US can, and now is, withdrawing forces from Saudi Arabia in toto, and increasingly from Turkey, Germany, France and the Low Countries. NATO seems increasingly driven by the types of membership tensions, wishful thinking and loss of focus that led to SEATO's demise. In North Asia, the US appears to be headed towards a redeployment and large downscaling of its 100,000-strong forward deployments in South Korea and Okinawa.

The time for an integrated Green Paper on Australia's national security is now well and truly upon

us. This should, in turn, lead to a single, integrated White Paper rather than separate defence and foreign affairs and trade versions.

Just as importantly, such papers must be developed by intellectually and morally robust, and professionally inclusive, processes. The White Paper in particular must be drafted by a broadly drawn expert team, which includes the full range of ADF and diplomatic expertise available, and which is supervised by the Chief of Defence Force, Service Chiefs and relevant Permanent Heads. In this way we would avoid the many flaws, underlying intellectual dishonesty and overly prescriptive nature of most recent Defence White Papers. These numerous flaws in process and result largely occurred because principles of accountable governance and ADF professionalism were forgotten or deliberately ignored. This wrongly allowed recent White Papers to be developed in detail, and with far too much internal bureaucratic secrecy, by a small, narrowly drawn and closeted clique of Defence civilian bureaucrats.

On the right path but too small a step

The recently announced government initiative to form a Defence and Security Division within the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet is a small step forward in interdepartmental and inter-agency cooperation. The proposed separation of international issues into a separate division, however, does seem somewhat contradictory. If the bureaucratic method is to be followed, perhaps what is really needed is one integrated national security division.

The ADA has long believed, however, that solutions primarily dependent on bureaucratic reorganisation, or which are focused on one problem at a time, will not adequately address the real need for integrated national security decision making as well as bureaucratic coordination. This is the main reason why a specialist department of 'homeland security' is not required in Australia's case.

Starting from first principles, the National Security Committee of Cabinet appears to have functioned particularly well in the current government. The Association believes that this cabinet committee would function even better if directly served by a National Security Council. This Council should be established by statute and vested with appropriately delegated executive authorities and administrative co-ordination responsibilities. The Council should be supported by a deliberately small and independent secretariat not a division within the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Most Australians would understand why the last Defence White Paper went to the National Security Committee of Cabinet accompanied, appropriately, by the then Chief of Defence Force (CDF) and Secretary

of the Department of Defence. They might wonder, however, why senior Defence civilian bureaucrats were also present for discussions but the three Service Chiefs were excluded.

The backdoor demise in the mid 1990s of the statutory interdepartmental Defence Committee (comprising the CDF, Service Chiefs, Director-General ASIO and key Permanent Heads) has resulted in some highly unfortunate consequences. Not least of these is the exclusion of the commanders of the navy, army and air force from the highest-level interdepartmental committees involved with national security issues. This is just plain silly and unprecedented by any comparable international standard or practice.

Furthermore, in the case of a future integrated national security White Paper, there would obviously have to be high-level input from many departments and agencies. The current 'process' of committees of some departmental Permanent Heads supported by lower-level interdepartmental committees and task forces needs serious reform.

Given the integrated approach to national security now required, Australia needs a proper National Security Council rather than interdepartmental committees comprised of officials only. Such a council would involve ministers, senior ADF commanders and civilian officials in a similar manner to the War Cabinet and later the War Conference instituted during World War II.

Our proposed National Security Council would be chaired by an appropriate minister, and include all or most of the members of the National Security Committee of Cabinet when required by the seriousness of the issue. The Council would also always include: the Chief of Defence Force and all three Service Chiefs; the Directors-General of the Office of National Assessments, the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation and the Australian Secret Intelligence Service; the Commissioner of the Australian Federal Police; and the heads of key departments (Defence, Foreign Affairs, Treasury and Attorney-general's). Some State premiers might also be invited to attend from time to time when relevant.

A National Security Council constituted along these lines would allow the highest political level of government to be continually across the issues and up with the thinking of its most senior professional advisers. It would also stop much of the process-driven bureaucratic game playing that sometimes prevents ministers from being as fully informed as they should be (and the expert advice of the Service Chiefs being excluded).

Many will be the self-serving arguments against such a concept from various senior officials. There are, however, no valid constitutional, legal or professional impediments. In the light of 21st century whole-of-nation threats a whole-of-government response, not a bureaucratic response, is clearly required.

Garnering disaster

While the force-on-force phase of the US-led campaign to topple Saddam Hussein succeeded beyond nearly all expectations, the continuing chaos of the subsequent occupation risks undoing much of the good. Over two months after organised Iraqi resistance collapsed in early April the allies still appear to have inadequate forces to impose order on the chaos.

US Defence Secretary Rumsfeld's direction to cut the forces needed may have appeared to work for the fight but any campaign also includes the consolidation and the orderly withdrawal phases. Occupations, even relatively benevolent ones, soak up forces until a semblance of street-level law and order is re-imposed and public confidence is restored enough for some semblance of normality to return. The corrupting nature and longevity of Saddam Hussein's regime and the Sunni-Shia schism in Iraq, has contributed to the problem as there is little enduring civil society to fall back on for rebuilding.

Unless this situation is fixed quickly, the US risks replicating the British quitting of Aden in 1968 on a large scale, rather than midwifing the first of a new order of democracies throughout the Middle East. Even worse, the US at first seemed to lack the will to restore order. Growing Iraqi impatience and even antipathy to their liberators may be in no small part due to many Iraqis just wanting enough order re-imposed, however temporarily, so they can eat, drink and work before moving forward to rebuild and democratise Iraq.

Despite pre-war Pentagon hype about post-war planning there were obviously not enough occupiers to deter or stop post-combat looting. Such looting also continued for far too long. Whatever the reality, the whole world unfortunately contrasted the photos of a well-protected Oil Ministry with the burnt-out shells of other ministries and museums. Losing much of the common treasure of mankind's earliest urban civilisation, despite Iraqis being the looters, was a colossal goal for the allies in the struggle of perceptions. Not giving Iraqis the bulldozers to topple the statues of Saddam Hussein on their own, and draping US flags everywhere, were examples of unprofessional military discipline and unnecessary triumphalism we may all regret in the long run.

There was an easily foreseen serious shortage of Arabic interpreters during combat operations that led to many unnecessary civilian deaths through misunderstandings and concern about suicide bombers. Misunderstandings and, much worse still, proliferate with a US armed forces not well populated with diggers oozing cross-cultural awareness and sensibility. Many US soldiers interviewed on TV continue to say exactly the wrong thing.

Given the US's long involvement with the Middle East it is somewhat surprising that they had no 21st century, Arabic speaking, 'General MacArthur' equivalent waiting in the wings. While things have looked up since the diplomat Paul Bremer eventually replaced the profoundly

charisma-challenged Jay Garner, a long and difficult road lies ahead.

If it all turns to disaster it may be morally and politically difficult for Australia to avoid shouldering a greater burden in the consolidation phase of the campaign. A requirement to contribute a reasonable number of ground troops to the occupation of Iraq would impose a near-impossible burden on the ADF, especially while our commitment to the security of East Timor continues. We simply lack the troops to meet, let alone sustain, both commitments.

Fragmentasi?

Last month hopes for a peaceful solution to the Aceh problem in Indonesia were again dashed. The current Indonesian government has again resorted to trying an exclusively military solution to what is a political, religious and cultural dilemma. It is noteworthy that the Swedish diplomats mediating the negotiations between Indonesia and the Gerakan Aceh Merdeka (GAM), representing the secessionist Acehnese, have attributed the failure of the talks almost exclusively to Indonesia.

The Indonesian leadership and military (TNI) appear to have learnt little from their long but counter-productive campaign in East Timor, or indeed from previous counter-productive campaigns in Aceh. Initial objective international press and Red Cross reporting from Aceh has not helped Indonesia's case. While GAM are certainly not angels either, it will be hard for Indonesia to hide abuses by excluding the international and domestic media, and diplomats and NGO, as it did in East Timor during the 1970s and most of the 1980s.

The problem of Aceh is likely to pose a growing moral and practical dilemma for Indonesia's neighbours. While the case for Aceh's secession from Indonesia is different in fact and international law from that of East Timor (and of West Papua), continued Indonesian atrocities in Aceh may eventually cancel this out as it did for Serbia over Kosovo. There are clearly limits to the legal defence of invoking state sovereignty, especially where persistent and serious human-rights violations are involved and the secession appears to have considerable popular support in the territory concerned.

Furthermore, even more importantly, Indonesia itself cannot properly democratise while it is prepared to sanction the use of armed force — rather than consent — to hold on to provinces that strongly desire to secede. As Mahatma Gandhi noted, 'you cannot really be free while you oppress others'. Indonesia cannot be truly democratic itself at the national level unless it permits free provincial elections in Aceh (and elsewhere). While it is arguable how much popular support GAM really has, especially if not allowed to sway the result by intimidation, Indonesia needs to truly face the prospect that GAM or a moderate secessionist party might overwhelmingly win a free election. There is also no accurate method of determining GAM's true level of support without such a free election.

Australia's strategic relationship with Indonesia is an exceptionally complex one by any standard of international relations. We are locked together in perpetuity by simple geographic proximity and strategic inter-dependence. As well as coping with all the contrasts in ethnicity, religion, culture, economics and demography, our two countries have starkly differing national foundation myths.

Australians freely chose to join in a federal union, with some other possible constituents (such as New Zealand) deciding not to. Most Australians would have accepted a choice by the Cocos Islanders to go their own way if they had chosen this option in their UN-supervised 1984 referendum. Similarly, while it is an unlikely possibility it is virtually unthinkable, for example, that Australia would not let Western Australia or Norfolk Island secede should they freely choose to do so. Most secessionist impulses in Australia attract only fringe support because the arguments for and against secession can be freely debated and tested in a calm atmosphere. Federalism in Australia is as democratic as it can be and matures as our country matures. It minimises our regional differences by genuinely popularising our shared history and outlook. On the whole Australian federalism also shares national resources between its constituent states, with the resources largely flowing from the richer states and regions to the poorer ones by general consent. Our federalism draws us together in fact and perception.

In contrast, Indonesian decolonisation and 'nation building' was based on the concept of 'inheriting' Dutch authority over an otherwise diverse group of ethnic communities, cultures and polities. Despite promises to the outlying islands, federalism was strangled at birth because it was, and largely still is, seen as driving 'Indonesians' apart rather than drawing them together. Many Indonesians in the outlying islands also consider that national resources are being plundered by the majority Javanese rather than shared equitably. Three generations of Indonesians have also grown up deliberately immersed in the questionable belief that any successful secession would mean the end of multi-ethnic Indonesia as a whole. Particularly when general Indonesian federalism is perpetually postponed, the danger is that such a myth can needlessly become self-fulfilling when a secession becomes inevitable anyway. These effects can be seen in the manner in which many Indonesians have superficially reconciled themselves to the loss of East Timor. Many, perhaps most, regret its loss rather than truly face up to why Indonesia 'lost' the territory. The farcical sentences now being awarded by Indonesian courts allegedly trying cases of human-rights violations in East Timor exemplify the enormity of Indonesia's self-perception problem.

At this juncture, Australia has little alternative but to maintain a public position that Aceh is an internal Indonesian problem. Obviously attempts need to be made to encourage peace talks to resume and for the Indonesian government not to sanction continued harsh repression

by the TNI and national police. GAM should also not be allowed to get away with egregious propaganda. This will be a hard 'row to hoe' for Australian diplomacy. Meanwhile it is probable the civilian casualties will continue to mount and the world will continue to take notice. It remains more than likely that elements of the TNI will again shoot Indonesia in the foot — perhaps mortally.

In the longer term, especially if, as seems probable, the TNI campaign continues to harden rather than weaken Acehnese resolve, Australia faces the same fundamental moral and strategic dilemmas posed by the Indonesian invasion of East Timor. In the case of East Timor, our de facto and subsequent (unique) de jure recognition of the territory's forcible incorporation into Indonesia because of supposed 'realpolitik' eventually collided with our other enduring national interests. These included Australia's moral conscience, pervasive democratic outlook and burgeoning international pressure for resolution. Just as importantly, 'realpolitik' eventually dictated the strategic need to finally heal a continually festering and worsening wound infecting the overall bilateral relationship. As many observers have noted, even a threatened or actual short war with Indonesia in support of East Timorese independence in 1975 might have caused far less bilateral damage in the long run. Even more to the point, these collisions over enduring national interests were driven more by Indonesian blunders and wider international consequences than by our own shrewd diplomatic navigation.

By the early 1990s, as Falantil resistance in East Timor strengthened rather than weakened after a long colonial occupation, some perceptive Indonesians realised the game was up. Indonesia had by then lost even the option of achieving a compromise solution, such as provincial autonomy within the republic, because of central government intransigence and loss of moral authority through repression. It seems such a great pity that a harsh lesson of Indonesian history seems about to repeat itself over Aceh.

As in East Timor (and West Papua), Indonesia faces the continuing paradox of colonialism eventually faced by all colonial powers. That most Indonesians cannot even begin to see themselves as colonisers only exacerbates the fundamental problem of confused national identity. True democratisation of Indonesian society would help such national self-realisation, but even if this occurs it seems probable it will not happen quick enough to forestall another disaster.

More Indonesians need to study French history. The French were unwilling to acknowledge the lessons of their forced withdrawal from Indo-China in the mid 1950s. In the late 1950s too many of the French could not accept that Algeria was not a department of France itself but an overseas colony yearning to be free. As with Indonesia's continuing colonial dilemma in West Papua and elsewhere, the parallels in Aceh with French colonialism in Algeria remain striking.

While Australia obviously cannot be seen to be encouraging the dismemberment of its largest neighbour, some contingency consideration needs to be undertaken. If some measure of Indonesian disintegration becomes inevitable, would it not be better for both our countries to assist Indonesia to manage such a transition. Despite the lessons of East Timor (and many other examples with other countries), Australian policy, at present, often seems to be based on an assumption that Indonesia is an immutable polity, and that if we ignore secessionist pressures in Indonesia they should, and will, simply go away.

Japan strikes in

In the light of continued North Korean brinkmanship Japan's Prime Minister, Junichiro Koizumi, has finally said openly what many Japanese leaders have said privately for years. Mr Koizumi made his remarks to an upper house parliamentary committee in late May examining proposed war contingency legislation that has already passed through the lower house of parliament. The bill is intended to provide the government with greater powers to forestall or react to potential attacks on Japan.

Mr Koizumi's preparedness to consider pre-emptive action against aggressors (most notably North Korea) echo similar remarks by Defence Minister Shigeru Ishiba earlier this year. To exemplify the change of stance Mr Koizumi has also proposed renaming the Japanese Self-Defence Forces as a navy, army and air force. These latest changes to Japan's defence posture are understandable steps along the progression that really took off with Japan accepting the responsibility in the mid 1980s to protect its sea lanes of communication out to one thousand nautical miles from Japan itself.

Japanese participation in US plans for theatre missile defence now seem certain, as does Japan's acquisition of cruise missiles for a first-strike capability. Japan is, however, not proposing any reconstitution of the large force projection and strategic mobility capabilities that allowed it to conquer much of the Pacific Basin in the early 1940s.

The reaction of China and South Korea to these latest comments will prove very interesting. Japan's neighbours have known this day would eventually come but are nonetheless not comforted by the forecast. Japanese diplomats are no doubt working overtime in Seoul and Beijing. In the latter capital, they are no doubt alluding to China's part in forcing the decision through its failure to satisfactorily influence North Korea to be a responsible international actor.

While the two generations of Australians with personal experience of Japanese aggression in the 1930s and 1940s grow ever smaller, a strong degree of strategic suspicion concerning Japan also lurks in the Australian national psyche. This has not been alleviated by Japanese official and popular reluctance to face up to its past in the same manner as Germany or even Russia. Contemporary

Japanese school history texts still incorrectly dismiss many Japanese war crimes as myths, including major atrocities such as the Rape of Nanking and Japanese biological warfare experiments on Chinese prisoners. The texts also do not cover Japanese mistreatment of Australian (and allied) prisoners of war in anywhere near appropriate detail. Many young Japanese tourists visiting Australia are consequently surprised to discover that Japan attacked Australia during World War II.

That said, however, it seems unlikely that Japan will again pose a military threat to Australasia. Like Australia, Japan is now a major ally of the United States and this is unlikely to change in the foreseeable future. Japanese governance is also fairly democratic by international standards. Furthermore, free-trade agreements and general peace guarantee access to raw materials a lot easier and cheaper than conquest. The becalmed Japanese economy suffering from prolonged deflation also acts as a firm brake on substantial Japanese rearmament and a recurrence of a foreign policy driven by sabre rattling.

While nations have only enduring interests rather than enduring friends, a potential threat from Japan also remains unlikely for even more prosaic reasons. The modern, joint-focused ADF, and the Australian population at large, are surely most unlikely to again embrace a modern version of the 'Singapore strategy'. Such a disastrous strategy was foisted on us in the late 1920s and 1930s by narrow-minded civilian bureaucrats in the Department of Defence and complacent politicians unwilling to pay for effective national defence. It couldn't possibly happen again could it?

The eccentricity of hermits

The hermit kingdom of North Korea continues to provide the epilogue of the Cold War. While there appears to be no rational reason for a war to break out, especially from our viewpoint, the biggest problem remains in understanding how the North Korean regime views its international and domestic predicaments, and in how it might react.

North Korea remains an enigma wrapped in a riddle governed by what we think is a joke (individually and ideologically). At least superficially, the North Korean State could be described as a 'would-be Roman Empire' celebrated in bronze instead of marble. Even more than their North Asian neighbours, the North Koreans appear to value the oriental game of 'Go' in strategy formulation. Put simply, they do not always share our predilection for linear logic and therefore often appear unpredictable within our frames of reference.

Throughout the Cold War, North Korea was occasionally a worry but not a significant threat outside the Korean peninsula. In a similar manner to Iraq, the pursuit of weapons of mass destruction and consequent regional instability has fundamentally changed the equation. Recently there has been an upsurge in the

numbers and seniority of North Korean defectors. As well as providing further evidence of the regime's unravelling, these defector reports apparently indicate that the concept of 'regime change' and the recent collective intervention in Iraq have concentrated the minds of the North Korean leadership. No doubt the example of the 'decapitation strikes' launched against the Iraqi leadership at the beginning of the intervention in Iraq has not assuaged their concerns. Accurate assessments of the real North Korean reaction are still being compiled but more than mild paranoia appears to be endemic.

For Australia, the detention of the North Korean ship Pong Su for alleged smuggling of illegal narcotics with official blessing simply adds another unwanted layer of complexity. As a signatory to the 1953 Korean armistice Australia is legally, morally and strategically bound to assist South Korea and the US should North Korea initiate hostilities again. Our ability to assist is limited, but no doubt some contingency planning is occurring for air and maritime options.

The biggest problem with the North Korean regime is not so much in determining when its inevitable collapse will occur. The key dilemma remains in assessing what its leaders understand to be their situation, and what they might resort to in attempting to avoid or survive the regime's death throes (if they can recognise them). Furthermore, the paranoid nature of North Korea's totalitarian regime and its tendency to strategic brinkmanship provide obvious limitations to dialogue and crisis management through conventional diplomacy.

The death throes of communist dictatorships thus far have not followed a uniform pattern and the Asian versions have, as yet, all survived. The Soviet juggernaut slowly bogged down in internal corruption of all types until it eventually tottered to a complete stop. The externally imposed communist dictatorships in East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Poland and Bulgaria crumbled quickly when their ruling cliques realised the game was up. The unwilling communist federation of Yugoslavia crumbled through a mix of secessionist and democratic pressures, but not without a decade of war provoked by Serbian communists trying to prolong the inevitable. In only one case, Ceausescu's Romania, probably the closest equivalent personality cult to North Korea, did the ruling clique attempt to repress widespread popular dissent and thereby trigger a violent confrontation that it swiftly lost.

No one outside North Korea really knows what effect the half-century of cradle-to-grave, all-pervasive propaganda and mystical twaddle about the two Kims has really had on most North Koreans. It may have, even if only subconsciously so far, nurtured the type of underground cynicism and desperation that only awaits the right trigger as in Romania. On the other hand, the North Korean people may be as broken in spirit as many Iraqis.

Using a first principles argument, it seems a simple question of undertaking a cost–benefit analysis to determine whether North Korea should exist or not. If it should but will still collapse eventually, is it better to continue propping it up, or to actively manage its collapse, or to just let it fail? The chances of agreement on this issue being easily reached between China, the US, South Korea, Japan and Russia are not good. The chances of North Korea agreeing as well are virtually nil. The dilemma for the outside world really remains whether we can risk waiting for an internal collapse in North Korea with all its attendant risks from a disintegrating regime lashing out first in desperation, or whether further external coercion or even direct intervention might bring a better result. North Korean threats of nuclear and conventional ‘retaliation’, and the somewhat ambiguous situation and position of China further complicate the issue.

The only country that can really make the call on whether ‘wait and see’ is still an option is South Korea because it would have to bear the brunt of the risks and consequences either way. Even if war is avoided, there are clear signs that some South Korean leaders are becoming somewhat traumatised at the prospect of Korean reunification. South Korea has studied the lessons of German reunification with great interest and rocketing concern. If the huge and strong West German economy could be so damaged by absorbing the most successful of the communist economies, South Korea naturally fears having to absorb probably the worst of them. While South Korea is the world’s 13th largest economy, North Korea’s is less than half that of Bangladesh. On top of this are the simple facts that the North is starving and its people are deeply traumatised psychologically by their long inundation in lunatic political, social and economic conditions. The only silver lining for South Korea, and it would be a two-edged sword, is that it might inherit a nuclear-weapons capability without the international odium of developing one.

While the world ponders these dilemmas, Japan and South Korea grow ever more nervous and North Korea’s leaders probably ever more paranoid. The benighted people of North Korea also continue to endure mass starvation, extensive and comprehensive repression, and the scary prospect of being sacrificed even more to the vanity and paranoia of their self-styled ‘dear leader’.

A firm base for an argument

Kites appear to be floating again in the sky of Australian public debate concerning possible basing of US forces in Australian territory. One impetus for renewed interest in such an option appears to be increased US desires to significantly reduce their large forward deployments in South Korea and Japan (principally Okinawa). Australian Ministers and senior US officials have denied that there is any serious US interest in long-term basing in Australia for large forces.

Discussion of this issue needs to be kept in perspective. For example, only one US carrier battle group is homeported outside the United States (in Japan) and US ground-force deployments are rarely substantial away from traditional ‘front line’ confrontations. The constraints of Australian geography, especially the distance to traditional ‘front lines’ in the Middle East and North Asia, will always limit the potential attractiveness of Australian facilities for large-scale US forces on a permanent basis. Despite some media speculation, the campaign against transnational terror in South East Asia does not require the forward basing of large US forces closer to the region.

Furthermore, and in our strategic and ADF interoperability interests, US forces have been exercising in Australia, either jointly or on their own, for decades — often for months at a time. Elements of the US military, especially the Marine Corps, have been interested in even greater training access to Australian facilities for many years. There are often more USMC (and Singaporean) fighters exercising from RAAF Darwin than Australian ones. The USMC have also often expressed interest in accessing ADF field training areas such as the much under-utilised (and difficult to access) Yampi Sound Training Area in the Kimberleys.

There is often much interest at State level in both the Northern Territory and Western Australia in hosting more US forces on either a temporary or permanent basis. While it is unlikely that large US forces might be based in Australia permanently, there are no insurmountable obstacles to more US forces in principle. A degree of knee-jerk anti-Americanism from some sections of the community cannot be discounted but can be appropriately placated or ignored. To put this in perspective, how many Australians are aware that Singapore maintains permanent and extensive air force training facilities in Perth?

Some Australian journalists and pressure groups can be expected to blow this issue out of all proportion in order to satisfy latent or blatant anti-American prejudices, or to provoke a reaction among Australia’s neighbours in order to get a ‘story’ or some publicity respectively. Some might even scratch both itches. Even without such gratuitous beatings of the regional bushes the reaction of Australia’s neighbours to any increase in US use of Australian facilities would need watching. Their reaction, however, poses few real obstacles if managed correctly. The US already has access to facilities in Singapore and this is viewed at a good thing for regional stability. Thailand and the Philippines are not likely to object as both have formal and informal alliances with the US, including regular joint exercises with US forces. Some elements in Malaysia and Indonesia might choose to view such increased US use in a bad light but most will not — at least in private. More to the point, the anti-Western bigotry that would motivate some Malaysian and Indonesian critics is inevitable no matter what Australia and the US freely choose to do. Growing US impatience with such posturing, in suitable diplomatic phrasing, was

apparently passed to the Malaysian government by the US Ambassador recently.

The bottom line is that firm US proposals are required for the public debate in Australia to go further if indeed it needs to go anywhere. You cannot really fly a kite successfully without something firm to tether it to.

Ducking criticism

Now since its bipartisan founding in 1975 the Australia Defence Association has genuinely striven to be as apolitical as it can be. The Association considers it needs to be apolitical in order to improve our national defences by raising political and community consciousness of defence issues. We could not function any other way even if we wanted to. A truly apolitical stance takes effort both in actual objectivity and fairness, and in scrupulously observing appropriate conventions and being seen to do so. Generally speaking we are confident that we hit the mark pretty consistently. All mainstream political parties respect the Association, even when we disagree with one of them from time to time.

The Association therefore hesitates to enter the perennial debate in Australia about the degree of political bias exhibited by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC). The ADA notes, however, that in both the 1991 and 2003 wars with Iraq, Australian governments of both Labor and Liberal political persuasions have perceived that the ABC has shown a marked tendency to left-wing and anti-American views, rather than professional objectivity, in much of its war coverage. Perhaps these perceptions have arisen not just because of the existence, or otherwise, of bias but through the ABC's apparent reluctance to observe appropriate and commonsense apolitical conventions.

We also note that the ABC continues to vigorously deny the charges, as did its famous 'internal inquiry' into the 1991 Gulf War accusations. We further note that part of this attempted defence is to quote statistics that purport to illustrate letters of complaint about ABC bias are 'politically balanced' in overall numbers.

The ADA's archives contain letters of complaint and letters of praise from Australian governments of both main political persuasions. They contain even more complaints from cranks across the full political spectrum. Our experience is that the quality of the letters is just as important as the numbers. With this distinction in mind, and based on observation of media coverage of the recent war in Iraq by ADA members with some experience as professional warfighters, the following thoughts on the issue of ABC bias are offered.

Bias in broadcasting is not just a matter of what is said or shown. It includes the conscious or unconscious exclusion of alternative views and TV 'vision' to what is said and/or who is interviewed and for how long. Bias can also arise through a lack of real intellectual

diversity in the journalists, producers and researchers employed. In terms of war coverage, bias can also easily sneak in through ignorance of basic military operational matters (tactics, weapon capabilities, international law, need for operational security, etc.), or in not giving proper weight to the difficulties of reporting from both sides of the conflict. This is especially so where one side is a totalitarian state with a much greater motivation and capacity to deny access, stage manage supposed incidents, or intimidate those 'bystanders' who might be 'interviewed' by foreign media.

The concept and practice of being apolitical, even if you hold strong personal beliefs, is faced daily by members of the ADF and the forces therefore place great importance on being apolitical. The defence forces serve governments of all political colours with considerable professionalism and pride in this regard — even when governments do silly things concerning defence. The forces usually react to even the silliest criticism and comments from the general public with impressive equanimity. The general reaction of many ADF personnel when recognising perceived ABC bias is therefore interesting to note. As members of a profession proud of its apolitical traditions and record they rarely show outrage at the nature of the bias itself. More often than not, by a wide margin, ADF personnel are genuinely offended or disappointed by the lack of public broadcasting professionalism involved when a broadcast is not, or does not strive to be, apolitical.

In general, the apparent bias in ABC news and current affairs coverage during the wars in Iraq appeared worse on television than it was on radio (with the probable exception of JJJ), and not as bad on Radio Australia as on other radio. Problems with access and 'vision' may have contributed. It is also worth noting in comparison that the apparent pro-American bias in coverage by the Fox cable network was just as bad, if not probably worse.

With this in mind, and admittedly based on anecdotal evidence only of the apparent popularity of BBC coverage of the war among Australian viewers, the question of relativity concerning letters of complaint might be worth reviewing. Perhaps many Australians of a conservative bent have stopped writing letters of complaint to the ABC because they fear it does no good or because they have stopped watching or listening to the ABC altogether. Perhaps many Australians of a left-wing bent are unconsciously quite comfortable with the ABC, and only write to the Corporation because they are so shocked when finally (and rarely) confronted by the odd broadcast that makes them actually uncomfortable.

Now there will also always be those who will seek to defend actual or perceived ABC bias on the grounds that commercial media frequently exhibit the most egregious examples of 'cant and slant', and that the ABC is somehow 'merely providing balance'. This is

a false argument. Just like the publicly funded military who serve and defend all Australians equally, publicly funded broadcasters must always be apolitical in absolute terms.

Finally, ABC coverage of the recent Iraq war has also been defended on the grounds that the journalists and producers involved were just employing due scepticism when challenging announcements by the Coalition partners. There is, indeed, nothing wrong with scepticism in itself. However, to be truly fair such scepticism should be used politely, not based on what may be fairly perceived as questionable assumptions, and deployed with equal vigour against all sides of an argument. The real problem is that the question of broadcaster bias and its cure exist as much in perception as fact. The Association suggests that the key to solving the

problem of actual or perceived bias in ABC broadcasts is to convince ABC staff that the problem actually does exist, and that even a hint of bias is both unprofessional journalism and an abuse of the ABC Charter.

There will probably continue to be at least some ABC staff who reject the accusations of left-wing and anti-American bias out of hand. There will undoubtedly be many who genuinely believe, however mistakenly, that they undertake their reporting or production duties objectively even when covering issues on which they have strong views. However, on the matter of identifying bias in their broadcasts perhaps they should discount resorting to such rhetorical camouflage and remember the old Aussie bush saying about appearances: 'if it walks like a duck, smells like a duck and quacks like a duck — then it must be a duck'.

Conference Calendar

ADA members and *Defender* readers may be interested in the following public conferences scheduled over the next few months:

**Chief of Army Military History Conference 2003
Foundations of Victory: The Pacific War 1943–44
National Convention Centre, Canberra
10–11 July 2003
Enquiries: (02) 6266-2744**

**Royal Australian Navy 2003 King-Hall Naval History Conference
The Navy and the Nation
Telstra Theatre, Australian War Memorial, Canberra
24–25 July 2003
Enquiries: (02) 6266-2654**

**Centre for Defence and Strategic Studies (Australian Defence College)
US Grand Strategy: Implications for Alliance Partners
Hyatt Hotel, Canberra
01 August 2003
Enquiries: (02) 6266-0664**

**Australian Defence Studies Centre 2003 Homeland Security Conference
Safeguarding Australia: Frontline Issues
National Convention Centre, Canberra
31 July to 01 August 2003
Enquiries: (02) 6262-7337**

**Australian Financial Review 'National Critical Infrastructure Security Conference
Four Points Sheraton, Darling Harbour, Sydney
22–23 September 2003
Enquiries: (02) 9080-4307**



MAJOR FURPHY



Blowing the whistle

I knew it was going to be a bad day when an extraordinarily scruffy looking aircraftman came into my office — without knocking, I might add — and blew a loud blast on an umpire's whistle. With thoughts of a terrorist attack (I'd forgotten to check the threat board when I came in), I dived under my desk and held my breath until my palpitations abated.

When I did emerge, I could see my visitor sporting a self-satisfied smirk at my discomfort so I had to assert myself. 'What do you mean, barging in like that and making that vile noise', I demanded.

'I'm blowing the whistle', he replied with another blast on his instrument but not the slightest hint of an apology for embarrassing an almost senior officer. I decided to deal with him very firmly indeed; if this sort of thing is tolerated, discipline will collapse.

'Why?' I queried in as firm a voice as I could muster. 'And call me sir.'

'Yessir', he replied. 'I'm just following orders and blowing the whistle.' And he did — again.

I was beginning to think a lunatic had got through security but the best thing might be to humour him.

'What orders?' I wanted to know.

'It's in the Defence Whistleblower Scheme Instruction', he said. 'It's here in black and white in DI(G) PERS 20048-642. Blow the whistle, it says, and the boss will fix it for you. So I blew the whistle.' I noticed.

My assessment of the man as a lunatic was beginning to firm up but I thought I'd better have a look at the Instruction. I know it's somewhere in the office but I'm still working through last year's collection. The job now was to get rid of him before Barney came in. (For those of you who haven't met him yet, Barney, better known as Air Marshal

Barney Stoush, is the VCDF and my boss.)

I thought of calling security and having him thrown out but decided that in our sensitive New Age defence force, I should treat him gently. I borrowed his copy of the Instruction and, sure enough, it instructed any defence person to blow the whistle if something went wrong that they couldn't fix. For the sake of peace and quiet, I decided first to recover the whistle and then investigate further.

'What's the problem?' I asked politely.

'It's like this,' he began until I glared at him, '— sir. I've been passed over for promotion to LAC for the 24th time. It's not fair, sir, so I'm blowing the whistle.'

I could understand why he might have been passed over so often. What I couldn't fathom was how anybody managed to enlist him. I was about to investigate that further when Barney walked in with his usual scowl at the world in general.

Of course, being an air-force type, Barney reverted to his unusual avuncular self with his air-force visitor and was particularly gracious. But before he could invite our 'guest' to stay for coffee and a bun, I interposed to explain the problem but without mentioning the whistle.

Being a decisive type, Barney made an immediate command decision.

'It's outrageous,' he declaimed. 'You should have blown the whistle on that.' Turning to me, he ordered 'Get the papers started to promote him to Flight Sergeant. I'll sign them before lunch. That will show people we mean business about blowing the whistle.'

Our visitor disappeared, beaming. As Barney walked into his office, I looked thoughtfully at the whistle and put it in my pocket for later use — and not for umpiring.

Lessons from the Iraq war

by Michael O'Connor

This article will look at the recent war in Iraq from but from three distinct perspectives:

- the lead-up to the decision by the coalition of the willing to go to war;
- the war itself; and
- the implications for Australia's defence policy.

Let me state first that a decision to go to war is one of the most difficult for a democratic government to make. If it does not have the support of its electorate at the outset, it must either win that support or be defeated at the next election. One of the great myths of democracy is that governments cannot act without the support of the electorate at the time of acting but, against that, it must bear the consequences. That will demand leadership of a high order if the government is convinced that its decision is the correct one.

Personally, the government did not initially persuade me that its decision was correct but I accepted that:

- it was privy to more information than I had, and probably information that could not be revealed for sound security reasons;
- it and it alone had the responsibility for making the decision. Interventions by the Opposition, by assorted church leaders, the so-called peace movement and others were useful but could not override the government's responsibility; and
- most of the arguments against the war were invalid, superficial or dishonest. Many were based upon culpable ignorance.

That said, the American, British and Australian governments could, I believe, have been more persuasive if they had been more frank with their peoples. Australian governments generally are far too secretive and distrusting of their electorate.

Incidentally, those bishops and other clerics who claim some moral authority but purport to extrapolate from the traditional just-war principles to judgements about professional political and military matters are acting outside their own competence. Their statements have no more validity than those of any other layperson lacking both information and expertise.

The outcome of the war invalidated most of the anti-war arguments and certainly removed the only reservation that I had entertained. This was the just-war principle that the end result of the conflict should not be worse than if the war had not occurred. Incidentally, that is a judgement that very few people around the world — and certainly no non-military professionals — would have

been qualified to make before the event.

There were a number of key characteristics of this conflict that contain important lessons not merely for military professionals but the whole world, not least the anti-war movement. These characteristics include:

- greatly increased weapons accuracy at all levels of combat;
- the fundamental military irrelevance of weapons of mass destruction;
- the ability to fight day and night with great precision;
- real-time intelligence with rapid response capabilities;
- greatly improved mobility; and
- rapid and accurate communications.

Coupled with these characteristics of the coalition forces was the serious degradation of the Iraqi armed forces that resulted from such factors as:

- outdated weapons and systems arising in part from economic sanctions but more particularly from outdated dogmas;
- outdated and incompetent tactics, especially those relying on static defence;
- the loss of effective command and control;
- the reliance on poorly equipped, motivated and trained conscript forces;
- an inability to contest the coalition's air supremacy;
- poor intelligence; and
- a desperate resort to terrorist tactics that are strong on bravado but worthless against well-trained and armed professional troops.

The rapid victory of the coalition forces in what was one of the shortest and least lethal wars in history signals some radical changes in the generally accepted international security system. If planners and observers in those countries that were not part of the coalition fail to recognise or come to terms with these changes, they risk at best irrelevance or at worst punishment for behaviour that increasing numbers of countries will regard as unacceptable, if not criminal.

In part, the changes are a product of the substantial shrinking of the world that arose from the communications revolution that has transformed the transmission of information, of goods and of people. Related to this is the recognition that no one, not even a New Zealander, is immune from the threats posed by rogue states or sub-national groups of fanatics or criminals. Because few can claim to be isolated from the

rest of the world, no one can be so self-indulgent as to tolerate lawless behaviour.

As the 17th century English poet, John Donne, wrote in his *Devotions*: 'No man is an Island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main' and 'Any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in Mankind; And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.'

In the 17th century, it was possible for people to ignore oppression in other parts of the world. In the 21st century, Donne's strictures are no longer avoidable.

This is particularly applicable to the peace movement whose commitment to the welfare of humanity is undeniable but whose understanding of the dynamics of international peace and security is grotesquely obsolete. Especially, this is true in respect of the principle of inviolable national sovereignty, another 17th century construct whose applicability in the modern world is due for modification in the light of not just current abuses but also of the growing ability to deal with those abuses.

Related to this is the role of sub-national actors such as terrorists and organised crime groups, which can pose a threat to national security and which are all too often protected by national governments for any one of a number of reasons.

The interception over Easter of a North Korean merchant ship smuggling a large quantity of heroin into Australia has focused attention on the role of rogue states in large-scale criminal activity. This is not the first occasion on which North Korea has supported terrorism or the narcotics traffic as a matter of state policy. With the same country on the point of developing nuclear-armed ballistic missiles and also heavily involved in the export of missile technology to other rogue states, it is clearly throwing out a serious challenge to the world community that goes beyond the issue of Korean reunification or regime protection. The Pyongyang regime continues to demonstrate its total disregard for any rules of international behaviour or of sensitivity to ordinary diplomatic negotiations.

While there is now a substantial and growing body of international law that attempts to set the bounds of acceptable behaviour, the capacity for enforcement of that law is in practice almost non-existent. The United Nations Security Council has been granted authority under Article 1 of the UN Charter: 'to maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace'.

In practice, the UN Security Council has, over the 58 years of its existence, demonstrated a consistent inability to perform its duty. The reasons don't matter although one key factor is the predisposition to avoid authorising the use of force. What does matter is that its most recent failure over Iraq has cast doubt on the organisation's desire and ability to do its job. With the end of the Cold War and the emergence of a number of rogue states and

sub-national criminal organisations, the problem is no longer one to be ignored. Either the UN Security Council does its job properly or it will be bypassed. Those who would leave responsibility with the UN must now show how the world body can be made to meet its responsibilities. Buck-passing to the UN is not good enough.

What the Iraq war showed also is the role that can be played by a small group of UN members that are prepared to show strong leadership to the community of nations. Too many commentators seemed to forget that the US, Britain and Australia are members in good standing of the United Nations. The leadership they showed was an example to the rest of the world community. This was perhaps more significant in the case of Britain and Australia, which are hardly dominant world powers. As in all things, leadership is a trait to be valued in any community.

The security relationship between the US, Britain and Australia is one of long standing and certainly one to be valued by others. It was disappointing that two other members — Canada and New Zealand — of what might be called the Old Firm backed away from supporting action that was important to their future security and to their standing in the world. That was their choice but an opportunity was missed.

The Iraq conflict demonstrated another crucial factor — the sheer dominance of American military power based upon advanced technology and superior professional skill. US military technology is now possibly two generations ahead of any competitor. While British systems are perhaps one generation behind, they and the Australians make up for the some of the disparity with better training and doctrine. In the context of using military force for what is effectively large-scale law enforcement, that superior training and doctrine is very important.

What is clear, however, is that Australia is not in good shape to play any more than a token role. In the Iraq conflict, the British force was 45,000 strong. A proportional Australian commitment would have been 15,000 instead of the 2,000 actually committed. We could not have committed 15,000 and even the 2,000 strong contingent was barely sustainable. As with our initial commitment of 5,500 to East Timor just 400 nautical miles from Darwin, we have become unduly bemused by government propaganda to believe that we have a first-class defence capability. We do not. We depend too heavily upon the high professionalism of our people but we do not have enough of them and we do not support them with adequate equipment.

The clear message from the events of the past twelve months or so is that Australia has made the right choice in adapting its national security policy to current realities rather than obsolete notions of international law enforcement. In this, the government has shown strong strategic leadership. It now remains for it to reorganise and properly develop its organisational capacity to play a role commensurate not only with its potential and its rhetoric but also with its duty to provide before everything else for Australia's security.

Securing Australia in 2003:

The need for an integrated approach

A summary of the ADA address to the Homeland Security Australia Conference 2003 held at the Sydney Convention Centre at Darling Harbour on 28–29 April 2003.

At some point in each new war those involved face the realisation that they have ‘learned a few new lessons but re-learned a hell of a lot of old ones’. Each war or other major crisis that confronts us poses few new lessons, especially where principles or other fundamental characteristics of warfighting or strategic crisis management are concerned.

Our struggle against the latest variant of transnational terrorism, be it a ‘war’ or a law-enforcement campaign, is essentially no different. We may have some new lessons to learn but we surely have far more old ones to re-digest and react accordingly. This address will touch on six key themes where old lessons are being, or need to be, re-learned:

the nature of threat from transnational terrorism and the broad response required by the international and Australian communities;

- the need to refine the Australian view of the concept of ‘national security’ to realign it with the reality of the complex situations and threats we face;
- the need for a whole-of-government approach to a whole-of-nation problem;
- the need to fully involve the Australian people and the need for national unity;
- the extent to which the Australian Defence Force (ADF) needs to be restructured, and if so, by how much, where and at what cost, and
- the question of whether or not to join other like-minded countries in defence of our common interests.

The nature of the threat

First, some brief points on the nature of the current threat from transnational terrorism.

Our first re-learned lesson is that terrorism and the responses to it are, by their nature, clashes of wills (just as war is). No matter whether the current struggle against transnational terrorism is a war or a law-enforcement campaign, or both, it remains fundamentally a clash of wills. The terrorists have to be made to realise that we will beat them and we will persist in the struggle until this occurs.

Our second re-learned lesson is that a terrorist by definition is not a legitimate combatant and treating terrorists as criminals under international and Australian law is a key part of winning this clash of wills. Terrorists such as the Twin Towers attackers or the Bali bombers must never be accorded the status of combatants, not just because they are actually criminals, but also because describing them as combatants might incorrectly bolster the alleged legitimacy of their supposed cause.

Our third re-learned lesson is that Islamic fanaticism and Islamic fundamentalism are not necessarily the same — as in most religions. Just as in previous struggles with charismatic but deviant Islamic preachers in Sudan, in the late 19th century (the ‘Mahdi’) and Somaliland in the mid 20th century (the ‘Mad Mullah’), the fanatics are virtually all fundamentalists — but not all Islamic fundamentalists are fanatics. Genuine, moderate Muslims have a key role in our struggle against the fanatics. Indeed we would all probably feel a lot more comfortable if moderate, mainstream Muslims, both in Australia and overseas, could be more vocal and active in their criticism of the fanatics. This latter point is developed further in the address by Professor Hasjim Djalal (‘An Indonesian Perspective on Security and Terrorism’).

No threat to our safety and our way of life can be effectively defeated without understanding its roots,

isolating the threat's centre of gravity and then destroying or neutralising it. Terrorism by Islamic fanatics has political and cultural as well as theological strands. Particularly when considered in the long term, the strategic centre of gravity of transnational (and non-state-based) Islamic terrorist groups is probably their ability to recruit. This, in turn, largely depends on a combination of four factors:

- the perceived righteousness of their cause among potential recruits;
- the poor or narrow understanding of Islam that allows recruits to be inculcated with the perverted values and extremist beliefs of the most bigoted forms of fundamentalist Islam;
- the generally deprived social, economic and political conditions that produce potential recruits, allow bigotry and zealotry to thrive, and which appear to justify 'martyrdom' and 'jihad' against non-believers as viable solutions; and
- the unfortunate trend whereby many Muslims throughout the world are prepared to give the benefit of the doubt to fundamentalists, fanatics and even terrorists because they are 'Muslims', but see any response by non-Muslims to terrorist or extremist actions as an attack on Islam, no matter how justified such a response may be under accepted international law, custom and practice.

This is also not to say that all Islamic fanatics willing to commit murder or suicide for their supposed cause are young, poor, uneducated and without viable futures in their own or wider societies. As the Twin Towers attack in particular shows, some are just zealous bigots and at least some of them come from comparatively privileged backgrounds. In such cases, it would appear that their perverted perception of the political, geostrategic and cultural humiliation of Islam has replaced poverty and deprivation as the third factor. This is especially so if they are adherents of one of the more fundamentalist, puritanically intolerant or bigoted forms of Islam.

Our fourth re-learned lesson concerning terrorist threats is on the importance of resolve and the concerted international implementation of stern counter measures. Now, like it or not, the terrorist attacks in New York, Washington and Bali have 'awakened a sleeping giant' (as Admiral Yamamoto described the US after Pearl Harbour). For those concerned about the apparent resolve being shown in the US, UK and Australia, they might do well to remember that we have tried less comprehensive or supposedly more humane alternatives. The West got few results from discussions, sanctions, and even less from the ineffective and largely self-defeating 'air strikes on terrorist bases' that followed the 1988 Lockerbie bombing, the 1993 truck bomb at the World Trade Centre and the 1998 US Embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania.

Concerted international action needs to be taken to update international law, including revision of the UN

Charter. Some suggested areas for reform are:

- The suspension or non-recognition of State sovereignty where international terrorist crimes and their perpetrators are condoned or sponsored by UN member States, and the expulsion of guilty countries from UN membership.
- The introduction of similar responsibilities and proactive measures to combat terrorism as those that have quite successfully applied to the eradication of piracy and slaving on the high seas for the last century and a half (whereby vessels suspected of piracy or slaving can and should be sunk or boarded respectively without undue legal complications).
- A modernised version of the Martens Clause (from the 1907 Hague Convention on the Laws and Customs of War on Land) to sanction some forms of reciprocal 'gloves off' warfare against 'uncivilised peoples' until they accept to be bound by International Humanitarian Law.

In demonstrating our resolve, our response to the current transnational terrorist threat must be considered, prolonged and broadly focused. In World War II, for example, we did not stop when the fascist regimes were beaten. We continued until the regimes themselves were toppled and destroyed beyond hope of reconstitution. A modern version of the denazification imposed on Germany and Austria is required to eradicate Islamic fanaticism and the regimes and societies that tolerate it. Islam is not necessarily a violent religion. Genuine and moderate Muslims are vital in spearheading a moral and theological offensive against the perversion of Islam that causes the fanaticism.

A re-learned lesson about terrorism also has a wider application. When pondering the nature of the current threat, we need to face up to the fact that the attacks in New York, Washington and Bali require many in the West to understand a phenomenon (religion) that most Westerners are now quite unfamiliar with. The general decline of religious observance in nominally Christian countries over the last half-century has resulted in most Westerners lacking first-hand experience of bigotry by religious fundamentalists.

More importantly, many Westerners are now so secular or even irreligious in their general outlook that they no longer know how to recognise religious bigotry, differentiate it from legitimate religious belief, and refute it using the philosophical frameworks of conventional theology and religious tolerance. Many Westerners are now so devoid of religious understanding that they even misconstrue religion itself as the problem. A key lesson to be re-learned here is that religious bigotry thrives on such superficial understanding of religion but greatly fears, and is invariably best combated by a well-argued theological response.

Finally, and most importantly, the terrorist attacks in New York, Washington and Bali have re-taught us the lesson that the West has bigoted enemies prepared to murder on a large scale. The associated revision lesson

is that such extremists are generally beyond reasoning with, and that the only moral and practical answer is to destroy or neutralise such enemies and the conditions that breed and nourish their bigotry. These appear to be lessons that at least some Australians shirk from acknowledging.

Updating our concept of national security

Our second theme is the need to broaden and update our view of national security.

In the broadest sense, national security encompasses a wide range of economic wellbeing, bio-security and environmental challenges, as well as the more conventional view of the security of the realm — the defence of Australia, its people and its interests from armed threats. The term ‘defence’ is not defined in Australian legislation nor does there appear to be any agreed definition across the Australian government.

The Commonwealth Constitution grants the federal government power to provide for ‘the naval and military defence of the Commonwealth’. Section 4 of the *Defence Act 1903* does not define defence but does define ‘war’ as ‘... any invasion or apprehended invasion of, or attack, or apprehended attack on, Australia by an enemy or armed force’. The *Oxford Dictionary* defines ‘defence’ as ‘resistance against attack’.

The working definition of national security the ADA uses, however, concentrates on the latter aspects — armed threats to our people, territory and interests. We consider the luxury of worrying about the former types of threat is wholly dependent on there being a basically safe Australia to worry about in the first place.

Since Arthur Phillip founded modern Australia in 1788, during a time of similar strategic complexity and unpredictability, Australia’s view of protecting our territory, people and way of life against external threats has generally been within a defence paradigm. However, the complexity of the 20th century struggles against totalitarian ideologies, especially where they attracted some domestic following, also often resulted in significant internal security dimensions to external threats. Over the last two decades, either through general lotus eating or a pre-occupation with external security, we Australians have largely forgotten many of the internal security lessons from our defeat of the fascist and communist threats.

It is the ADA’s view that the struggle against this latest variant of transnational terrorism is essentially a law-enforcement issue domestically, and a continually changing mix of law enforcement and military aspects outside Australia. This is likely to remain the case in a world strongly influenced by cultural biases, religious bigotries, ethnic tensions and racial hatreds. It will definitely remain the case while there are at least some countries or societies where there are groups or individuals who mistakenly believe that terrorist attacks are somehow justified, and/or that non-Muslims are

somehow lesser beings under God and can be killed accordingly.

The dual nature of the transnational terrorist problem internationally is reflected in the comparative effectiveness of the relevant international bodies. Many of the international law-enforcement bodies and agreements appear to be working well (if not perfectly). There has been markedly less agreement and consequent success with collective security action by the United Nations to deprive terrorist groups of the territorial and jurisdictional sanctuaries that vastly increase their capabilities.

On the one hand, for example, we have the highly successful cooperative investigation into the Bali bombing by the Australian Federal Police (AFP) and the Indonesian National Police. This is cause for great confidence, particularly as the investigation was a subset of an overall quite vexed strategic relationship with Indonesia. On the other hand, however, we have the often timorous or hypocritical international reaction to collective ‘swamp draining’ operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. These examples provide more than just mild disappointment for the future.

The ADA contends that the current threat from transnational terrorist groups must be countered by a judicious mix of law enforcement and wider national security measures, and in a context of strategic policy maturity and national unity. The ADA further believes that the achievement of overall victory against the terrorists in such complex moral, legal and strategic circumstances should not be undermined or trivialised. It is our view that the struggle is not helped by an unfortunate penchant among some Australian public figures, and media commentators, to trivialise Australia’s international stance by their pursuit of essentially domestic party-political agendas. Winning the struggle with the terrorists is also not assisted by those journalists and academic commentators who automatically seek to view our national responses predominantly or solely within the narrow framework of domestic party politics. Party advantage, perceived or otherwise, is never more important than actual government.

A ‘whole-of-nation’ problem needs a ‘whole-of-government’ approach

This overall theme of national unity and country above party, faction or ethnicity leads neatly into our third theme. In modern cosmopolitan, multi-religious Australia the problem posed by Islamic terrorism means we need a whole-of-government approach, rather than one centred on haphazardly integrated defence, law enforcement or security intelligence perspectives.

In the late 1970s it was common to hear veteran ASIO officers refer to their agency as the fourth arm of the defence force. In that era it was widely accepted that

national security involved protecting Australia from threats of espionage, sabotage and subversion (not just espionage). At that time, for example, ASIO had the responsibility for maintaining the Commonwealth database of critical infrastructure throughout Australia requiring protection from sabotage and other (internal and external) attack. One of the first lessons re-learned from the current terrorist threat is that this responsibility should never have been dropped from ASIO's charter (or should have been picked up by some other agency).

But dropped it was in the early 1980s as perceptions of the sabotage threat contracted and associated matters were no longer seriously addressed. Despite the line between politically inspired vandalism and actual sabotage being crossed by some of those opposed to Australia's participation in the defence of South Vietnam, it became fashionable in political and intelligence circles to believe that sabotage was really only a problem during major wars against enemy states. In the perceived absence of such external threats the mistaken belief flourished that no one would ever seek to attack our national infrastructure from within.

A similar fashion evolved concerning the concept of subversion. This was particularly influenced by the highly polarised views resulting from the anti-Vietnam War protest movements of the late 1960s and early 1970s. The ASIO Act was even amended to omit subversion as a threat to national security requiring protection, although aspects of subversion flickered on by statute, however nominally, as 'acts of foreign interference'. Somewhat ironically, over the same period the concept of psychological operations enjoyed a resurgence in Western military and academic thought. We somewhat strangely appeared to believe we could always subvert our potential enemies but were somehow invulnerable ourselves to such measures.

You can't, however, wish away reality by ignoring facts inconvenient to your political beliefs or prejudices. The line between legitimate dissent and subversion had been crossed to varying extents during the Vietnam War protests, especially by Soviet funding of key front groups in the 'Moratorium Movement'. In the mid to late 1980s the cyclical resurgence of 'peace movements' supported by the Soviet Union provided a last hurrah for this long Australian tradition.

Once again old lessons about subversion have also now been re-learned. Our security intelligence and law enforcement agencies have always had to monitor the tiny extremist groups and individuals on the fringes of our society. However, the motivation of such extremists has largely been politically oriented, or they have been émigré groups supporting foreign terrorist organisations fighting their original country's government.

We are now faced with the problem of having to monitor more mainstream groups and individuals within Australian society. That many of these groups are religious is a further problem we have not really confronted before on this scale. Few would seriously dispute, in the

current context of terrorism by Islamic fanatics directed at Australians, that the Australian authorities have a legitimate duty in so doing. Obviously commonsense checks need to be made to ensure that domestic Islamic groups and individuals are not harbouring, propagating, or at least inadvertently sheltering, those with views strongly inimical to our democratic, pluralist, multi-religious, cosmopolitan society.

Where the monitoring includes immigrant and religious groups from countries, or backgrounds, where the security and police services are not subject to the rule of law (as they are in Australia), there will obviously be some problems with overcoming suspicions in such groups as to why they are being checked out. It should be noted at this point that there are no indications that the monitoring of, and liaison with, such groups in such complex circumstances is being done with other than considerable professionalism, sensitivity and restraint by ASIO and the AFP.

We should not shrink, however, from defending the legitimate right of the Australian community, for example, to monitor the extremist, intolerant and subversive sermons preached in some mosques and Islamic prayer meetings. Community reaction to the need to monitor potential threats has, on the whole, been quite realistic. However, the reaction in some religious and ethnic circles to such commonsense counter-subversion measures has not been encouraging. In several cases it has demonstrated a grossly inadequate understanding of Australia's democratic pluralist way of life.

Such reactions, however exacerbated by inept and sensationalist media coverage, provide considerable food for thought concerning the nature of national unity, political and religious tolerance, subversion and even treason, in contemporary Australia. Incitements to religious intolerance or hatred are bad enough, but when they result in, or condone, terrorism they are a social evil no open and democratic society can safely tolerate.

It may very well be, for example, that we might have to eventually limit the entry into Australia of foreign clergy (of any religion). This may have to particularly apply where such clergy seek permanent residence but make no attempt to integrate into Australian society; such as by learning English or understanding how our systems of democratic pluralist government and religious tolerance work.

Other related concerns for national unity and national security in the current context perhaps include:

- a tendency for some Australian Muslims to withdraw from mainstream Australian society rather than contribute fully to the national mix (perhaps exacerbated by the disproportionate number of Australian Muslims concentrated in Western Sydney compared to the rest of Australia);
- the increasing tendency for many Islamic congregations to split along ethnic lines;
- the dramatic increase (from 144 students in 1985 to 10,743 in 2002) over the last two decades in segregated Islamic schools, some with highly questionable aspects of

their curriculum and/or foreign sponsorship from unsavoury regimes and groups; and

- claims to victimhood by some Islamic community spokesmen that are, at best, highly insensitive at a time when Muslim fanatics overseas are deliberately murdering Australians in large numbers, especially when vague or trivial claims of ‘Muslim vilification’ contrast so strongly with little or no apparent condemnation of Islamic fanaticism by the same ‘community’ spokesmen.

Another old lesson re-learned is about the need for flexibility in combating asymmetric threats such as terrorism. When the threat from international terrorism increased greatly in the early to mid 1970s the terrorist methods of the time, and consequent security measures, were mainly aimed at avoiding or resolving siege–hostage incidents or direct attacks against civilian airliners. While terrorism got added to the ASIO Act, the narrow focus of our counter-terrorism measures further submerged the fact that in-principle threats from sabotage and subversion had not been abolished by legislative or ideological fiat.

These are just some of the reasons why a whole-of-government approach to national security is required in modern cosmopolitan Australia. Nor should we be overly troubled by civil-liberties concerns as Australian history clearly shows our checks and balances work well in this regard. No constitutional law authority in Australia seriously disputes that the constitutional heads of power covering defence and national security purposes expand and contract as the seriousness of the situation dictates. The High Court has upheld major limitations on civil liberties during wartime and struck down other attempts to do so outside times of crisis and war, such as the Communist Party Dissolution Act in 1951. Another re-learned lesson worth noting is that the sixth (and last) edition of the Australian *Manual of National Security Legislation*, published in early September 1945, ran to two volumes each some three centimetres thick.

As another example of re-learning lessons about a whole-of-government approach, until 1958 the *Commonwealth Manual of War Precautions* (the ‘War book’) laid down, generally in considerable detail, the responsibilities of each federal and state department and major agency during time of war or impending war. Some of the more important precautions were permanent. In immigration and citizenship matters, for example, resident aliens were required to register with the immigration authorities until the mid 1960s, in large part so potential enemy sympathisers (or worse) could be monitored or even detained if Australia found itself at war with the country concerned. During World War II, for example, citizens of the axis powers were often detained for national security purposes, as were those Australians whose loyalty was seriously in doubt.

Australians of the time accepted such measures as both necessary and morally legitimate. No doubt this was partly due to a less varied Australian society in ethnic, cultural and religious terms compared with 2003. But we should not forget that the Australia of 1916, 1942 and 1951 was

still a society frequently buffeted by strong political, ideological and sectarian currents. We would be naïve to assume that the societal divisions in modern cosmopolitan Australia are much different in scope no matter how much more varied they may appear to be in nature. Surely another re-learned lesson is the importance of national unity. There would appear to be a growing feeling that the ideology of ‘applied multiculturalism’ (as opposed to organic cosmopolitanism) has mutated out of control, become divisive rather than inclusive, and has reached its community health and safety ‘use-by date’.

Finally, in terms of implementing a whole-of-government approach to national security the Australia Defence Association considers that the time for three key structural reforms has well and truly arrived.

First, since the promulgation of the UN Charter in 1945 no country has declared war — as under international law armed conflict can exist as a fact irrespective of individual national interpretations. The lines between transnational crime (smuggling, poaching, trafficking, piracy, terrorism, etc.), international crises and ‘war’ are therefore often blurred. The ADA has long called for the formation of a coastguard in order to:

- better manage border security (including seamless territorial surveillance);
- enforce our maritime laws (customs, immigration, quarantine, conservation, resource management, etc.); and
- meet our other maritime responsibilities, including Australia’s responsibilities under international arrangements for maritime search and rescue (SAR) and safety of life at sea (SOLAS), in the integrated manner now required.

Furthermore, in regard to the practical interface between law enforcement and defence, and with regard to cost, resources and bureaucracy minimisation, the ADA has been of the firm opinion for many years that an integrated approach to littoral and coastal surveillance and response also requires a dedicated coastguard. Finally, an Australian coastguard would also allow clearer control of ADF support to such activities, not least in minimising and regulating the constitutionally and professionally distasteful uses of ADF elements in what are predominantly domestic law enforcement situations.

The ADA’s second recommendation for national security structural reform concerns the clear need to significantly rejuvenate Radio Australia, so it can regain its once respected voice in our region. We have a definite strategic (political, diplomatic and moral) need to be able to speak directly to the many peoples of our region in order to provide them with:

- a regular, comprehensive, consistent and credible insight into Australia, our way of life and our view of the world;
- facts and alternative views not otherwise available to them because of political biases or limited educational or social opportunities in their own societies; and
- facts and alternative views and explanations that the

often censored or biased media of their own countries might prevent them otherwise obtaining.

Combating the bigotry that underwrote the recruitment and motivation of the Bali bombers, for example, would be greatly enhanced, at little financial and strategic cost, by Radio Australia being able to broadcast facts and a range of views about Australia and the world widely and in detail. It is worth noting that a related re-learned lesson is that Australian commercial media also have a responsibility in this regard. Too many Australian journalists, unfortunately, appear to lack professionalism and an adequate sense of perspective. This is especially so when they drum up a story overseas by deliberately presenting Australia in a poor light, or by consciously generating a foreign reaction that might otherwise not occur or occur to the same extent.

Last but certainly not least in terms of structural reform, Australia needs a small, statutory National Security Council. As the Secretary of the Commonwealth Attorney General's Department, Robert Cornall, noted in his opening address, 'counter-terrorism is a bureaucrat's paradise'. Australia does not need a dedicated department or agency for homeland security (as in the USA) but it does need a National Security Council rather than the current practice of either ad hoc multi-agency 'task forces' or too formalised, frequently bureaucratic and often too senior, interdepartmental committees. A council would allow us to permanently integrate and manage national security planning and interdepartmental coordination, and it would also assist the National Security Committee of Cabinet (NSCC) much better than current arrangements.

As the Senate Committee Inquiry into the interdepartmental bungling to do with the so-called 'children overboard' affair clearly showed, much of the misunderstandings, chaos and destroyed reputations involved could have been avoided by an established, standing and comprehensive procedure for interdepartmental and multi-agency coordination. In contrast to this debacle, a National Security Council would instead allow us to foresee and manage actual or potential crises using clear lines of responsibility, accountability and command for orders and actions. It would also provide a sound structure rather than one, as at present, which appears hamstrung by interdepartmental rivalries and personality clashes, and, even more importantly, is compromised (in perception, fact or both) by what can only be described as 'hazy' political-bureaucratic interfaces.

Involving the Australian people

Our fourth theme is the need to fully involve the Australian people in the struggle against transnational terrorism. I have already touched on aspects of this when

addressing national resolve, national unity and the need for a whole-of-government approach.

There is little doubt that involving the Australian people might be hard. We are an often-cynical people — at least on the surface — as all the fridge-magnet jokes show. More to the point, it is a long time since the bulk of the nation felt individually threatened enough to take a sustained interest in national security matters.

However, the national reaction to recent events indicates that most Australians have a reasonable grasp of the fundamentals of national security, particularly when confronted with instances where their everyday security is threatened. Examples include:

- the widespread condemnation of Indonesian atrocities following the 1999 East Timor Referendum and the general recognition that the threat or use of armed force was required to stop them;
- the highly successful public-consultation process on the Defence Green Paper in 2000; and
- the calm and measured public response to the Bali atrocity last year, where emotional calls for vengeance were few, virtually no serious community repercussions were experienced by Muslim Australians, and most Australians soberly realised the gravity of the situation.

These indications of an increased national awareness, and maturity, on national security issues are further reinforced by the popular reaction to our participation in the collective intervention in Iraq. Despite much biased media hype inflating the importance of protests by those against our involvement in Iraq, despite the general poverty of the arguments offered by many of those protesting, and, as shown by the comparatively small numbers and narrow constituencies supporting such protests, it seems clear that most Australians can objectively assess when their national interests and/or safety are threatened.

The key lesson we are re-learning here is that the Australian people, at large, can be trusted and should be regularly consulted on national security issues. Indeed one of the key failings of the discredited isolationist strategic thinking in some political, bureaucratic and academic circles during the 1980s and early 1990s was in their elitist disdain for, and condescension to, popular views.

The other key aspect of popular involvement is that national unity in the face of the threat posed by transnational terrorism is a vital aspect of the resolve required to win the struggle. This is not to say that we should enforce some form of cultural homogeneity. There is, however, an obvious need to cultivate shared community values, particularly concerning tolerance and pluralist democracy. Those Australian groups and individuals that seek to divide us, especially when their motivation is not just the expression of legitimate dissent, must be exposed to the vigorous currents of democratic debate that the terrorists so despise and fear.

ADF Force Structure

Our fifth theme is the fitness of the ADF for the fight against transnational terror.

The ADA has long advocated that the task of the ADF and the Department of Defence is to provide the government of the day with the widest possible range of military options should such measures become necessary. Such measures need not necessarily involve the use of force as they include the deterrent effect of demonstrating the willingness and capacity to do so. As Frederick the Great notably remarked, 'diplomacy without arms is like an orchestra without instruments'.

To use a poker analogy, however, you cannot play or bluff successfully with a weak hand. The ADA is strongly of the view that the defence force should be primarily configured for high-end military operations both in Australia and overseas. This is primarily for reasons of deterrence and long-term strategic flexibility. However, it is also because forces so configured can more easily, and swiftly, scale down to handle lower-level threats than low-end forces can scale up (even in the unlikely event there was sufficient time and recognition of an emerging threat to do so).

Building on the need to fully involve the Australian people, the ADA is also firmly of the view that there is also a real role for high-readiness reserve forces, both generally, and in providing the types of incident response unit to deter, prevent or ameliorate terrorist attacks in particular. However, the role of the ADF, both regular and reserve, is not to provide static guard forces for elements of key national infrastructure or highly visible 'national icons' (as some State premiers somewhat foolishly requested after the Twin Towers attack).

From the perspectives of conventional defence of Australia and its interests, and also with regard to counter-terrorism, there is little doubt that the ADF is not big enough. This is borne out by our contribution to the recent collective intervention in Iraq. It should be of concern to all Australians that this country was apparently unable to contribute what would historically have been regarded as our share of the collective burden. Forty-five thousand British personnel were committed to the theatre of operations and a proportional Australian commitment would have numbered around 15,000 rather than 2,000. The simple fact is that we do not have 15,000 ADF personnel capable of such a deployment, especially to what was a high-end battlespace. Even if we had enough time to scrape 15,000 together we could not have rotated or sustained them.

This is not to decry the fact that the small ADF elements committed have acquitted themselves very well. Nor is it to deny that, in some cases, their specialist niche capabilities have been especially useful. We need to remember, however, that the success of our forces in Iraq, and the success of the collective intervention overall, cannot justify the general rundown of the ADF over the

last generation.

It is the ADA's view that our inability to contribute a larger commitment to Iraq, or indeed a more broadly based one — including basic capabilities such as infantry equipped for a modern battlefield — is just another indication that we have let our defence capabilities run down too much during the last three decades. There are three main causes for this.

First, and most importantly, there has been insufficient funding for the ADF over a sustained period, due in part to unfocused public involvement in national security matters. The following examples highlight the gravity of the situation:

- The gap between the minimum funding identified as required in Defence white papers since 1987, and the funding actually delivered, is in the order of 100 to 120 billion dollars.
- Current defence expenditure is about 1.8 per cent of GDP but needs to be in the order of 2.5 per cent for a sustained period in order to catch up.
- Since 1991, ADF regular and reserve numbers have declined by 28 per cent.
- Our intervention in East Timor in 1999 was essentially a low-intensity operation very close to a major mainland mounting base. Even then it was a close run thing logistically and we came close to running out of infantry. If the UN had declined to take over from INTERFET, we would have faced major problems in sustaining the operation without the re-introduction of conscription.

Second, an essentially isolationist strategic view had too great a sway over defence decision-making and force structuring over the same timeframe.

Third, as the recent Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade report again revealed, the ADF suffers greatly from a cumbersome and often stultifying civilian bureaucratic hierarchy in the Department of Defence. This bureaucracy dilutes appropriate ministerial control, prevents ministers interacting effectively with senior ADF leaders (and the ADF at all levels), hampers the ADF in undertaking its core tasks, and prevents military capabilities being developed and delivered in an effective and accountable manner. The bureaucracy also perpetuates and exaggerates inter-Service rivalry in order to claim a spurious *raison d'être* for its bloated size, excessive influence and constant interference in military professional matters.

While the ADF's funding has increased to some extent over the last few years it is still plainly insufficient for the international and domestic security situations now confronting us after East Timor, the Twin Towers, Afghanistan, Bali and Iraq. Some of you may think the ADA view is somewhat alarmist and that my second name is probably Cassandra. Please feel free to read, in the introductory chapters to the first volume of the official histories of World War II, how similar complacency caused numerous defeats, casualties, deaths and eventually even higher expenditure in the 1939–42 period.

Similarly, while the proponents of the 'defend the moat' strategic siren songs of the 1980s and early 1990s are in retreat, having largely reduced our army to the capabilities of a field gendarmerie, the final wooden stake has yet to be driven through their hearts to prevent their regeneration. Australia has now deployed armed force overseas in defence of its interests twelve times in the last century and a half. We have directly defended Australian territory, from our territory, for two limited periods only (a few months in mid-to-late 1914 and in 1941–42). The struggle against transnational terrorism has been largely no different from both a military and police perspective. The simple truth remains that the defence of Australia and its interests will continue to require the deployment of the ADF overseas — and it should therefore be configured and resourced accordingly.

No real or at least economically efficient redevelopment of ADF capabilities can be achieved without root and branch reform of the Department of Defence. At the very least, the CDF and Service Chiefs must be re-empowered and freed from the managerialist shackles preventing them from truly commanding the forces entrusted to them by the Australian people. The Navy, Army and Air Force are major Australian institutions. The CDF and the Service Chiefs assume their positions after a lifetime of varied professional experiences and service. Their decisions and their advice to ministers, and their political control by the government, should not be perpetually frustrated by bureaucratic layers of civilian public servants with significantly less experience, far narrower responsibilities, much more limited professional perspectives, and frequently with self-interested agendas. When Australians learn that the heads of the armed forces are regarded in the federal bureaucracy as deputy secretary equivalents, most are simply astounded.

One final point on the subject of whether the ADF is best equipped for the current situation. Much is made of how good our special forces are by world standards and they are indeed a first-class capability. However, the reason the special forces are often suggested as the best contribution we can make to coalition operations is simply because they constitute one of the few ADF capabilities that are maintained to both a world standard and at high states of operational readiness.

However, for obvious reasons, there are not many of them and they are stretched somewhat thin. While the ADF may be coping at present, there will obviously be operational tempo problems if the special forces are required elsewhere. This may be why Australia does not plan on contributing much of a force to the occupation of Iraq — we do not have the military capacity to do so.

More to the point, a successful special forces capability cannot be maintained without an adequate critical mass in the 'unspecial' bits of the rest of the ADF from which they are recruited, trained, gain their initial experiences from, and from which they are supported. Put simply, especially in the case of the Army, if more conventional

military units are continually run down we will eventually not be able to sustain our special forces anyway.

Furthermore, not every strategic problem can be solved by the commitment of special forces. For the foreseeable future we will continue to require larger numbers of more conventionally equipped and conventionally roled units. However, if the bulk of the Army is not given the chance to use their skills, or maintain them at modern levels, we will eventually suffer such morale and retention problems that we will lose the very personnel required to have both an effective army and the recruiting base anyway for our special forces.

Eschewing neo-isolationism

Our final theme is the issue of combating transnational terrorism alone or in company. It must be said that this question is really one of degree rather than an 'either/or' choice.

Despite the efforts of a strangely large section of the New Zealand populace and the more extreme fringes of Australian society, you cannot make the world stop while you attempt to get off. Ignoring the threat from transnational terrorism does not make it go away — as even New Zealand's Labour government acknowledges. The prefix 'trans' in the term 'transnational terrorism' means that some degree of international cooperation will always be required.

Australia has no practical or moral alternative but to assist in the fight against transnational terrorism at its sources, and these are predominantly outside Australia. There is obviously also considerable benefit to the sole world hyper-power being exposed to other points of view from trusted allies. There are obvious risks in supporting the US and UK so closely. Again this is not a new lesson. The 'old firm' of the UK, Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the USA faced down threats to international order at least six times over the last 100 years. The struggle against transnational terrorism is just another example of where the foot soldiers of Anglo-Saxon democracy again show their willingness to take up the burden of combating international evil.

The ADA view is that Australia has little alternative for both moral and practical reasons. In addition to a long history of shared values and democratic resolve, Australia and the US are also the only first-world democracies to directly border on third-world neighbours.

In Australia's case one of these neighbours is the world's largest Muslim country. Even excluding the wake up call of the Bali bombing, Australia's geostrategic vulnerability compared to most other Western countries is usually not understood or is ignored by critics of our stance on international security issues. It is not, anyway, the Australian way to shirk a fight that needs fighting, nor to pass the buck in the defence of those unjustly attacked. Our participation in the struggle against transnational terrorism is also just another example of our consistent international good citizenship.

Some have suggested that Australia should not become involved in the fight against transnational terrorism, or that we should somehow hide or publicly downplay our involvement, because our participation might heighten our danger as a terrorist target. Such a suggestion is simply morally despicable as well as unsound both strategically and operationally.

Conclusion

The ADA's view on this complex topic may be summarised in eight key points:

First, the struggle against transnational terrorism has meant we are mainly re-learning old lessons rather than absorbing many new ones.

Second, the terrorists are Islamic fanatics who hate our way of life and us enough to want to kill us. We need to recognise this unpalatable fact and respond accordingly by demonstrating our resolve to destroy both them and the conditions that generate them. Mainstream Australian Muslims have a significant role to play in our struggle.

Third, Australians need to refine our perception of national security. At the very least this means acknowledging many old lessons about national unity, subversion, sabotage, the limits of democratic and religious tolerance, the balance between temporary impositions on individual liberty versus national safety, and the nature of treason.

Fourth, Australia needs a whole-of-government approach and structure concerning national security issues. This includes establishing a National Security Council and a coastguard, reinvigorating Radio Australia, and adequately resourcing and realistically focusing ASIO.

Fifth, the Australian people can be trusted and should be consulted on all important national security issues.

Entrusting the formulation of national security policy to narrowly constituted bureaucratic and academic groups has been disastrous. A comprehensive national consultation process is also a key element in nurturing the national unity required to win the struggle against the terrorists.

Sixth, the ADF is grossly underfunded and has been so for at least three decades. The ADF is also inadequately equipped in depth and breadth and has clearly insufficient elements at realistic levels of operational readiness. To add insult to injury, the ADF has also been unnecessarily shackled by an overly large, cumbersome and seemingly unaccountable bureaucracy in the Department of Defence. Greater and sustained funding for the ADF is required but only after root and branch reform of the departmental bureaucracy is undertaken to ensure the money will be spent wisely.

Seventh, Australia has little moral or practical choice but to join with other like-minded countries in combating the common enemies of civilised international discourse. We are, however, unable to pull our weight at present because the ADF has been so badly circumscribed and emasculated.

Finally, the struggle against transnational terror is likely to be a long and difficult one. It will be longer and still more difficult while the conditions that nourish the terrorists' perverted and bigoted beliefs survive. The struggle will continue to require us to actively do something about the countries, societies and cultures that give succour to the terrorists.

It will also mean we should not shrink from robustly criticising those countries or groups that duck the fight, especially when they hypocritically sling off at us for taking the actions they know are necessary but fear to do.

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An Indonesian perspective on terrorism and counter-terrorism

Professor Hasjim Djalal

Long before the 11 September 2001 attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon, Indonesia had already been dealing with a number of terrorism issues domestically. Since its independence in 1945, Indonesia has been subjected to various kinds of terrorist acts.

The recent spate of terrorist bombings, however, began in 1998 with one incident causing no casualties. This rose to five bombings in 1999 with a total of five casualties, 46 bombings in 2001 causing 46 casualties, and 49 incidents in 2002 (including the wave of Christian church bombings). In most cases, the reasons for this terrorism were separatism or religious radicalism, fuelled by the decline in social and economic conditions resulting from the financial crisis of 1997.

Yet, the most spectacular and devastating terrorist act took place on 12 October 2002 in Bali. According to Police General Made Mangku Pastika, the Chief Investigator of the Bali bombing, and other sources:

The Bali attacks involved three bomb blasts in three locations. As of 9 January 2003, 192 people were killed (187 bodies have been identified, five remain unidentified and there are 142 body parts still under examination. The blasts also damaged 58 buildings, 19 cars and 32 motorcycles. The ensuing investigation involved 400 Indonesian police assisted by 110 foreign police officers drawn from Australia, US, UK, Japan, Germany, France, New Zealand, Sweden, Netherlands, Philippines, Singapore and Malaysia.

The investigation indicated that the bombings were conducted by a group with international support, were well planned and involved suicide bombers. So far, 30 suspects have been apprehended. These include five principal suspects believed to be directly involved in the bombing acts, four suspects believed ready to act as suicide bombers, and 21 facilitating suspects. A further 10 suspects are still being sought.

Investigations also indicate that there were direct relations between the Bali bombing and the Jemaah Islamiyah 'network' in South East Asia. This involved Singapore and Malaysia, and perhaps Thailand, in view of the fact the preparatory meeting for the Bali attack was held in Bangkok in February 2002. It was also revealed that some of the Bali bombers were former volunteers in Afghanistan wars, and had participated in inter-religious conflicts in Ambon and Poso. Some of the documents discovered also indicated that Jemaah Islamiyah sought to establish 'Daulah Islamiyah' and a 'Khilafah' (Islamic State) presumably embracing Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, the Southern Philippines and perhaps Southern Thailand.

Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) is led by an Amir ('Head of State') and comprises four subordinate political organisations: the Majlis Qiyada (MQ), Markazia (headquarters), Manthiqiyah and Wakalah. The organisational structure consists of a hierarchy of seven levels. The Markaz supervises four Manthiki with each Manthiki supervising a number of Wakalahs. Each Wakalah in turn supervises a number of Khatibahs, which in turn, supervise a number of Qirdas. Each Qirda comprises a number of Fiahs (or cells), which, in turn, consist of a number of Jamaahs (or Islamic congregations or prayer groups).

The investigations also revealed that there was annual reporting of military training. These reports included an inventory of weapons and ammunition, and a list of those trained including their grade within the organisation and their shooting skills. The investigators also found manuals on the assembling of various bombs and toxic materials, as well as audio-visual tapes. The tapes included interviews by Osama bin Laden and the testaments of 'martyrs' from the Washington and New York attacks, together with material on 'Jihad', the riots in Ambon and Poso, and the approval of Abu Bakar Baasyir regarding the implementation of 'Jihad' on Ambon.

The Bali bombing investigation also identified the following specific difficulties with counter-terrorism activities in Indonesia:

- About 500 Jemaah Islamiyah members may be active in South East Asia, while only about 100 have been detained, particularly in Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and the Philippines. Some 20–25 alleged JI operators may still be at large in Indonesia and only 10 of that number are identified.
- Within Indonesia there are different perceptions regarding Perpu (Emergency Decree) 1/2002 on counter-terrorism, particularly with regard to cooperation with foreign agencies.
- The intense interest of the mass media and the tendency for some police officers to provide information to them anonymously and not through authorised channels.
- Opposition from some politicians and observers who oppose cooperation with foreign police officers arguing that this somehow undermines Indonesian national sovereignty.

There are also several general problems in combating terrorism in Indonesia:

- Indonesia is a very large and archipelagic country spanning three time zones. It contains thousands of islands having thousands of kilometres of porous international borders and coastlines, not stringently

patrolled, and with many local communities being 'accommodative' to radical and separatist elements. The country is also susceptible to lateral conflicts (ethnic, religious, racial) and vertical conflicts between the central government and provincial and local authorities.

- The capacity of the Indonesian police and other law-enforcement agencies are limited because they are under-equipped and under-funded, while the challenges to national unity and stability are enormous.
- Indonesia is occasionally distracted by external factors, such as the difficult and sometimes abrasive political relations with Australia.
- Some Muslims in Indonesia are still nervous about their place in the world. Some of them believe in numerous 'conspiracy theories', including that the Bali bombing was the work of the CIA or Mossad.
- The conditions placed on some assistance from foreign donors complicates counter-terrorism efforts in some cases, such as the restrictions on US aid to the Indonesian police and armed forces.
- The Indonesian economy itself has not yet fully recovered since the financial crisis in 1997. Indonesia has thus not fully developed really effective defence and law enforcement capabilities commensurate with its needs.
- A number of internationally active non-governmental organisations (NGOs), primarily those assisted by Western countries, are mostly interested in promoting democratisation processes, the protection of human rights and the freedom of the press. They are less enthusiastic in their support for, and assistance to, counter-terrorism and law-enforcement activities.

Defining 'terrorism' itself is still problematic in the sense that whether the definition should be limited only to non-State actors or whether they should also include State actors. This is especially so in the case of Israel vis-à-vis the Palestinians, which is the main concern of Muslims around the world including in Indonesia.

Addressing the root causes of terrorism is essential and crucial, both domestically and internationally. These aspects are generally neglected in combating terrorism. Therefore, it is essential to take social and economic measures by increasing educational opportunities and job creation, to support moderate Muslim intellectuals to counter 'hate messages' vis-à-vis non-Muslims, particularly Jews and Christians. We also need to address the political causes of Muslim discontent throughout the world, particularly the fate of Palestinians in the Middle East.

There are, however, some immediate strategic lessons that can be learned from the Bali bombings.

- Terrorism has become even more 'borderless' and motivated by group interests ready and willing to sacrifice human lives and human values. They strike at unlikely places and times, and do not belong to any particular nationality or religion.
- The Bali bombers were non-State actors who based their attack on certain beliefs and convictions, sometimes seemingly irrational, but having a wide network of support. A 're-education' process for Indonesian society

is therefore essential.

- Mutual cooperation among countries, particularly in the region, to counter terrorist activities is even more essential.
- Investigations of terrorist activities should be carried out by experts that are professional, supported by high technology, modern equipment and sufficient funds.
- In combating terrorism, a strong legal foundation and effective and efficient law enforcement activities are required.

A number of issues that need to be further investigated include:

- The extent of the relationship between the Al-Qa'eda networks and Jamaah Islamiyah. The role of the elusive Mr 'Hambali' in this regard may be very significant. It appears that Al Qa'eda is very interested in South East Asia and seems to have been using JI as its regional arm to target US and other Western interests in the region.
- The links between Jamaah Islamiyah and the Rabithatul Mujahidien (RM) in Malaysia also need to be further investigated, since both Hambali and Abu Bakar Baasyir seem to be also the spiritual leaders of the RM.
- The introduction of 'suicide bombers' to South East Asia could have far-reaching implications, particularly to Singapore and Indonesia since the two countries are sensitive to these kind of attacks if directed at shipping at sea or in port.
- The shift from 'hard' to 'soft' targets in South East Asia due to increasing alertness and cooperative relations between law enforcement agencies in the region.

The Bali bombings have had several significant impacts on Indonesia:

- Indonesia now realises that terrorism is a clear and present danger to Indonesia itself. This realisation has also reduced the debates before the Bali bombing whether or not Indonesia was a haven for terrorists.
- The voice of the moderates in Indonesia is becoming more confident while the voice of the religious radicals has become more defensive. Indonesia has in fact supported the inclusion of Jamaah Islamiyah as a terrorist organisation in the UN list, and some radical organisations like the FPI (Islamic Defenders Front) and the Laskar Jihad have now been officially disbanded.
- There is now an increasing acknowledgement, nationally and regionally, that the Indonesian police are now doing a good job in investigating terrorist networks in Indonesia.
- The enactment of Perpu 1/2002 and 2/2002 (Perpu 2 applies Perpu 1 to the Bali attack retrospectively) on counter-terrorism. These decrees authorise the Indonesian authorities to detain a terrorist suspect (based on an intelligence report) for seven days without a court order. This is in some aspects progress, although nowhere as draconian as the Internal Security Acts applying in Malaysia and Singapore.

Prior to 1998, previous governments in Indonesia could deal with terrorism by employing various measures,

such as open and secret military operations, covered intelligence operations, negotiations, and even a combination of all these measures. But since 'Reformasi' in 1998 the measures that can be used are now limited.

The 'Reformasi' process was introduced quickly and not always with adequate transitional preparations. The old anti-subversion law that enabled anti-terrorism activities was abolished in 1999 without it being replaced by a new law. The existing criminal law has not been sufficient to deal with terrorism matters, especially in dealing with preventative actions. The criminal law basically only covers repressive actions after offences have been committed.

Albeit too late, the emergency decrees (namely Government Regulations in Lieu of Law), Perpu Numbers 1/2002 and 2/2002 (the latter enacted on 18 October 2002 after the Bali bombing), were therefore designed to enhance the legal capacity of governmental institutions, particularly the intelligence agencies, police, military, judicial system and immigration authorities to cope with terrorist crimes.

Perpu 1/2002 includes the following features:

- The regulation covers persons committing terrorist acts in Indonesia, in foreign countries, toward foreign countries from Indonesia, and against Indonesia from foreign countries.
- The penalties for terrorist offences are severe and include death, imprisonment for life or a fine of one trillion rupiah. In some cases, a minimum sentence of four years imprisonment applies.

Some of the terrorist offences covered by the regulation include:

- acts against aircraft or the safety of aviation;
- importing or exporting firearms, ammunition, explosives and other dangerous goods;
- the use of chemical, biological and radiological weapons, micro-organisms and radioactive materials;
- collecting funds for terrorist crimes or to buy materials for use in such crimes;
- helping or facilitating terrorist acts; and
- planning or encouraging terrorist acts.

Some of the counter-terrorist measures covered by the regulation include:

- detaining terrorist suspects for up to six months;
- arresting terrorist suspects and detaining them for up to seven days without a court order;
- blocking bank accounts of terrorist suspects and authorising the provision of financial information on the suspect by the bank concerned;
- opening and examining mail, and intercepting telephone conversations and other communications of the suspects;
- protecting witnesses, investigators, prosecutors and the relevant judges and their families from threats;
- confiscating the property of terrorists if they die before the courts come to a decision as to their guilt; and

- compensating the victims of terrorist acts and their rightful descendants if the judge so decides.

According to the Indonesian Constitution, emergency decrees (Perpu) must be subsequently approved by the Indonesian Parliament before becoming full laws. The draft law on terrorism currently being considered by the Indonesian Parliament to replace the Perpu includes several changes, including:

- a clearer definition of 'terrorism';
- some penalties are reduced from those instituted by Perpu 1/2002, although the death penalty is still maintained;
- the power of investigating authorities to detain a suspect for up to six months is abolished, but the result of the investigation must be read in the court openly by the presiding judge;
- the power of investigating authorities to arrest and detain a suspect for investigation is reduced from seven to three days;
- the power of investigating authorities to open mail and intercept private telephone conversations and other communications is reduced from one year to 60 days at a time; and
- the Indonesian President is authorised to establish an ad hoc task force in certain circumstances to implement the proposed law against terrorism.

Continuing Indonesian efforts to fight terrorism are being carried out on four fronts. On the national front, there are steps to promote institutional capacity building and the strengthening of legal infrastructure as discussed above. At the same time, the Government is also intensifying efforts to promote and improve social and economic conditions of the people, as well as, hopefully, better managing governance by promoting decentralisation processes, democratisation and the protection of human rights.

On the bilateral front, Indonesia is establishing formal cooperation with neighbouring countries such as the conclusion of an MOU with Australia in February 2002, and in securing bilateral assistance for institutional capacity building. The MOU with Australia promotes cooperation on intelligence and information sharing, further enhancing cooperation between the law-enforcement agencies of the two countries. The MOU also strengthens capacity building and capabilities through networking; programs of training and education; exchange visits by high-level officials, analysts and field operators; seminars and conferences; and joint operations, as appropriate.

On the regional front, there is enhanced cooperation among ASEAN members and between ASEAN and its dialogue partners:

- In May 2002 Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines concluded a trilateral agreement to combat terrorism and this was later joined by Thailand and Cambodia. Laos and Myanmar have now expressed a desire to accede to the agreement. Some of the agreement's features include:

cooperation against terrorism, money laundering, smuggling of goods and persons, piracy and robbery at sea, hijacking, intrusion (including by insurgent elements), illegal entry, drug trafficking, theft of marine resources, marine pollution, and illicit traffic in arms.

Also in May 2002, the ASEAN Special Ministerial Meeting on Terrorism was held in Kuala Lumpur. This meeting adopted the Work Program to implement the ASEAN Plan of Action to Combat TransNational Crimes with emphasis on the program's terrorism component. The Special Meeting was followed by a workshop on terrorism in Jakarta in January 2003. The ASEAN Work Program on TransNational Crimes covers eight areas: trafficking of persons, illicit drugs trafficking, money laundering, sea piracy, terrorism, smuggling of small arms, cyber crime and commercial crime. The thrusts of the Work Program involve the exchange of information, legal cooperation, law enforcement cooperation, training programs, institutional capacity building, and collaboration with ASEAN dialogue partners and other like-minded organisations and countries from outside the region.

ASEAN has also promoted extra-regional cooperation, such as the ASEAN-US Joint Declaration for Co-operation to Combat International Terrorism signed in Bandar Seri Begawan in August 2002. Among other aspects, this emphasises the need to strengthen capacity building efforts and assistance on border and immigration controls. In January 2003 this was supplemented by the similar ASEAN-EU Joint Declaration on Co-operation to Combat Terrorism. ASEAN has also promoted regional cooperation on specific issues, such as money laundering and terrorist financing. Coordinated by the ASEAN Secretariat, Singapore and Malaysia will soon be organising programs of training on post-blast investigations, psy-war and psy-ops techniques. Singapore will also organise a training program for ASEAN police forces on aviation security.

On the global and international front, ASEAN has taken an active interest in global action against terrorism through the UN and involving all civilisations and all religions, while at the same time addressing the root causes of terrorism. Indonesia is committed to fight transnational crime and especially terrorism. Within Indonesia a range of measures have been taken. To improve the exchange of information, both nationally and internationally, Indonesia has established a special anti-terrorist desk within the Office of the Co-ordinating Minister for Political and Security Affairs, in order to coordinate intelligence gathering between relevant departments and agencies, and to formulate anti-terrorism policies and strategies. MOU on the exchange of information have been concluded with Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines, Thailand, Australia and others.

On legal matters, as well as the Perpu discussed above, Indonesia has also participated, signed or ratified nine international conventions concerned with combating terrorism. These cover preventing attacks on various modes of air transport, suppressing the financing of terrorism, protecting nuclear materials, prohibiting the

stockpiling of chemical and biological weapons, and suppressing people trafficking and people smuggling. Indonesia is yet to become a party to a further six relevant conventions. These include matters such as the punishment of crimes against internationally protected persons, the prohibition of hostage taking, the safety of maritime navigation and fixed sea platforms, the marking of plastic explosives during manufacture and use, and the suppression of terrorist bombings.

In law-enforcement matters, Indonesia has conducted various preventative and early warning measures to prevent further terrorist activities. The government has increased alertness in protecting and checking public facilities, airports, seaports, tourist spots, international conference venues, religious centres and establishments. Indonesian police have undergone anti-terrorist training, assisted in some cases by the US, Germany and Australia.

In terms of institutional capacity building, Indonesia has established a Special Anti-Terrorism Task Force within the Indonesian National Police. Indonesia is considering the formation of a national authority to deal with chemical as well as biological and toxin weapons. Indonesia is also aiming at the establishment of an ASEAN Joint Task Force on Post-Terrorist Attack, on the establishment of ASEAN-wide mapping of the region's terrorist networks, and on establishing an ASEAN extradition treaty as stipulated in the Bali Concord of 1976.

Finally, more intensive public discussions of terrorist issues have taken place. The Indonesian government has called on prominent Muslim leaders and politicians to prevent their followers from being influenced by terrorist and religious radical elements and 'idealism'. For instance, a meeting of all Sumatran Muslim leaders was held in Padang in December 2002. It was attended by leaders of Islamic organisations and Islamic Universities, Muslim scholars, society leaders, governmental leaders, representatives from Muslim student and youth organisations from all over Indonesia, as well as by leaders of the armed forces and police. The meeting issued a statement:

'Islam is a religion which deeply loves peace, based on love for all humanity and nature at large. Therefore, Muslims do not condone all anarchical and sarcastic actions as well as all forms of terrorism.

Terrorist acts taking place in various places have clearly destroyed the principle of good behaviour. Islam therefore proclaims war on all forms of terrorism. Besides, Islam assures the establishment of Islamic friendship, love for country and humanity.'

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Strategy from the armchair

Professor Stewart Woodman

I sip my beer. Images of Iraq flash endlessly across the television screen. A presidential palace bursts into stark relief against the night sky as a cruise missile fired from a US cruiser hundreds of kilometres away in the Persian Gulf slams into the compound. Children holding hands wander slowly across a dirt road as a main battle tank threatens to engulf them. It is an image made all too real by the foreshortening of the telephoto lens — but is this, I wonder, the face of future war?

An ad intervenes. A young ADF engineer sits straddled across the roof beams of a school being rebuilt in an East Timorese village. Children play happily on the grass below. 'Are you looking for a worthwhile career?' the commentator challenges. I pause. The contrasting images of devastation and reconstruction, of high technology and very simple lifestyles, are almost too much to comprehend.

As I lean on the kitchen benchtop, my mind wanders to those other images that have been so rudely pushed aside by the second CNN war. What happened to the premonitions of Indonesia's disintegration following the Asian financial crisis and the ousting of President Suharto? Has China suddenly been accepted as a responsible international citizen not likely to threaten Taiwan — at least until the next Olympics? Does anyone even remember the 'children overboard' affair and, tell me again, when did that happen? Even North Korea's intimidatory missile firings struggle for airtime. Fortunately, on the bedside table lies a copy of Australia's National Security, the 2003 Defence Update. At least there I might find some insights into this strategic cauldron into which we have been swept. I flip the pages. The global agendas of terrorism and the potential proliferation of weapons of mass destruction stare starkly back.

Terrorism has a new face. The symbolic attacks and hostage taking of the past are no longer. Al Qaeda's aims are far more ambitious. It seeks, the Update asserts, to build international terrorist networks to roll back Western values, engagement and influence and to supplant moderate Islamic governments. Chillingly, inflicting mass civilian casualties is seen as a deliberate objective. The imprints of September 11 and the Bali bombing are unmistakable.

And make no mistake — this is not simply a Middle-Eastern affair. Bali has destroyed any last shred of Australian complacency. The tentacles of Al Qaeda stretch deep into South East Asia. A network of extremist cells threatens to create a radical Islamic state encompassing Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and the southern Philippines. 'Australia's security is affected if there are any regions in the world from which terrorists with Al Qaeda's ambitions

and capacity can operate internationally with impunity'.

'But ...', the words come out involuntarily. 'But ... but ... how can little Australia play in such a global game?' How do you tackle such a shadowy enemy? No territory, not even paramilitary forces, no warning — exploiting the very symbols of development to wreak destruction. My thoughts race. And who is to respond? In democracies we have always kept the military apart from the civil population. No state control welcome here ... not across our freedoms.

Then comes the double whammy. What if these terrorists, or a rogue state like Iraq or North Korea, could vent their fanaticism with weapons of mass destruction? The collapse of the Soviet Union, dual use technologies, ballistic missile proliferation ... a chemical or biological attack to dwarf the World Trade Centre. Everything inside me screams 'No!'

But September 11 seemed unthinkable ... and Sarin gas in the Tokyo subway? I don't want to believe it but I am no longer sure it is unthinkable. And why should Australia be immune? Forget the missiles. Civil airliners and cargo containers mock our much-vaunted strategic isolation almost every hour of every day. And the island hopping of asylum seeker boats and pleasure craft from the north east and north west ... is it only drugs and illegal immigrants we have to worry about?

The words on our immediate neighbours hardly register. Weak leadership, declining standards of governance, law and order in tatters, economies on the verge of bankruptcy. From Jakarta to Port Vila, the degree may differ but the challenges to state survival are real and immediate. Bougainville has taken years. Solomon Islands hasn't even got to first base. And what are the prospects for PNG and perhaps even Indonesia?

We can't be expected to solve all their problems for them — no argument there. But to expect the islands to do it for themselves! Talk about a half-truth. Dispersed geography, little infrastructure, few resources, rapid population growth and tensions between traditional chiefly authority and national governance. Who can make any headway against that tide without substantial support? No, the arc of instability is here to stay. Don't tell me we can ignore it.

The frown on my brow deepens. The kettle promising that much-needed injection of caffeine whistles unheard in the background. How can a country of Australia's size and modest defence capability manage such a diverse security agenda? Tropical Honiara one day, downtown Baghdad the next. The engineer rebuilding the school, the sniffer dog at the airport. They are light years away from stealth bombers and laser-guided munitions, stretching the potential contingency spectrum to breaking point.

I dive back into the Defence Update, desperately seeking answers. I shake my head. Only three pages ... that can't be right? The tone is reassuring. Australia does have 'a Defence posture for the times'. Important niche capabilities will be needed to support the global war against terror but otherwise the changes are not large. Some rebalancing of capabilities and priorities, that is all. There will be no fundamental change to the size, structure and role of the ADF established in the Defence 2000 White Paper.

I berate myself. Of course, the big decisions are only made in Defence White Papers. They come out about every seven years. And we all know defence capabilities cannot be changed over night. But wait, wasn't the last White Paper all about the defence of Australia and operations in the more immediate Asia-Pacific? Sure, East Timor was there and some of the new transnational challenges, but the bottom line was to maintain 'an integrated and balanced joint force'.

But what does a 'capability edge' mean in the face of a terrorist threat. Asymmetry means just that, people don't fight on your terms. And if we really think rogue states are going to get ballistic missiles (it is certainly cheaper than an invasion force!) what's the point of a maritime strategy to defend the sea-air-land gap to the north?

So what are we trying to do? Stop the new challenges before they grow? That crusade is already dragging us in coalition to the far reaches of the globe. But if those movements are fundamentalist, can you really bomb them out of existence? Might not significant pre-emptive action turn moderates into radicals and radicals into martyrs?

The terrorist training camps in Afghanistan were one thing — real and immediate. How much further can the action go without fermenting the very forces we are trying to eliminate? And what risks are there for the nation's regional stature and influence if perceived as riding too closely on the coat tails of America? For Australia, one

thing is certain. It's about specialist capabilities, not integrated forces.

But if those global tasks are only an add-on, are we getting the security of our immediate neighbourhood right? Yep, we did manage East Timor and the ADF did a pretty professional job — but there was very little left in the cupboard at the end. The potential demands on personnel numbers and logistics are mind-boggling. High technology seldom rates. And rebuilding nations isn't a short-term task. When you're the biggest fish in the local strategic pond, you can't really walk away.

Hey, and let's not forget the average digger in all this. Soldier one minute, social worker the next, increasingly caught amid unfamiliar communities — sometimes friendly, often indifferent, occasionally hostile. Even at patrol level, the decisions can be very weighty. The cameraman on that nearby fencepost threatening to beam any false move to the world within moments.

Whatever happened to the comfortable divisions between strategic, operational and tactical decision making? 'We care for our people', the motto proclaims. Let's pray we're preparing them properly for this.

I slump back into my chair. Some adjustments at the margin. I don't think so, Minister. The Update calls it as it is: the world is different. The battlefield is different. The ADF is being stretched to the far boundaries of the conflict spectrum. There are no longer geographic pegs to shape our capability ambitions. Terrorism, missiles and the new interventionist agenda are all compressing strategic time. The dollars to do everything simply aren't there.

I stare unseeing at the flickering images. Choices must be made for the future, and soon. 2007 ... the next White Paper? ... that's a bridge too far. I shake my head. My beer lies flat, half finished on the table.

The strategic value of Taiwan

Hisahiko Okazaki

What is strategy?

To discuss the strategic importance of Taiwan is a delicate task. It is in itself delicate to discuss any strategy openly. Strategy is based on the calculation of naked national interests. It is irrelevant to current norms or ethics of international conduct. Even if not unethical, it could be discourteous. 'He is neither rich nor promising. Therefore, I wouldn't think of marrying

him'. Any lady has the right to think so. But it is definitely impolite to explicitly say so.

When one refrains from discussing strategy, however, quite often, one forgets the importance of strategic thinking. After the Russo-Japanese War, strategy was neither taught nor discussed in Japanese military education because it was considered to be top secret. The Japanese military taught only battlefield

strategy or campaigning — what is now referred to as the operational level of war. Gradually nobody talked about grand strategy and they lost the memory of the vital role played by the Anglo-Japanese alliance. This led to the belief that it was only the tremendous Japanese fighting spirit that won the war. Thus, all the military leaders in Japan eventually became strategic idiots. That is a bitter reflection of the wartime Japan after the disastrous defeat.

In modern diplomacy as well, diplomats quite often concentrate on producing ‘position papers’ for briefing prime ministers and foreign ministers on current affairs. These papers concentrate on bilateral courtesy and public reactions, and they stop thinking about anything beyond.

I cannot help but gain the impression that recent American policy concerning Taiwan has also been fossilised in such ‘position papers’, which do not provide us with any clues as to their underlying philosophy or strategy. Let me quote from a recent statement by Mr. Richard Haas¹, Director of the Policy Planning Staff at the US State Department, which is not a particularly bad example at all, but rather a typical one:

The United States is committed to its ‘one China’ policy, as well as to longstanding obligations under the Taiwan Relations Act. We do not support Taiwan’s independence. We have an abiding interest, above all else, in the peaceful resolution of cross-Straits differences.

It is impossible to explain this remark in the light of American strategic thinking, although it can be explained by Chinese strategic thinking. Instead, it is absolutely explainable from the background of the past Sino-American diplomatic exchanges.

The American position was first expressed in the US–China Communiqué² of 1972. It has been confirmed and gradually modified over and over again between the two countries for the past thirty years. In that process, the Chinese have modified the expression, inch-by-inch, in their favour. The US, while explaining to itself and to third parties, ‘No substantial change from what the US had already said’, has repeatedly made unilateral concessions to China for the reason of ‘common defense against the Soviet threat’, or to prevent deterioration in the Sino-American relationship, or to make a presidential visit successful.

In that process, the American position has moved from an objective reflection of the situation at the time of Shanghai Communiqué which stated:

The United States acknowledges that all Chinese on either side of the Taiwan Strait maintain there is but one China and that Taiwan is part of China.

The American position is now American support of the ‘One China’ policy and non-support of

independence for Taiwan. This is the result of the accumulation of ‘no change in the fundamental posture’ and ‘no unnecessary friction with China’. It is definitely impossible to explain by the philosophy or strategic thinking of the US concerning the long-term peace and stability of Asia.

Now, let us turn to the strategic value of Taiwan. Strategy requires long-term thinking and taking account of all possible contingencies. One of the recommended approaches is to consider extreme cases first in discussing strategy and then examine more realistic conditions. If you start with current affairs, it is hard to have a long-term vision. A typical example is the post-war debate on Japanese defence. ‘In case of a war’ is the most basic assumption for any strategist. But in post-World War II Japan you have to overcome various arguments, such as ‘peaceful solutions should be sought first’, or ‘why do you believe current international relations are so grave’? After all this, you will have ended up with no time to discuss strategy and never reach an appropriate defence strategy.

We could even define effective strategists as those who always have extreme cases in mind. Just as religious or moral philosophers ponder the question of life and death, even in their normal life, strategists also need to think almost unnecessarily broadly and deeply. Let us start thinking about the extreme case where China has succeeded in getting full control of Taiwan.

As to the method of annexation of Taiwan we may exclude the direct use of force. Such a scenario would mean a Sino-American war without necessarily resulting in the successful Chinese annexation of Taiwan. Quite likely, a Chinese annexation of Taiwan would be the result of political and psychological pressure. Certainly, the threat of force would have to be behind it, but it would take a form in which the US at that time would find it difficult to convince domestic American opinion that it was necessary to intervene. Also, it may not take a direct form of annexation at first, but begin with a Hong Kong style ‘one nation - two systems’ intermediate stage before gradually proceeding to full annexation. Whatever the method, we are presuming the extreme case of China getting complete control of Taiwan.

The impact of a Chinese Annexation of Taiwan

The first concern of Japan in such an eventuality would be over its sealanes of communications in East Asia. This is a natural reaction for Japan, which is unable to self-supply its supplies of food and other vital raw materials.

During the Cold War, Japan felt it was the northern and eastern sealanes that were most vulnerable to the

constant threat of Soviet submarines and long-range bombers. On the other hand, the southwestern sealanes, which were and are the most important for Japan, remained quite safe. This was because of Taiwan's geopolitical position during the Cold War.

China lacks access to deep oceanic waters, particularly on its East China Sea coastline where China's important naval bases and industrial capacity are located. Therefore, Chinese submarines have to sail on the surface for a considerable distance and dive near the Ryukyu Archipelagoes in order to operate in the Pacific. As a result, Chinese submarines are presently not a serious threat. In contrast, Taiwan's east coast directly faces the deepest seas in the Pacific. If China controlled Taiwan, China could utilise Taiwanese ports for its submarines to operate freely throughout the Western Pacific.

The question of sealanes is even more serious in the South China Sea. China claims extensive territorial waters in that area. Possession of Taiwan would mean control of the northern entrance of the South China Sea. The larger part of the South China Sea would then become a kind of Chinese 'inner waters'. If China claims exclusive jurisdictions there, the only safe sealane for Japan in Asia in an emergency would be the passage through the Lombok Strait in Indonesia and along the east coast of the Philippines.

What is vital to Japan's interests, however, is not limited to the question of oil routes to the Middle East, because in an extreme case, Japanese ships could reach the Arabian Gulf by going around the south of Australia.

What is more important is the political impact of China's annexation of Taiwan on Southeast Asian countries - which have been major Japanese economic strongholds. Among Southeast Asian countries, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, and Brunei have no access to the sea except through the South China Sea. Most Thai and Malaysian ports also face the South China Sea. Therefore, these countries have a vital interest in the South China Sea.

In the 1980s, Thai Prime Minister Chatchai Choonhavan once expressed concern about China's advance to the South China Sea and openly proposed Thai-Japanese joint naval exercises. Japan responded with silence as usual. This negative reaction gradually induced Thailand to other alternatives, that is, some form of strategic accommodation with China. The entire control of the regional nations' outlet to the sea would be one of China's most useful tools for 'Finlandising' these nations. Finlandisation of South East Asian nations by China would undermine Japan's vital interests.

There exists a still more important question. The ethnic Chinese populations in Southeast Asia, which China often terms 'overseas Chinese', have long been divided into pro-Beijing, pro-Taiwan, and neutral groups. However, China's control of Taiwan would

make this division disappear. This may happen even under an interim period of 'one state — two systems', short of complete Chinese control of Taiwan.

Southeast Asian governments used to govern their ethnic Chinese minorities by, in part, utilising this division. What might happen if this policy tool was no longer available? In the past, China, while showing strong interest in the defence of 'overseas Chinese' interests, has generally been extremely cautious in considering the effects a Chinese intervention might generate. As China's Finlandisation of Southeast Asian governments proceeded, China would have a freer hand. Also, the local ethnic Chinese would feel freer to resist the existing discriminatory policy of their national governments.

In Indonesia, the ethnic Chinese control much of the economy. With background support from China their political influence would also increase. In Malaysia, China might show more sympathy toward the local Chinese who have always complained of racism by the local governments.

The posture of Singapore may also change. Singapore has traditionally maintained a policy of independence from China's influences, having achieved a unique law-abiding society and high standards of living. It has, however, quite often showed pro-Chinese gestures, reflecting its racial affinity. Singapore's fundamental geopolitical situation is that of a predominantly ethnic Chinese island in a sea of the Malay races. Singapore has had to be cautious not to offend its neighbours. If Chinese influence extends to the South China Sea and Southeast Asia, Singapore might find it no longer necessary to play such a low-key role in the region. If Singapore swayed to more of a pro-China stance, Chinese control of the South China Sea would be complete with Taiwan in the north and Singapore in the south.

Finally, any scenario in which China gains control of Taiwan means that the US did not, or could not, intervene for one reason or another. This means, in turn, the collapse of American credibility. It is predictable under such circumstance that the entire public opinion of Southeast Asian countries could be swayed toward a pro-China stance.

The Historical Significance

Such a development would mean a return to the status quo ante of 1965. Before that time, Southeast Asia had been under the threat of communist insurgencies since the end of the Second World War. Prince Sihanouk of Cambodia was definitely pro-Beijing. Indonesia was on the eve of a communist takeover. There was the Beijing-Phnom Penh-Jakarta axis against the US. Many Southeast Asian nations appeared resigned to an eventual communist takeover. In 1965, the American Marine Corps landed on Vietnamese soil. Although the American campaign in Vietnam eventually failed,

America's act gave Southeast Asian nations the courage and the time to resist the communists. In September 1965, the communist coup in Indonesia failed. Southeast Asian nations formed ASEAN in 1967. This was the beginning of the present stability and prosperity of Southeast Asia. In short, an American withdrawal from Taiwan would annihilate all American regional efforts since 1965, including the tremendous sacrifices made during the Vietnam War.

The threat posed by China to international order has often been debated. Those who deny the threat usually forecast Chinese economic and military power in the future and draw a conclusion that China cannot possibly match the US in strength in the coming decades. They may be right. However, if China annexed an industrially advanced and prosperous Taiwan, controlled the entire region of Southeast Asia, and extended its influence as far as the West Pacific and the Indian Ocean, China would be a formidable challenger to American hegemony.

This would be historically significant. China has always been the greatest land empire in the world in the past thousand years. It was weakened in modern times mainly because it lost all of its hinterlands to Western imperialism from the 17th to the 19th century. The Russians took Siberia. West European powers governed South and Southeast Asia. Japan and the US controlled China's exit to the Pacific by colonising Taiwan and the Philippines. Therefore, Chinese annexation of Taiwan, and the eventual increase of Chinese influence on Southeast Asia, may well mean the revival of the Chinese worldwide empire.

In the past half century Japan has spent tremendous efforts and resources to establish economic relations with Southeast Asian nations. As stated above, however, Japan did not respond to their security needs and concentrated on trade and investment. This made Japanese influence in the region shallow and vulnerable. A loss of influence in Southeast Asia would be a huge blow to the Japanese economy.

What are the Strategic Implications?

As noted above, the outcome of Chinese annexation of Taiwan would be far-reaching. America and Japan should always bear in mind the wider strategic importance of Taiwan. It may be, however, more important for China to recognise it.

The public normally ignores such strategic values until they face a real crisis. However, one can never underestimate the reaction of the public when they suddenly recognise strategic implications.

China has achieved a great diplomatic success. Since the Shanghai Communiqué, China has been successful in making American diplomacy retreat a long way from its original words. The US has by

degrees committed itself to a 'one China' policy which was not intended at the time the communiqué was signed. But China should be prepared for America's reaction when China really tries to make 'one China' come true. Such a reaction would not be limited to the United States. Japan and Southeast Asian nations might also react sharply when faced with this strategic truth (even allowing for China having already achieved a degree of 'Finlandisation'). China may claim the ethical and nationalistic right to annex Taiwan, quoting the history of humiliation from one hundred years ago. China may argue for its legal right, quoting all of America's verbal commitments to 'one China' as well as various principles of current international law. Facing strategic reality, however, these arguments may suddenly become powerless.

In the past four centuries, no challenger has successfully defeated Anglo-American hegemony. The Spanish and the Dutch lost their empires, the French lost India and Canada, the Germans lost half of their territory, the Japanese lost their empire, and finally, the Russians lost all their gains since Peter the Great. China is almost the only remaining empire in the world, possessing Tibet, Xinjiang (Uigur), Mongolia, etc. If China challenged Anglo-American hegemony unsuccessfully, it is quite predictable that China too would lose its empire.

China may conceive the annexation of Taiwan to be merely an achievement of the final goal of Chinese nationalism. It may, however, be the beginning of a deadly, perhaps fatal, confrontation with a world hegemon.

Ambassador Hisahiko Okazaki, a graduate of Tokyo and Cambridge Universities, is the Director of the Okazaki Institute in Tokyo. During a long and distinguished diplomatic career he was Director-General for Foreign Relations at the Japanese Defence Agency, Japan's Ambassador to Thailand and Saudi Arabia, and Minister at the Japanese Embassy in Washington.

He is also a Visiting Scholar at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington DC, Harvard University and the Rand Corporation. Ambassador Okazaki is a regular columnist in various leading Japanese newspapers. This article was originally produced for the US-Japan-Taiwan Trilateral Strategic Dialogue, Tokyo Round, 02 March 2003 and is reproduced courtesy of the Okazaki Institute in Tokyo.

Endnotes

1. Richard N. Haas, 'China and the Future of US-China Relations', remarks to the National Committee on US-China Relations, New York, 5 December 2002.

2. Excerpt from 'Managing the Issue: Key is Better US Relations with China', Report of an Independent Task Force, Sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations, 1995, p. 44.



Dark Victory

David Marr and Marian Wilkinson

reviewed by **Michael O'Connor**

At the outset, let me confess to being no fan of the authors of this book, both Sydney journalists would be widely regarded as of a Left political persuasion. That said, this is an excellent book that should be read by all Australians who have any interest in the way our country is governed.

Dark Victory is the story of the political exploitation of boatloads of asylum seekers in the 2001 federal election campaign in Australia. The story begins with the rescue of a boatload of Middle Eastern asylum seekers by the Norwegian container ship MV Tampa at the request of Australia's search and rescue authorities. Australian government attempts to have Tampa take the rescued asylum seekers back to Indonesia instead of to the nearest port — Christmas Island — were unavailing in the face of the desperate conditions on board for a vessel not equipped to handle large numbers of people.

The book then follows through the events of the succeeding weeks until the November 10 election. A brief aftermath chapter is disappointing because it does not cover the subsequent Senate inquiry into a Certain Maritime Incident, the so-called 'children overboard' affair. Presumably this was due to a clash with publication deadlines. If the book is ever republished, as it deserves, additional material on the inquiry would be useful. The Report of that inquiry makes devastating reading.

Overall, the book reflects the results of hard and detailed research. The analysis is sound and the description of the sequence of events coupled with the political and bureaucratic manoeuvring makes compelling reading. The only disappointing — and unnecessary — feature was the tendency, all too common in Australian journalism, to intrude unnecessarily derogatory comments on individual players.

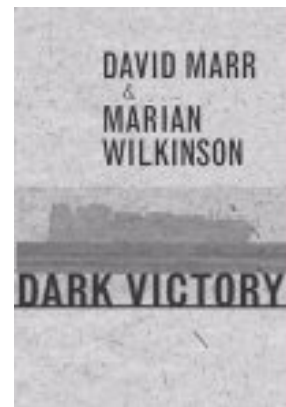
The most disturbing aspect of the book was its reinforcement of a suspicion that the nature of Australian government has been changed dramatically by a stealthy process that has led to what might almost

be called an executive dictatorship. The Westminster tradition of an executive answerable to Parliament has been sharply diminished by rigid party disciplinary structures coupled with the effective politicisation of the senior levels of the public service. This trend towards an American-style presidential government lacks the checks and balances that are built in to the American system.

Senior ministers from the prime minister down show a dangerous tendency to bypass the rule of law by ramming expedient and ill-considered legislation through a compliant Parliament. In the period covered by the book, this was accompanied by the misuse of the Defence Force, especially the navy, in enforcing directives that were of dubious legality and sharply contrary to the traditions and the legal obligations of saving life at sea.

Border protection missions were controlled very tightly from an inter-departmental committee in Canberra, leaving professional officers on the spot not only unable to exercise independent judgement according to the circumstances but also being forced to carry out orders that were arguably illegal and certainly contrary to the safety of life traditions with which they had been imbued.

Generally speaking, Australians have little understanding of the sea. As a distinguished naval officer and former Governor of New South Wales, Rear Admiral Peter Sinclair, once pointed out, Australia is a maritime nation with a continental mindset. Our merchant shipping fleet is negligible and our navy tiny by any measure. Few Australians ever go to sea; fewer still attempt to live for even short periods at sea. We have a general understanding that Australia's dry interior can be a dangerous place but it is far less



dangerous than the sea. Unlike desert travel, those who use the sea must contend not only with an even greater lack of fresh water but also the immense power of the sea itself.

On land, even in the most inhospitable parts of the country, help is not far away. There exists a strong network of emergency services to assist those in distress. At sea, the traveller must depend upon passing merchant ships directed to answer a distress call (as was the Tampa), the navy or a coastguard. The area Australia's small forces have to cover is, in fact, larger by more than 50 per cent than our land mass. Under international agreements to which we have become a party, Australia's responsibility for SOLAS tasks is even greater. Indeed it is one of the largest in the world.

The policy of intercepting asylum-seeker vessels and sending them away adds to the risks these people are already running. There is a Pontius Pilate air about a policy that effectively washes its hands of these people. Certainly, the risk is theirs and perhaps they should not have taken it. The fact remains that, like some of the more stupid risk takers who venture unprepared into the Australian wilderness, their lives are in danger and the navy, which has been ordered to turn them away, is also the primary ocean search and rescue organisation. If it is at the whim of office-bound politicians and bureaucrats to pick and choose between those it will support and those it will send away, our part of the world has suddenly become a more dangerous place as a matter of Australian national policy. As the book makes plain, many governments and international maritime organisations have become understandably alarmed at the implications of Australia's border-control policy.

Many of the asylum seekers did not help their cause. They were aggressively hostile and sometimes violent towards their rescuers. They made serious accusations, such as the use of cattle prods, that cannot be sustained and that have, in fact, been denied by Air Marshal Houston, whose reputation for honesty was substantially enhanced over this period. This, incidentally, is one aspect of the book that could have been improved by closer investigation.

The Defence Force comes out of the whole affair as the only Australian government body to have acted properly, despite some provocation from those it rescued but far more from its political masters and their hangers-on. The role of the then Defence Minister, Peter Reith, and his personal staff can only be described as a blot on Australian government. Part of that can be put down to plain incompetence in overseeing military operations in a dangerous environment but most is due to the opportunistic politicisation of the process in an election campaign. It is this elevation of the political ambition over the responsibility for good government that is the most disturbing feature of this period.

Personally, I have no quibble with the principle that a judgement of the legitimacy of asylum seekers should

be made or that it is Australia's right to refuse entry, even to detain people in safety until a determination of their status is made. Certainly, measures should be taken to deal with the people smugglers who prey upon their clients and to persuade regional governments to meet their responsibilities. What is morally wrong in my view is making a blanket judgement that each and every asylum seeker on each and every vessel has no justification for the attempt to reach Australia and that their lives should be put in jeopardy as a result.

The proper course of action should be to get these people ashore into a place of safety as soon as possible. Then the proper assessment procedure can be set in train. The current practice, however, is morally wrong, dangerous to human life and, I would suggest, demoralising and confusing for the men and women of the navy who have to do the politicians' dirty work.

Marr, D. & Wilkinson, M. 2003, Dark Victory, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 350 pp, soft cover, \$29.95.

Mad Harry

George Franki and Clyde Slatyer

reviewed by Michael O'Connor

Mad Harry was the soubriquet for Lieutenant Colonel Harry Murray who enlisted in the AIF on 30th September 1914 and rose to the rank of lieutenant colonel and commanding officer of the 4th Machine Gun Battalion. Along the way, he collected a Victoria Cross, CMG, two DSOs, DCM, a Mention in Dispatches and the Croix de Guerre, and is renowned as Australia's most decorated soldier. He re-enlisted immediately before World War II and, for a short while, commanded 26th (Militia) Battalion. Mobilised for full-time service in 1941 at the age of 61, he was stood aside on age grounds a year later but continued to serve, this time commanding a mounted unit of the Volunteer Defence Corps.

Even before the Great War, Murray served in the Launceston Artillery before moving to Western Australia. Upon enlistment, he was assigned to the 16th Battalion, the cradle of many famous soldiers in both World Wars. With his battalion, he landed at Gallipoli on the afternoon of that first ANZAC Day and, apart from periods in hospital with wounds and sickness, served throughout the campaign, being one of the last to leave in the evacuation. He was commissioned while on Gallipoli.

This excellent book tells not merely the story of Murray's exploits but provides an insight into the character of a man who was more mature than most, a sober, deliberate and cautious individual very much unlike the popular picture of the reckless collector of decorations. The name Mad Harry clearly owes its origin

to the Australian custom of assigning contrary nicknames.

Something of a loner, Murray was known for his custom of carrying out lone reconnaissance patrols in No-Man's Land but was also renowned as a careful and thoughtful commander who could nevertheless react rapidly and effectively when plans went wrong.

After the war and an unsuccessful marriage, Murray remarried and worked his own sheep properties in Queensland. He eschewed publicity and, apart from a number of thoughtful articles in the RSL paper *Reveille*, remained out of the public eye. Despite persistent trouble from old wounds, he lived an active life until his death following a car accident when he was 85.

Apart from normal training within his unit, Murray never undertook any training course either in his machine gun specialisation or for promotion to any rank. He was not well educated in a formal sense but was extremely well read. There is one comment in the book that suggests that administration was not his long suit but the record suggests a man who was supremely physically fit, intellectually adaptable, sober in his personal habits and always dedicated to the task in hand.

In many ways, the legend of the Australian soldier is based upon people like Harry Murray. One can argue whether the legend has as much validity in modern warfare as it did in the world wars but there is little doubt that the best soldiers are those who possess the strength of character of people like Murray. As long as the ethos of the Australian Defence Force is based upon such traits as initiative and fortitude as much as on professional skill, then the legend will be maintained and reinforced.

Franki, G. & Slatyer, C. 2003, Mad Harry, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 276 pp, soft cover, \$29.95.

Gallipoli: The Turkish Story

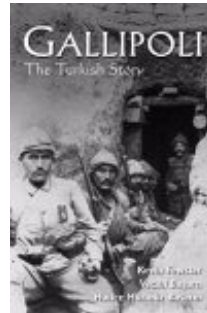
Kevin Fewster, Vecihi Ba[[arin and Hatice Hürmüz

reviewed by Michael O'Connor

The relationship between Australia and Turkey is perhaps one of the more intriguing of the modern world. Born in war as adversaries, it gained strength from a mutual respect between fighting men. To some degree it was strengthened in Korea where units from both countries fought in the United Nations force.

Since that time, the relationship has been reinforced with the addition of thousands of Turkish migrants seeking a better life in Australia. Two of the authors of this book came to Australia in the 1970s.

In recent years, what might be called Australia's rediscovery of the Gallipoli legend has led thousands



of young Australians on pilgrimages to Gallipoli. In the process, Australians and Turks have found each other once more.

Australian history has focused on the Australian experience at Gallipoli. This book sets out frankly to tell the Turkish story of what is regarded by the Turks as an unwarranted invasion of their country and their defeat of the

invader.

One could argue endlessly about the issue of who won and who lost. In reality, the result of the campaign was essentially a stalemate; the Allies could make no headway against the dogged and sacrificial Turkish defence while the Turks were unable to dislodge the Allied bridgeheads. No doubt, the outcome was a strategic defeat for the Allies because they were unable to attain their objectives.

This most interesting book not only outlines the campaign through Turkish eyes but also provides a valuable background of Turkish history and social structure, especially that of the army.

The disappointing feature of the book is the tone of moral superiority that emerges from the authors who boast of their anti-war convictions. This is overdone and we have had too much of it in recent years. Only lunatics are pro-war but most people accept that sometimes war is the only way to restore peace or to establish justice. A pretentious and delicate revulsion only encourages aggression and oppression. In the context of World War I, Turkey did not have to ally itself with Germany. Once it did, however, the consequences were inevitable.

One of those consequences, however, was the rise of Mustapha Kemal Atatürk, the founder of modern Turkey. This man, at the time a relatively undistinguished officer, was more than anyone responsible for holding the line against the Anzacs and, after the war, the founding of modern Turkey. Can anyone claim that a German victory would have been good for Turkey?

This is a most interesting and valuable book, not least for its insight into the thinking of Turks whose legend of Gallipoli is not very much different in its essentials from our own. Turkey's major, perhaps only, victory of the war provided the basis for a strong national identity that emerged from internal collapse and the loss of an empire. In the Gallipoli experience, Turks celebrate a military victory, whereas we celebrate a military defeat and a victory of a different kind. Both countries now celebrate a friendship founded in war but one which transcends that bitter experience.

Fewster, K., Ba[[arin, V. & Hürmüz, H. 2003, Gallipoli: The Turkish Story, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 166 pp, soft cover, \$29.95.

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