

defender

The National Journal of the Australia Defence Association

Price (rrp)
\$A12.50

VOL XX No. 4
Summer 2003

www.ada.asn.au

Print Post Approved No: PP255003/06664

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this issue

● **Mark Latham's perspective on defence**

● **Nuclear proliferation treaty threatened**

● **Remembrance Day through time**

● **Why Indonesia ignores terrorism**

● **The Army's tank quest**



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THE NATIONAL JOURNAL OF THE
AUSTRALIA DEFENCE ASSOCIATION

(ABN 16 083 007 390)

Published quarterly since 1979
Print Post Approved No. PP255003/06664

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ISSN 0811-6407

Printed by
Industrial Stationers
43-51 Queen Street, Melbourne VIC 3000

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Annual \$A50.00 post paid
(Overseas) \$A65.00 air post

ADVERTISING

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AUSTRALIA DEFENCE ASSOCIATION

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www.ada.asn.au

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

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 encompassing:

- 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 bulletin, 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 often invited to make submissions to official and parliamentary inquiries, especially those 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

An M1A1 Abrams from the the 1st Tank Battalion, 1st Marine Division, breaching beach obstacles during a recent amphibious exercise.

Photo courtesy US DoD

Strategy must determine resourcing

Key interim decisions stemming from the Defence Capability Review (DCR) are covered in the feature article in this issue. One important and long overdue decision taken, to finally modernise the Army's tanks, is explored in more detail in our new 'The Sharp End' section.

As is common in what too often passes for public debate on defence issues in Australia, media coverage of what the DCR announcements mean has included several articles presenting wildly contradictory interpretations.

Articles by some former defence officials, in academic or strategic 'think-tanks', even posited that the DCR was fully consistent with the Defence of Australia (DOA) policy of the 1980s and early 1990s. Much other commentary detected a refreshing change from DOA strictures.

Several members of the academic-bureaucratic circle who used to play the 'what the government wants to hear line' are now embarrassed by DCR decisions. This is primarily due to the review's emphasis on balance and versatility in the ADF. It rejects the previous prescriptive configuring of the ADF to match pet theories about Australia's strategic circumstances, the probability and nature of future events, and, hopefully, the long-term canard of making strategic assessments fit budget limits.

The modern Joint Force strategy and concepts underlying the DCR have also proved somewhat confusing to those used to the narrow 'Service Stovepipe' terminology and approach long favoured by the Department's large civilian bureaucracy—to buttress its policy of dividing and

conquering the Services in order to preserve its own power and influence.

Some uninformed criticism of the DCR was inevitable from those with Service-centric biases or platform 'hobby horses'. This group includes some older or long-retired ADF personnel, and academics and journalists with no on-the-ground military experience or feel.

Many commentators missed or undervalued one major DCR announcement, perhaps because it did not involve photogenic hardware issues. This was that the government's decisions in the DCR had drawn heavily on the advice of the CDF and Service Chiefs. For anyone with knowledge of the pre-1974 structure of higher defence management, or indeed with knowledge of how other comparable countries do this, the statement (if true) was particularly encouraging.

Hopefully this development signals an end to the silly and destructive habit whereby strategic advice to government has been the ruthlessly protected preserve of Australia's large civilian defence bureaucracy, rather than more broadly informed and constituted groups and processes.

Most importantly, it may finally be that our intelligence assessment, strategy formulation and capability development processes can become intellectually and professionally robust ones, incorporating the best expert advice available—including the considered professional advice of our senior sailors, soldiers and aviators. This has not been the case in recent times. The two most recent Defence White Papers, for example, were developed by processes that deliberately excluded the Service Chiefs and their staffs as much as possible.

The flawed DOA policy in particular was a result of a process that was corrupt politically, intellectually, professionally and constitutionally. It was essentially a figleaf to disguise a defence strategy that was wrongly driven, and unduly constrained, by the funding thought to be available. Although always shortsighted, such a policy was able to gull the uninformed and uninterested during times of relatively benign strategic circumstances. Our contemporary, much more fluid, strategic circumstances require integrity and a robust approach.

The amount of our national resources to be allocated to our national security is not unlimited but it must be primarily dictated by the situation we face—both now and in the future. Short-term political perceptions and concerns, and our three-year federal electoral cycle, have too much sway. We need more maturity in assessing the threats to our national security and in deciding how we respond to them. We must also avoid in future the perennial situation to date where the funding promised in Defence White Papers is never delivered. The gap, since only 1987, is now at least \$107 billion.

We must have a robust process whereby the strategy and the forces we need to execute it drive the resourcing allocated not vice versa. ♦

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

Sir: Why, when the ADA puts so much effort into being non-party political, did you include an article by Tony Abbott, a controversial minister in the Howard Government, in the Spring 2003 issue of *Defender*?

**Susan Ryan
New South Wales**

Editor's note: Any Australian can contribute to 'Defender' and politicians are not necessarily excluded. We will continue to publish such articles if it is considered they further public debate on national security issues. To allay any undue concern about the ADA's long established bipartisan approach, this issue includes an article by senior Labor frontbencher, Mark Latham. Mr Abbott and Mr Latham are both frontbenchers without direct portfolio responsibilities for national security matters, and both are regarded as 'thinkers' in their respective parties and more widely. They were invited to contribute philosophical analyses on Australia's broad range of national security challenges rather than just more political 'tub-thumping'. 'Defender' readers can be confident that 'puff pieces' from political or commercial sources will not be published.

Sir: With the addition of Tom Magee and Alan Collier to join Neil James on the Association's Board of Directors, the board is starting to look very like the executive of the Duntroon Labour Club circa 1975. I hope this does not mean any dilution of the ADA's longstanding and hard-earned bipartisan status?

**Rick Moore
Australian Capital Territory**

Sir: Tony Abbott makes some very good points about the need for the 'West', as both a civilisation and a pluralist liberal democratic philosophy, to continue to fight hard against the rubbish spouted by the likes of Ayatollah Khameni, Osama Bin Laden, Abu Bakar Ba'asyir and other bigoted evangelists for terror (*Defender*, Spring 2003).

Their hate-filled and often hysterical threats against Western civilisation surely go down a treat at the 'all-you-can-eat scorpion bar' that is now the favoured meeting place of Al Qa'eda's remaining leadership in the mountainous wilds of northern Pakistan. What remains disappointing, however, is their acceptance and even support by those who do or should know better.

What is it that stops many in the 'West', and far too many Muslims worldwide, from recognising such threats as intellectually empty, spiritually barren and morally bankrupt

rhetoric. How can any normal human cheer out loud or under their breath when fully laden passenger planes are flown into New York skyscrapers or car bombs target tourist attractions in Bali?

The test for us in Australia is to remain strong, vigilant and prepared. We set a good example as peacekeepers in both Cambodia and East Timor where the force commanders were Australian professional officers of the highest calibre leading well-trained Australian troops as part of a wider multi-national force. Such examples demonstrate to the world our ability to be a force for good.

Given time, one would hope the same type of communities we helped rebuild in those two countries can be emulated in Iraq. To see that country prosper now that the bloody Ba'ath party murderers are gone and Saddam is living beneath a rock somewhere would be a truly great gift to all mankind.

**Simon Kent
New South Wales**

Sir: I thought the feature article in the Spring issue 'Rethinking the Defence of Australia' by Dr Paul Monk was outstanding, and easily the most informative of that edition.

It was perhaps the most thorough dismantling I have read to date of the mainland defence mantra which has clearly dogged the proper development of the ADF for so long. Dr Monk was also successful in revealing the extent of influence that personalities—rather than sound policy and capability analysis—have had on the shaping of Australia's approach to defence.

The so-called 'gatekeepers of strategic doctrine' were exposed for their part in creating the hollowness and virtual operational irrelevance of the ADF that has taken place over the last 15 years.

It was also most enlightening to read the author's rationale of our still evolving defence policy and the capacity of the pending and forecast capabilities to be acquired under the DCP to meet current and emerging requirements.

Just one question, though. Who exactly is Paul Monk? A few details about his professional background would be appreciated.

**J. Mitchell
New South Wales**

Editor's note: Dr Paul Monk received his PhD in international relations from the Australian National University in 1990 and then worked for six years as a senior East Asia analyst in the Defence Intelligence Organisation. He is a co-founder of

'Austhink' <www.austhink.org>, a Melbourne-based thinking skills group engaging in research, education, training and consulting focused on critical thinking, especially argument mapping—the use of software-supported graphical techniques for handling complex argumentation.

Sir: My congratulations to Paul Monk for a cogently argued pin pricking of the narrowly defined defence of Australia (DOA) dogma. For far too long debate on this orthodoxy has been stifled, including a tendency for its principal defenders to resort to ad hominem tactics such as disparaging critics as 'retired brigadiers' and 'only a former Army captain'.

The prime purpose of the ADF is to defend Australia from military attack or coercion not just against invasion of mainland Australia. The exercise of sovereignty (and our freedom) includes protection of our interests and responsibilities not just our physical territory.

It also seems clear that an ADF structured, equipped and trained to handle more complex matters can easily handle less difficult crises but that the opposite is not the case.

As one of the world's oldest democracies we also have both a duty and a clear self-interest in making sure that the international system works fairly and effectively. This too means us resorting to considered military force at times in partnership with similar countries, as in Korea, East Timor, Solomon Islands and Iraq (twice).

It seems to me that the DOA dogma conveniently ignored everything but the remote possibility of invasion, whose remoteness was then used to justify minimal defence spending for reasons of political convenience. This was an intellectual and moral blind alley because the money wrongly thought to be available ran the strategy, rather than sober assessments of our strategic situation and needs, driving real assessments of the money required.

**Peter Standish
South Australia**

Sir: Dr Paul Monk's article on 'Rethinking the defence of Australia' (*Defender*, Spring, 2003) is not a rethink but a rehash of the war in defence academia between Dibb and the defence of Australia traditionalists on the one hand, and Dupont and the new age global engagement advocates on the other.

A genuine rethink would start with a statement of the prime object of our defence effort, which is, put simply, to prevent the direct use of military force against Australian sovereignty. That the threat of such an attack is remote is a measure of the success of our current defence policy, which has the defence of Australia at its core.

Further, it is this security at home that has allowed the Australian government over the past decade to commit the ADF to a series of overseas deployments, generally in support of allies and of global security.

The events of 11 September 2001 and the war on terror have in no way changed Australia's basic defence position and the consequent need to pay attention to the defence of

Australia. Our current capability to defend the sea-air gap is still at the heart of our military deterrent posture, which, in turn, is an important element in ensuring that the threat of direct military attack remains remote. Take away that capability and you change, quite significantly, the threat equation.

While the most likely employment for the ADF over the next decade will remain overseas deployments in support of allies, the prime role of the ADF must remain the defence of Australia. It is this latter role that must remain the prime force structure determinant, with such additional capabilities as may be desired for overseas deployments being add-ons.

Thus the JSF needs to be judged against its contribution to the defence of Australia through control of the air in the sea-air gap, rather than merely as a big ticket item in the defence budget, the dropping of which will release funds to build a bigger and better overseas deployment capability.

**Norman Ashworth
Western Australia**

Sir: As, hopefully, the ADF looks like getting new tanks, a Vietnam history, published two years ago, makes apposite reading. If you haven't already read *Jungle Tracks: Australian Armour in Vietnam* (by Gary McKay and Graeme Nicholas, Allen&Unwin, 2001—about \$21) take the trouble to go to your local library. The book did two things for me—it showed the intensity of the conflict in Vietnam and the value of armour in a tropical, sometimes jungle, environment.

In Vietnam armour was involved in almost every action. Infantry used the cavalry's M113 armoured personnel carriers to reach their operational areas and the carriers also undertook their own patrols, particularly along some of the main roads that ran through the Australian zone of responsibility. Add to the intensive hours on operations the long hours of maintenance the armoured vehicles required and you are awed at effort the black berets put in.

The second factor, the value of the tanks, was a surprise. The Centurions were not by any means the right vehicle to use with their petrol engines and interior designed for smaller troopers—for Europe rather than tropical Asia. But after some initial doubts, the infantry had no trouble in working with them in the types of pacification operations required.

The tank's big gun, obviously, provided flat-trajectory, bunker-busting fire support and also useful anti-personnel fire. The infantry liked the way the 52-tonne tanks could ride up on a bunker and rotate on their tracks, crushing the fortifications. The speed and shock they provided was also well appreciated.

After a while, the enemy began to avoid action when tanks accompanied the infantry—so they had a deterrent tactical effect as well.

The most telling tribute to the value of the tanks came when the Centurions were withdrawn to Australia before the infantry—prematurely the authors say. In one of the final actions of the Vietnam War we incurred five soldiers killed and they probably would not have been lost had the tanks

been available. If, as some claim, new tanks will cost \$400 million, what is the value of the lives they will save in any future conflict?

John Stackhouse
New South Wales

Sir: Goh Chok Tong's remark that 'purists' might say Australia cannot be regarded as a part of the region until its population is at least 50 per cent non-white cannot be allowed to pass—or should I say Goh—without comment.

Our official response—that Australia was not about to have its immigration policy set by the demands of other countries—was appropriately forthright but there is a further point to be made. If Goh's purists, whoever they are, are to be consistent, they will have to apply their racist reasoning across the board.

It would follow, as I see it, that Singapore could not be regarded as a good neighbour to Malaysia and Indonesia until at least 50 per cent of its population was non-Chinese. It would also follow that Indonesia could not be regarded as part of the Asian region until at least 50 per cent of its population was Indian, Chinese or Japanese.

Isn't this so? This might be an imaginative cosmopolitan idea, but on purely practical grounds it is surely a no-Goh. I always thought of the Singaporeans as eminently practical people. Perhaps the Singaporean Prime Minister was careful to differentiate between himself and the anonymous purists because he recognises that the idea he attributed to them was sheer nonsense? But in that case, why did he raise it at all?

Paul Monk
Victoria

Sir: Australians perhaps more so than most tend to live for the present and avoid thinking too deeply about the future. This tendency is marked where potential future events are dreadful to contemplate but of lower overall probability. Australians are also generally confident to rely on gut instinct and commonsense when making important decisions in complex circumstances.

Both these traits are very relevant when we consider what should and would Australia do if the authoritarian (if no longer completely totalitarian) communist government in mainland China tried to use military force to conquer Taiwan. Despite the possibility that it might not be in Australia's short or even medium term interests to be involved, most Aussies would surely be very uncomfortable at abandoning a fellow democracy in such circumstances.

This gut instinct on moral grounds would be reinforced, of course, by the high probability that the US and at least some other democracies are not likely to stand by and let China attack Taiwan. The only exception might be if Taiwan unwisely provoked an invasion or could plausibly be accused of doing so. The longer any attack can be postponed of course the better for everyone. With enough time and encouragement even mainland China will eventually democratise to the extent that it will no longer be feasible to contemplate resolution of the China-Taiwan issue by force. The irony is that a China willing to, in their terms, 'let Taiwan go' would be the type of China most likely to woo Taiwan back into some type of political or economic fold.

This is why it so important that the world's democracies reinforce not weaken the status quo by continuing to support Taiwan. Taiwan is currently strong enough in military, political and moral terms to defeat any invasion but will not remain so if it cannot modernise its armed forces at least at the same rate as the Chinese communist regime. Taiwan is not as strong to beat threats to its seaborne trade or attacks on its territory by ballistic missiles.

The world's democracies must resist Chinese bullying intended to weaken international support for Taiwan and the right of the Taiwanese people to be the free and sole arbiters of their future.

Despite inevitable howls of rage from the current Chinese regime, perhaps Australia should consider helping the USA to provide Taiwan with the means to defend itself. Long-range, diesel-electric submarines spring to mind.

In the long term, once China joins the ranks of functioning democracies, future Chinese governments will thank and respect us. They will appreciate Australia helping hasten China's democratic evolution and in preventing a war prompted by emotion, dogmatism and communist subterfuge rather than good Chinese commonsense.

Mike Stephenson
Victoria

Sir: I enjoy the contribution of Australis in all her guises. The sub-article on our commitment to Iraq, 'Casting stones from grimy glasshouses' in the last issue caught my eye. I agree with much of its comment—the hypocrisy of our self-laudatory triumphalism, the refusal to concede our inability to do more and the hollowness of the ADF this reveals, but much of the argument hangs on a statistic that irritates me. Yes, if we had contributed proportionally to the British on a per capita basis we would have deployed 15,000. This is not however, the point. We made a contribution to a coalition campaign but in a theatre outside our area of strategic concern. It was though, well within that of Britain's concern. While I imagine most Australian strategists applauded the intent of the coalition I believe most would feel Australia had no obligation to be involved beyond demonstrating our solidarity.

If the same statistical interpretation as that used above for our involvement in Iraq were applied to the British commitment to East Timor it would have demanded the deployment of almost the entire UK defence force; or in the instance of the Solomons to a force of 6000 to support our endeavours to sort out a post-colonial British shambles. All of which goes to prove once again the old aphorism of lies, damned lies, etc.

Pat Beale
South Australia

Editors Note: Australis advises that the point being made was that the Australian contribution was much smaller than it should have been because we were incapable of contributing more. The comparison with the British commitment was for illustrative purposes to highlight this point, not necessarily to suggest that we should have sent 15,000 personnel. Australis also advises that surely Iraq is a major world problem and just as much an Australian strategic concern as it is a British one, whereas East Timor and Solomon Islands are regional concerns. ♦

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

Intelligence inquiry

The ADA continues to receive strong support for its submission and subsequent testimony to the inquiry into Iraqi WMD assessments by the Joint Statutory Committee on ASIS, ASIO and DSD. Rarely a day goes by without favourable comment from serving or retired staff from one of Australia's intelligence and security agencies, or current and past customers of their product.

The Association seems to have struck a very responsive chord and tapped a strong feeling among the professional career staff in all six agencies. Interestingly we have also received quite favourable comment from senior management staff without any professional intelligence background. This is encouraging for the success of the reforms clearly required.

For those who may care to read the Association's 13-page submission, it can be downloaded from the parliamentary website at: <<http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/pjcaad/WMD/subs/sub11.pdf>>.

The *Hansard* transcript of the Executive Director's subsequent oral testimony to the inquiry may be downloaded from the same website at: <<http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/pjcaad/WMD/official.pdf>> (pp 53–62).

Weighting the balance in our favour

Too many Australians still appear to fear their own politicians and officials more than the terrorist groups determined to kill them in large numbers. As the ADA has noted on several occasions over the last two years as the terrorist threat worsened, our national security continues to be unnecessarily endangered by our seeming national inability to apply goodwill to negotiations about, and commonsense solutions to, pressing national security problems.

Several key High Court judgements throughout the 20th century confirmed the principle that the heads of power covering defence matters in the Commonwealth Constitution wax and wane with the seriousness of the threat to our national security. In simple terms, temporary laws and regulations governing national security measures that might be unconstitutional during 'peace' are constitutional when the threat justifies it.

Whether we like it or not, Australia is involved in the

international struggle against transnational terrorism by extremist Islamic groups. No matter how calm and normal our day-to-day lives may superficially appear, or no matter how governments seek to assure us of normality, or no matter how we ignore the problem, we are no longer living in peacetime. The recent case of Willie Brigitte, unable to be effectively identified or detained under existing legislation, should finally shatter the illusions of even the most complacent.

In both international and Australian law, 'war' is a material fact not a legal term. A war exists because it does, not because a national or international authority necessarily declares it does or does not. This principle, based on the UN Charter, underlies much of our international humanitarian law, the laws of armed conflict and the protection afforded to combatants and non-combatants under the Geneva Conventions and Protocols.

With this in mind, we need to decide how we can best fight terrorism by banning terrorist organisations in Australia, stop them disseminating propaganda and recruiting, and prevent a small minority of Australians from wilfully or inadvertently donating money to terrorists and their front groups. Currently the banning of an organisation requires its specific designation. This is despite these groups having amorphous structures and titles by nature, their frequent mutation in both fact and name, and their common spawning of numerous and separately named front groups. Most terrorist groups also purport to have separate 'political' or 'charitable' wings, arms, support groups or allegedly separate organisations.

Currently, terrorist organisations cannot be banned in Australia unless each specifically named organisation is first banned by the UN, or identified as a terrorist organisation by an Australian court, or banned by parliament through legislation. Even ignoring the unworkable in practice specific identification mandated, none of the three methods of identifying and banning terrorist organisations is working properly or can work properly.

The UN continues to avoid banning obvious terrorist organisations because some UN members sympathise with them or claim that they are somehow not terrorist. Australian courts have yet to rule on the matter because no relevant terrorist case has yet made it to trial (in itself testimony to our lack of effective legislation), and such a method would be time consuming at best and easily

circumvented. Banning terrorist groups by legislation remains fraught with difficulty, especially when political parties of all persuasions ignore the public interest and prefer to play politics or curry favour with voters based on their ethnicity, religion, political beliefs or other sectional interest.

As two cases in point, both Hezbollah and Hamas are terrorist organisations that operate behind various front groups. In both cases, Australian legislation bans only parts of each organisation rather than the umbrella controlling body and the whole organisation. As the ‘parts’ banned do not exist separately in practice, this is just silly. As the ADA noted in the Winter 2003 issue of *Defender*, all political parties in Australia contributing to this situation should revisit their professed positions and expedite commonsense measures without further delay.

A strange way to run a railroad

As covered elsewhere in this issue, the revised Defence Capability Plan has much to commend it, especially in the continuing improvement being directed towards hardening our land forces and improving amphibious and sealift capabilities. Perhaps commendation is too strong a word; for this is no more than a belated attempt to overcome some of the worst features of past neglect; it represents a valuable rebalancing of military capabilities but a concurrent decrease in overall capability.

Politically, the revised DCP represents a flat refusal to use the federal budget surplus to overcome years of accumulated deficiencies. That surplus is clearly being reserved for next year’s electioneering and this will give heart to the noisier interest groups around the country. Given the lack of firm commitments in the revised DCP, and the absence of any serious organisational reform in the Department of Defence, the government has signalled that these growing deficiencies could get worse.

The apparent pursuit of a cost-neutral solution overall will lead to the guided missile frigates *Adelaide* and *Canberra* being taken out of service without replacement. This is, in itself, a false economy because while it is easy to take ships out of service, the financial savings will come more from the consequent personnel reductions. Personnel constitute the largest cost element in a ship in service. Significant savings will only be achieved if the trained personnel involved are made redundant or new crews for ships under construction are not recruited. This is, at least partially, an exercise in ‘smoke and mirrors’.

In the late 1960s the RAN’s Operational Research group calculated that 23 surface combatants were required to satisfy all the potential calls on Australia during a conflict of higher intensity. Even the cost-driven 1991 Force Structure Review identified a need for 16 destroyers or frigates compared with the 15 then in service. By the time the 1994 White Paper was published, the approved number had dropped to 14—six FFG and eight ANZACs. This revised Capability Plan will reduce this figure further to 12 in the short term—four FFG and eight ANZACs. Even if the ADF gets the three anti-air warfare destroyers (and that will likely be ten years in the future), there will still

only be 15 major surface combatants with under half of them being proper Tier 1 combatants.

Coupled with the reduction of the number of patrol boats from 15 to 12, the overall maritime warfare capability declines in real terms. While there is no doubt that the replacement patrol boats are more capable—as will be those of any potential adversaries - there is no substitute for hulls in the water. This is especially so given the vast area of Australia’s maritime responsibility, and the apparently endless range of naval commitments ranging from the Middle East through border protection to the Solomon Islands and, potentially, to the interdiction of merchant vessels suspected of trafficking in weapons of mass destruction. This is even before we consider the protection of exports along our sea lanes of communication.

Further, when one considers ships out of service for maintenance, the numbers of destroyers, frigates and patrol boats actually deployable for operations and training in 2003 comes back from 29 in service or under construction overall to just 18.

The table below sets out the numbers and classes of vessels in these categories actually in service or under construction over the next decade. These figures assume a modest level of maintenance that could be reduced by operational requirements, and that the decision making and construction plans will be implemented on time (one for ever lives in hope).

| Ship class | 2003 | 2006 | 2009 | 2012 |
|---------------------------|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| AAW destroyers | - | - | 1 | 2 |
| FFG | 6 | 4 | 3 | 2 |
| ANZAC frigates | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 |
| Fremantles | 15 | 10 | 5 | - |
| New patrol boats | - | 3 | 9 | 12 |
| Less refits/constr | 11 | 16 | 9 | 9 |
| Total operational | 18 | 9 | 17 | 15 |

The figures indicate that in 2006, the navy will be in as disastrous a state in terms of availability as it was in recent years as ships were paid off and construction programs delayed. If all goes to plan, major surface combatant numbers will peak at 12 in 2009, with the last two FFG facing retirement within five years at the most. Very likely, four of these 12 will be in refit or under construction.

By that time, the new patrol boat program will be approaching completion but any remaining Fremantles will be hard pressed to maintain availability. Even so, 2009 will see the RAN’s effective surface combat fleet (inclusive of patrol boats) at a peak of 21. This is compared with the 30 envisaged in the 1991 Force Structure Review when the ADF’s operational commitments were substantially less than they are today. Even so, the ensuing five years will see a further decline unless radical new building programs are set in train. Given that destroyers, frigates and patrol boats are always among the hardest worked on operations, this seems to be a strange way to run a railroad.

That sinking feeling

In a masterful piece of understatement, The Australian Submarine Corporation's annual report published in October said, 'Regrettably, ASC's relationship with its former major shareholder, who held technical management rights, has deteriorated'.

The dispute between the Swedish company, Kockums (now owned by the German firm HDW) and Australia over the ASC, now before arbitration, has a large number of longstanding and more recent causes. These include:

- few Western designs for ocean-going, long-range, diesel-electric submarines (due to US and British concentration on nuclear propulsion and German, Swedish, French and Dutch preference for shorter-range, coastal protection type boats);
- the consequent adaptation of a Swedish design;
- the resultant technological orphan status of the Collins Class (a problem that has badly affected the ADF in many other areas as well);
- the consequent numerous, complex and expensive technical problems experienced by the boats early on;
- Kockums possibly extracting too much value from its ASC holding too early, exacerbating project and cost difficulties;
- problems with the welding of the bow section of the first-of-class boat, HMAS *Collins* (which was constructed in Sweden);
- ideology and bureaucratic reputation protection, rather than the needs of Australian defence strategy, driving persistence with the full original program when the costs skyrocketed and circumstances changed;
- electoral 'pork-barrelling' that saw the ASC located in South Australia and then protected from pressure to restructure, or move or close part of its activities;
- the government's desire to align development of the submarine's systems with its overall objective of increasing interoperability with US for strategic purposes;
- consequent security problems because US entities were reluctant to share technological secrets with non-US commercial competitors, and the US government was as reluctant to share official secrets outside US-UK-Australia-Canada arrangements;
- the government's subsequent decision to purchase Kockums remaining half share in the ASC in November 2000; and
- doubts over the ownership of the project's intellectual property now Kockums is no longer directly involved with ASC.

Now all six Collins-class submarines are in service, the ASC is probably capable of fulfilling its 25-year contract for their refits and through-life support. Its ability to provide the full range of design support will be handicapped without Kockums involvement, although ASC has entered into a capability partnership agreement with a US submarine builder, The Electric Boat Company (the name is an historical carry-over and it has been a builder of only

nuclear powered boats for many years). Kockums is understood to want to remain involved for commercial, safety and product liability reasons.

Hopefully the dispute with Kockums can be resolved. There are clear operational and operational safety advantages in Kockums remaining involved, even if only as some form of technical adviser. Kockums, on the other hand, is not without blame for the situation.

The government will face difficulty in selling all or part of its equity in the ASC until the dispute is resolved. This affects the commercial future of the corporation. It also hampers and delays the ongoing rationalisation of naval shipbuilding in Australia that is needed to maximise flexibility and minimise overall costs for several programs for at least decades to come.

There are, however, clear lessons for the future for other major ADF capability development programs.

Insufficient hard stuff

In 1930s Malaya, the RAF built its airfields in locations based solely on their suitability for flying and ignored military advice as to their defensibility from ground (and air) attack. This contributed greatly to the swift defeat of the Commonwealth forces in Malaya when the Japanese struck.

This lesson was thoroughly absorbed by the ADF leading to its operational requirement that airbases in northern Australia be strategically located (in all respects) and tactically configured. This latter requirement entails, among other things, dispersal, hangar protection, runway and taxiway redundancy, underground command, control, communications and refuelling facilities, and locating residential accommodation outside battle damage range of military facilities.

To the minds of many in Australia's defence bureaucracy, these tactical requirements were just viewed as an expense rather than an investment and, if the bases were attacked, an occupational health and safety responsibility towards the ADF personnel and their families stationed on them.

Despite the hype that the DOA policy of the 1980s and early 1990s made about the need to 'defend the north', narrow bureaucratic perspectives and 'penny pinching' vetoed the thorough tactical configuration of new airbase construction. It also adversely affected the choice of some locations. ADF advice to locate married quarters and living accommodation away from operational areas was disparaged as 'just a desire for peace and quiet' (not an unreasonable aspect even if true) and too often rejected because it cost more.

In yet another of the now regular operational 'kickbacks' from the flawed DOA policy, it has become public knowledge, through a Boeing tender document, that some of the airbases constructed across northern Australia do not have enough runway length, and/or pavement strength, to accommodate the new generation of tanker aircraft being procured for the RAAF.

The concept for the bases was always quite sound, it was the penny pinching over their construction and the ignoring of commonsense ADF advice over their locations and configuration that has spawned this problem.

It will now cost much more money to extend and strengthen runways and related facilities than it would have cost to construct them to the operational standards required in the first place. This debacle would not have occurred if the needs of our defence strategy drove the resourcing allocated rather than the other way around. It would also not have occurred if senior ADF experts had been listened to instead of ignored by the Defence bureaucracy.

Struggling for purchase

There continues to be little real defence debate in Australia, especially outside those intimately involved with national security issues. Excluding official participants, those who participate in what passes for a national defence debate still mainly comprise small groups of academics, activists and retired military personnel. Their deliberations are virtually ignored by the political, bureaucratic and media leaderships who set the agenda for national policies. If this judgement seems harsh, consider the following examples drawn from recent public discussions.

- Our leading national newspaper, *The Australian*, managed to editorialise approvingly on the need for a new Iraqi army of some half a million troops but was not able to draw a parallel with the dismal state of the Australian Army, a mere 25,000 regulars.
- The Prime Minister, Mr Howard, recently claimed on national television that Australia did not have the capability to send more troops to Iraq. No Opposition politician commented on this public admission of a disgraceful failure of public policy. Of course, the Opposition is just as culpable and appears currently bereft of anything resembling a coherent national security policy.

But neither did the national political media, much of it bitterly hostile to the prime minister, take up the issue, even in the context of a debate about how to dispose of a significant budget surplus. Comment on that debate was reserved for every community interest group except defence.

All too often, journalists refer to official documents, such as the latest White Paper, but merely regurgitate details without any sort of contextual analysis in a rapidly changing strategic environment. Similarly, when interviewing supposed experts they allow some of the non-government (sort of) defence gurus in academia to just simply defend their outdated ideas, all too often in a crudely ad hominem style.

Somewhat earlier, there was some discussion of an alleged need to mothball some existing ADF capabilities so as to pay for upgrades of some of the more noticeably

obsolete capabilities in the force. But the discussion, based, as it was on what appeared to be leaks from interest groups within the bureaucracy, failed to analyse the medium to long-term effects of such mothballing. The notion that Australia can sustain a capable defence force in the long run by mothballing equipment is laughable. As usual, the proponents of this fallacy well know that the cost saving comes by cutting personnel numbers but ignore the reality that trained personnel cannot be whistled up in an emergency even if hardware can be put back into service.

The notion, often peddled by politicians and bureaucrats, that there is some sort of justified trade-off between machines and people in a defence force is fundamentally flawed. The machines—ships, aircraft, vehicles and weapons—are nothing more than the tools of trade for the people. People, highly trained in accordance with up-to-date doctrine, create combat power. Whether that power can be used in the service of a given challenge, be it peacekeeping or high intensity combat, depends upon quality people supported by the proper equipment. Australia's real policy too often depends upon a few flash weapons systems, and relatively small numbers of obsolete weapons, all operated by too few people.

With exceptions that can be counted on the fingers of one hand, Australia's media lacks both interest and ability on national security issues. As one of Australia's most respected journalists, Frank Devine, put it in the November issue of *Quadrant*: 'The present system of information being trickled out to journalists by politicians and officials as a favour, in return, over time, for reciprocal favours corrupts both participants and obfuscates the realities of government policy and administration'.

The trade-off notion is a product of fundamentally flawed thinking that insists that defence capability is a product of the funding authorised rather than strategic need. This has led Australia to the dotty idea that we can defend Australia's interests with token and low cost contributions to large coalition operations. These might win ephemeral political points but nothing more.

Hopefully, the prime minister's statement on a lack of capability was an attempt to persuade his Cabinet colleagues that Australia is welshing on its obligations and its allies. After all, too many members of Cabinet (and their Opposition counterparts) are manifestly uninterested in national security. And the less said about most of their backbench colleagues, the better.

Defence policy, especially in this new and challenging strategic era, should be about creating flexible military options. Recent DCR announcements give cause for hope but we are not through the woods yet. Too many actual and would-be defence policy makers seem wedded to dogmatically creating a force structure suitable for this—or maybe last—year's challenges but without the options that would allow us to confidently deal with those of the future. ♦

Major Furphy



The reformation of Russell

Despite the fact it was Monday, it felt good to be alive. The sun was shining, Barney (my boss, Barney Stoush, the VCDF) would be away for the next three weeks on leave and there were no hassles on the horizon. I was looking forward to putting my feet up while gazing out over Mount Pleasant and Canberra's massed blossom trees. I actually whistled a happy tune as I marched down the hallway to my office.

All good things come to an end, of course, and my cheerful Monday morning was no exception. On going into the VCDF Suite, I came face to face with a strange female in civvies sitting at my workstation and using my computer. She greeted me politely: 'Good morning, may I help you?'

In my instinctive assumption that some dirty work was afoot, I was a bit short. 'That's my desk', I said.

'Oh, hello, you must be Major Furphy. Didn't they tell you that you've been moved?' At least, she did have a friendly smile.

Of course, THEY never tell you anything around here so I asked the obvious question. 'Are you DEPSEC Strategy's new assistant?'

'Oh, no', was the astonishing reply. 'This is now the executive suite of GLOP, the Grand Logistics Organisation Panjandrum. Air Marshal Stoush and the office of VCDF have been moved to somewhere in the basement.'

While absorbing this shock and being somewhat curious, even after long service in Russell Offices, I asked, 'what does GLOP do?' The answer was perhaps predictable.

'Well, it's early days yet. At present, we are working out the reporting lines, matrix management responsibilities and staffing establishment. Then we'll look at the office accommodation requirements. It looks at the moment as though we will need the top three floors of Russell 1 and part of Russell 2. The plan is for the CDF to join the ops crowd in the basement as well, although I'm not quite sure where he'll go because VCDF is there already. CA is supposed to be going to Duntroon, CN to Garden Island in Western Australia and CAF to Curtin in WA when the detention centre there is cleared.

'Once we have worked out the establishment requirements and the accommodation issues, we will be initiating a major program of reviews to define our task. That will need a major PR effort to tell the Australian people how GLOP will solve all of Defence's problems. Luckily we will have all of PACC to help.'

I mused that that would be a major task in itself. After all, we have had a multitude of these reshuffles, each of which was meant to solve Defence's problems.

'Can you do it', I asked, 'solve all the problems, I mean?'

'I'm sure we can', she answered brightly. 'All we need is enough people and funds and proper processes. At the

moment, we are planning for a staff, Australia-wide, of 10,246 public servants and as many as 54 junior military personnel. We have a budget of \$2 billion for administration and travel, and \$500 million for purchase of new equipment and stores.

Gesturing at the glossy ADF Capability Fact Book on her (my) desk she added, 'of course, we'll recover all of the \$500 million plus some profit when we sell some stuff'.

This was a new one. 'Whom do you sell it to? I thought this equipment was for the ADF.'

'Oh yes it is, we sell mainly to the ADF. Normally the ADF is our sole customer but occasionally we get a better offer from outside—disposals stores and the like. They pay quite well and the minister likes to see Defence earning money instead of just spending it on the excessive number of uniformed people we have.'

One thought occurred to me—how did this stuff get declared for disposal. After all, Cabinet has to specifically approve any purchases, even for 100 pairs of boots, if it's for the ADF. Surely disposing of it is as well controlled. I posed the question to my new young friend.

'Well, we already have a well-staffed Capability Analysis Division (CAD) which rigorously examines everything we have in stock. They have the authority to declare for disposal anything that they believe the ADF does not need.'

'What if the ADF says it does need the stuff?'

'Oh, please,' she sniggered, 'you can't trust the military to know what it needs. They believe they know what they think they want, but you must have gatekeepers to ensure that they get only what they need, otherwise they'd be out there touting for lethal—and expensive—things like ships or tanks or aeroplanes. There has to be some control'.

'After all', she went on, 'our business management investigations show the busiest unit in the ADF is the Federation Guard and no one has made a submission to us that it should have lethal weapons. In fact, we're looking at taking their bayonets off them and giving them deactivated World War II rifles. GLOP himself commented the other day that their drill would be more attractive. We're even putting out a contract for refurbishing the old rifles and the Guard has put in a tender so they can pay for their travel.

'The only problem we've come across is that all the old drill books appear to have been pulped but GLOP thinks he can remember enough of it from his National Service days.'

Being the polite and good-natured gentleman I have always been, I thanked the young lady and departed with heavy heart and step to find my new subterranean domain. My current task was to set up a program of daily random drug testing for all ADF personnel. I thought the need was becoming ever more urgent. ♦

Reversing our march of folly

Mark Latham

The reception to President Bush's recent visit to London was evidence of the strategic mistakes he has made in prosecuting the war on terror—and the mistake the Howard Government has made in following the Bush strategy.

Bush's visit to London was conceived two years ago, shortly after the attacks on Washington and New York. It was supposed to be an expression of solidarity between two great English-speaking nations at war. Instead, because of Bush's flawed strategy, and especially because of his decision to invade and occupy Iraq, the visit became a symbol of the divisions between Britain and America that will make the war on terror even harder to win.

This must be a war against terrorists, not the women and children of nation-states. The best way of ensuring that weapons of mass destruction are not used for terrorism is to rid the world of terrorists. This should have been America's strategy post-September 11—to target, fight and eliminate the terrorists.

But instead, President Bush has squandered much of the international goodwill for the United States by following a strategy of regime change and pre-emptive war, under the poorly conceived banner of an 'axis of evil'.

This is the wrong strategy for the international community and it is the wrong strategy for Australia. Iraq should not be the frontline in the war against terror, not while Osama Bin Laden remains at large, or while al Qa'eda continues to operate in Pakistan and throughout the Middle East, or while terrorist networks continue to grow in South-East Asia. Our first priority must be to clean out the terrorist networks, not wage war against nation-states.

In truth, the United States was unaware and unprepared for September 11, and two years later it remains ill equipped to deal with the new and different threat of terrorism. More than two years ago, writing in the *Atlantic Monthly* magazine in September 2001, former CIA officer Reuel Marc Gerecht said this about the US capacity in counter-terrorism: 'I would argue that America's counter-terrorism program in the Middle East and their environs are a myth'.

He went on to quote a former senior Near East Division operative who said: 'The CIA probably doesn't have a

single truly qualified Arabic-speaking officer of Middle Eastern background who can play a believable Muslim fundamentalist who would volunteer to spend years of his life with shitty food and no women in the mountains of Afghanistan. For Christ's sake, most case officers live in the suburbs of Virginia. We don't do that kind of thing'.

Gerecht concluded his comments by saying: 'Unless one of bin Laden's foot soldiers walks through the door of a US consulate or embassy, the odds that a CIA counterterrorist officer will ever see one are extremely poor'.

This is the unhappy truth of the US capability against terrorism. Australia cannot rely solely on the judgement of American leaders. Nor can we rely solely on the capabilities of American forces. We need to develop our own capacity and defences.

Bali should have taught us that Australia is not an observer in the war against terror. As John Curtin said in 1941: 'only the

stars are neutral now'. But the frightening reality is that there is no evidence we are winning this war. And when the Government is confronted by this fact, instead of changing strategy, it changes the subject.

In the Spring *Defender*, Tony Abbott wrote: 'The war on terrorism is not primarily a test of military technology or of social service delivery. It's a test of character'.

This is a typically suave formulation from a politician who writes much better than he thinks. In fact, Abbott's assessment is a fallacy—one that is leading our country away from victory and closer to defeat.

Of course, the war on terrorism will test our character, both at an individual and national level. But we will not win this war by being better people. We will win this war by being better warriors. War is not primarily a test of character. It is a test of our ability to seek out and engage the enemy, to kill or capture him, and to repel his attack.

It's not just that Tony Abbott has nothing to say about how to defeat terrorism as a military threat. More than that, he effectively argues that defeating terrorism as a military threat is not the point. Instead, Abbott writes in generalities: that Western leaders need more 'conviction and clarity'

'But we will not win this war by being better people. We will win this war by being better warriors. War is not primarily a test of character. It is a test of our ability to seek out and engage the enemy, to kill or capture him, and to repel his attack.'

while Western populations need to be more ‘dedicated to enhancing civilised life’—and perhaps what is required are ‘sterner and higher virtues’.

Abbott’s ‘trumpets and torches’ rhetoric is a substitute for a genuine engagement with the military-strategic challenge of terrorism. He even writes that Islam would respect Western civilisation ‘if the contemporary version had less emotional distance from Burke’s notion of society’. In other words, a more politically conservative Australia would have fewer terrorist enemies. I don’t take that seriously and I don’t imagine that the Anzacs would have either.

I believe there is a new nationalism in this country—the sort of nationalism that says that Australia should be part of the international community and part of international engagement, but on our terms. It is the sort of nationalism that says that we should engage with other countries but with a very clear sense of our interests. Australians are saying that we are not a baby nation anymore. We are not some little colony or junior nation.

We are a nation that takes a mature view about our interests. And we need to defend those interests, as part of a balanced defence and security relationship with the United States. If our relationship with the US means anything, it means we should be able to speak clearly and honestly to American leaders about the failings in their strategy.

Equally, John Howard and his Government should be honest enough to admit their own mistakes and be

prepared to change strategy. In her outstanding book *The March of Folly*, the American historian Barbara Tuchman looks at the reasons why nations and governments often act in a manner contrary to their self-interest. She writes that throughout human endeavour:

Government remains the paramount area of folly because it is there that men seek power over others—only to lose it over themselves’.

For Tuchman, persistence in error is the problem: the march of folly, as governments defend their mistakes and failings instead of defending the people they are supposed to protect. This is our problem in Australia today.

Tony Abbott wants to talk about character. I say listen to the words of Barbara Tuchman: ‘In the search for wiser government we should look for the test of character first. And the test should be moral courage’.

The Australian Government has a responsibility to rediscover its independence of judgement and its independence of action. It should redirect our strategy in the war against terror away from regime change and pre-emptive war and back to cleaning out the terrorist networks in South-East Asia and protecting against attacks at home.

This is the only test of character that really matters for the Australian people. ♦

Mark Latham is the federal Opposition Spokesman on Treasury Matters.

Conference Calendar

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

Royal Australian Navy Sea Power Conference 2004
‘Positioning Navies for the Future’
Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre, Darling Harbour
03–05 February 2004
Enquiries: (02) 9248-0894 or www.tourhosts.com.au/seapower2004

Australian Defence Magazine Inaugural Conference
‘Mapping Defence’s New Business Environment’
National Convention Centre, Canberra
24–25 February 2004
Enquiries: (02) 9080-4307 or www.ibcoz.com.au/adm2004

Rowell Profession of Arms Seminar
‘Ethics, Moral Values and the Australian Military Profession in the 21st Century’
Telstra Theatre, Australian War Memorial, Canberra
15 July 2004
Enquiries: (02) 6265-9890

Royal Australian Air Force Conference 2004
‘The Future of Air Power: Network-Enabled Air Forces’
National Convention Centre, Canberra
16–17 September 2004
Enquiries: (02) 6287-6563

Remembrance Day:

then and now

Tom Frame

With the passing of all but a literal handful of the last Australians who fought in the Great War of 1914–18, ‘Remembrance Day’ has lost its human face and some of its poignancy. But this has not diminished its importance. The conflict left a deep scar on the young nation and few Australian families were untouched by grief. On my appointment as Anglican Bishop to the ADF in June 2001, I inherited a large collection of liturgies including a ‘Service of Thanksgiving for the Cessation of Hostilities and Commemoration of the Sons of the Church who have Fallen in the War’. It was produced by the Diocese of Sydney and authorised for use in November 1918.

The liturgy expressed sentiments of gratitude for ‘the gradual worldwide triumph of the cause of righteousness’ and a petition that Australians would be made ‘more worthy of the sacrifices made on our behalf’. It is almost as if the war reflected a holy cause that ennobled military service and rescued all the death and destruction from pointlessness and futility. While some sense had to be made of the carnage, how did the Churches interpret the Great War and assess its moral standing? And what comparisons and contrasts can be drawn from Church attitudes towards the recent war in Iraq?

The reasons for the British Churches, and by extension those in Australia, being enthusiastic about the 1914–18 war are the subject of spirited scholarly debate. In *The Last Crusade: The Church of England in the First World War*, Albert Marrin has argued that towards the end of the nineteenth century, the Anglican Church in Britain saw itself as the ‘guardian, the protector, the educator and the exponent of the national conscience’. The Church was effectively a check on the exercise of temporal rule (meaning politics). As the Church possessed a high view of the State’s right to impose obligation on individuals and a low view of ‘anti-social behaviour’, ‘Anglican opinion was almost unanimous in rejecting pacifism’. Alan Wilkinson, in *The Church of England in the First World War*, cites a number

of attacks by Churchmen on ‘wrong-headed pacifists’ and ‘the false teaching of pacifism’. But what the studies of Marrin and Wilkinson failed to identify was a spiritual dimension to their support for the war.

In his study entitled *God, Germany and Britain in the Great War: A study in Clerical Nationalism*, A.J. Hoover hinted that the Churches might have seen the war as a means of opposing the notion that God had blessed German militarism. ‘Germans have had no difficulty at all in fitting war into God’s world order. God has used war for thousands of years to accomplish his will’. He shows that German pastors were fond of preaching from Scripture passages that implied that God controlled the world through warfare. There is no evidence of any explicit German teaching on the morality of military service. However, in a more general sense, the German Churches believed that because Christ and the Bible were not openly against war they could not be against military service. But Hoover is not able to show any direct connection between the tacit support of the German Church for militarism and the attitude of the British Churches towards the war.

John Moses first identified the connection in 1987. He was able to show in relation to Anglican attitudes in Britain that the Great War was seen as a struggle between conflicting religious notions of the nature of the State. Whereas German Lutheran theology had envisaged that the German state and its military power was the means by which God would influence world affairs, British Anglicanism upheld, as Marrin has shown, the role of the State as the national conscience.

This is a persuasive argument because it separates the purposes for which the governments in London and Berlin resorted to war from the basis on which the Churches took such an active role. The Anglican Church was not, of course, obliged to see the war as the Imperial government saw it. If the spread of German apostasy could only be opposed by the war, the Anglican Church had reason enough for supporting the war. More recently, John Moses has tried to show that similar perceptions

of the Great War were held in Australia. Citing the role of Canon David Garland, an Anglican priest in the Diocese of Brisbane who coordinated the first ecumenical Anzac Day liturgies, Moses has argued that Anglican support was based on the premise that 'there could be no compromise with Prussianism'. Moses' work represents a challenge to the widespread notion that Australian Churchmen who were enthusiastic about the war were simply 'blimpish Empire patriot[s]'.

The churches greeted the Armistice in 1918 with thankfulness to God whom they believed had vindicated the righteousness of the Allied cause. In the years that followed, the churches proclaimed the dawning of a new civilisation. Western society had been taken to the edge of a moral abyss and Church leaders were appalled by what they had seen. They also hoped that the German people had appreciated the consequences of what they had unleashed in 1914. A determination to avoid any repeat marked the next decade. While there was widespread support for the League of Nations and the principle of arbitrating international disputes, the organisation was denied the means of enforcing its resolutions. This meant the League was effectively powerless to prevent the spread of left- and right-wing totalitarianism and the aggressive warfare these regimes waged against their neighbours. By 1939, another world war was inevitable.

There are four readily discernible differences in religious attitudes towards the Great War and the 2003 Iraq war. First, there is widespread suspicion of government (as distinct from political parties) and a general lack of trust in public institutions. Whereas the press and people were prepared to take on trust intelligence assessments of threats to Australia's security and to accept official explanations of the need for military action in 1914, they now expect the intrusion of economic self-interest in resorts to force and suspect that political parties will seek electoral advantage from participation in armed conflict. By way of illustration, it was alleged that the Iraq war was purely about Western access to Arab oil reserves while the Howard Government apparently sought the electoral advantage of 'incumbency' during a time of international hostility.

Second, those against whom Australians fought in 1914–18 were considered aggressive and brutal. They could only be stopped through the legitimate use of discriminate force. Once the war was over, Germany needed to be punished and denied the means of waging warfare. Since then, a more optimistic view of the capacity of individuals and states to act morally has developed alongside a more confident attitude towards the prospects of non-violent conflict resolution. Despite the twentieth century providing abundant evidence of persistent human depravity in

continuing instances of genocide and ethnic cleansing, there is a widely held belief that the evolution of international law and the establishment of forums to resolve disputes will advance human civilisation and eventually make military force redundant.

Third, there has been a clear resurgence of interest in and adherence to pacifism. The Reverend Tim Costello claimed in the *Sydney Morning Herald* ('A churchman cannot serve two masters', 4 June 2003) that the Church was indeed pacifist. In a letter to the editor, I took issue with this unhistorical assertion.

From the time of St Augustine when the Church properly accepted a share of responsibility for preserving temporal peace and protecting civil order, the majority of Christians have acknowledged that force may be required to restrain evil and restore justice both within a nation and between neighbouring states.

The pacifist tradition has always been a minority one. The official formularies of both the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches permit their members to bear arms when directed to do so in pursuit of just ends.

'The pacifist tradition has always been a minority one. The official formularies of both the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches permit their members to bear arms when directed to do so in pursuit of just ends.'

While resorts to force by either the police or the military are always regrettable, failure to deal with lawlessness and

oppression is just as repugnant. In such matters the choice is rarely between good and evil but between bad and worse. The followers of Jesus must, therefore, struggle with the tensions and the obligations created by his reminder that they were in the world but not of it. No one has clean hands.

Fourth, there is an increasing unwillingness to accept the loss of life involved in the application of force. Between 1914 and 1918, 59,000 Australian men were killed and many more permanently wounded in body, mind and spirit. In World War II, the death toll was 34,000. Since 1945, less than 1,000 Australian men and women have been lost in active service. Sergeant Andrew Russell was the sole battle fatality in Afghanistan and no-one has died in Iraq as yet and hopefully none will. This has not prevented some Church leaders arguing that one Australian death in either campaign would be one too many.

In the past, Australians have shown a willingness to oppose tyranny and totalitarianism whatever the cost. But what of Australia's present readiness to accept the consequences of using force to uphold moral values and protect human rights? To date, deployments to Somalia, Cambodia, East Timor and the Solomon Islands for these purposes have not been challenged in terms of the human cost. But one suspects that a handful of Australian casualties might expose the extent of this nation's self-interest and the shallowness of its commitment to preventing human rights abuses committed by oppressive and illegitimate governments.

It is frequently claimed that religion is the cause of more war than any other single factor. While I would dispute this on factual grounds, I am inclined to the view that an informed Christian perspective of the kind offered during the Great War can and does deliver a certain stance on a range of issues relating to the war and its conduct.

Christian notions of the dignity of individual human persons and the sanctified nature of life are integral to notions of social harmony and prescriptions for the proper exercise and limits of political authority. In terms of analytical method, a consciously Christian ethical outlook would, for instance, insist that we consider these concerns in the context of broad community discourse, both within the Church and in public conversations, as the nation state is a contingent entity lacking specific divine sanction for its actions.

The simplistic, over-confident, and naïve assertions and accusations of many Christian ‘commentators’, before and during the Iraq war, hurt the Church, the community and the ADF. They would do well to ponder the more thoughtful analyses of those who understood the individual and institutional evil that led to the warfare that was waged on a national scale after 1914. That same evil has yet to be banished from the human heart. ♦

Dr Tom Frame is the Anglican Bishop to the ADF and a prominent naval and church historian. This article is a modified version of an address delivered by him at the Anzac Memorial Chapel of St Paul, Duntroon, to mark ‘Defence Sunday 2003’ (the Sunday closest to Remembrance Day). Dr Frame’s next book, ‘Living by the Sword? The Ethics of Armed Intervention’, will be published by the University of NSW Press on Anzac Day 2004.

association update

Vale Lawrie Clark

As we noted in the Spring 2003 issue of *Defender*, this year brought the passing of the last survivor of our three founders, the redoubtable Jim Harding. As the Association finishes its 28th year we record the passing of our first national president, Colonel L.G. (Lawrie) Clark, MC, on 07 November 2003.

Lawrie joined the ADA in its earliest days in the mid 1970s because he had a deep commitment to Australia’s national security. His leadership skills were soon put to good use in the original State branch in Western Australia. When the ADA went fully national in 1981, Lawrie stepped up from the presidency of the Western Australia branch to be our first national president. He was a source of much sage advice on the national council and held the presidency until 1989 when he was forced to retire only through ill health.

Although Lawrie’s ill health plagued him for the next 14 years he remained a staunch supporter of the ADA and was a particularly close reader of *Defender*. At Jim Harding’s funeral in July this year, although not at all well, Lawrie insisted on representing the Association and saluting Jim’s passing. This dedication to duty, in practice, form and spirit, was typical of Lawrie’s approach to life.

An outstanding junior infantry leader in Korea, he later served in Vietnam, including with the Australian Army Training Team (AATTV). He was officer commanding 1st Special Air Service Company, Royal

Australian Regiment, from 12 September 1960 to 23 June 1963, and later commanding officer of the Special Air Service Regiment (SASR) from 13 December 1969 until 25 January 1972.

Lawrie’s other community commitments were extensive. He was a dedicated member of Rotary and a long-time staunch member of Legacy, the SAS Association and the AATTV Association. He also served as a councillor for the shire of Busselton.

His funeral at Karrakatta Cemetery in Perth on 13 November 2003 was attended by a very large group of family, friends, Army comrades and admirers, and included a representative of the Governor-General, a close friend. The SASR saw him off in fine style, both at the funeral service and at the celebration of his life held later at the SAS Association House at Campbell Barracks, Swanbourne.

The Association was represented at Lawrie’s funeral by his successor as President of the Western Australia branch, Noel Monks, and by other longstanding members including Joan Dowson, Andrew Fraser Hobday and Kevin Bovill. The Association has also passed its condolences on to Lawrie’s wife, Pat, and family.

Our continuing tribute to Lawrie is the work of the Australia Defence Association and the cause he championed, as our National President for nearly a decade and as a dedicated member for another two. ♦

Defence capability review:

a summary

Trevor J Thomas

On 7 November 2003 the Minister for Defence, Senator Robert Hill, confirmed the Government's response to the Defence Capability Review (DCR), which had been underway since late 2002. The Minister pitched his announcement as an 'interim' response to the Government's fuller expression of the whole revised 2003–2013 Defence Capability Plan (DCP), which is expected to be publicly released by the second quarter of 2004. He has also stressed that new capability decisions to date sought to embody the themes reflected in the 2000 Defence White Paper and Defence Update 2003 (released in February 2003), as well as lessons from recent ADF operational experiences in East Timor, Afghanistan and Iraq.

In announcing the first tranche of DCR decisions, Senator Hill also noted that in undertaking the review the Government had drawn heavily on the advice of the Chief of Defence Force and the Service Chiefs. Such an utterance would be unsurprising in most comparable Western countries. In the Australian context it reflects almost a revolutionary change. In recent times, more often than not, strategic advice to government has been the jealously guarded preserve of the upper echelons of Australia's large civilian defence bureaucracy.

As an 'interim' measure, there is obviously more to come as the next federal budget (covering the 2004–05 financial year) is framed in the months running up to Budget night on 11 May 2004. Senator Hill noted that, in this process, the Government needed 'to factor in important developments of the last few years, in particular, global terrorism, [the] proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and some deteriorating circumstances within our own region. We also needed to factor in the experiences of [the] high operational tempo of recent times'.

In releasing the DCR the Minister acknowledged it was 'three years on from the 2000 Defence White Paper and the [then] DCP attached to it, (and had incorporated) more mature costings in relation to some projects, particularly projects that were some years out' in terms of timing, in the first DCP. 'We therefore said that we would do a review

of the DCP, and hoped to have that concluded in October. It's still not quite complete, but nevertheless, the Government has taken a number of decisions this week'.

Where is the money coming from?

In terms of funding undertakings for new capability acquisitions coming out of the DCR, Senator Hill stated 'we developed this project on a budget-neutral basis, recognising that we're receiving a three per cent real increase per year. Because only seven years of the ten years remain, we've taken it out an extra three years. So the new DCP, when it's released, will be for a 10-year block again—basically starting from this year. And with the savings that we were able to make, and with some improvement of projects—that's some of the detail that we're settling at the moment—it's obviously our view that we can achieve these outcomes within the budget'.

Senator Hill's comments therefore sought to address early scepticism concerning the DCR, which has centred on the validity of the Government's confidence that the revised DCP, or indeed any effective modernisation of the ADF, can be achieved without a larger real increase in defence funding. In coverage since the review announcement, few commentators believe it can, especially if our strategic circumstances continue to deteriorate and the ADF is forced to maintain a high operational tempo. Accordingly, the overly optimistic financial management habits of the 1980s and 1990s, when Australia's strategic situation was relatively benign, are proving hard for many to shake.

A 'sea change' for the ADF

At the DCR announcement Senator Hill acknowledged he is unlikely to be the responsible minister when some of the critical capability funding decisions in the later parts of the program would be required to be taken. He claimed, however, some provision for this had already been built

into the plan, given close to \$A1 billion of approved funds remain unspent (and are being held by the Department of Finance in a special drawing account). According to Senator Hill, 'provided the government is prepared to reschedule money that it is anticipated to spend in the first few years for the tasks further out, [the DCP] should be adequately covered, and (in the past) the government has been prepared to do that'.

At the heart of the shift in ADF operational focus recognised in the DCR is a big emphasis on developing a joint-force approach, rather than three interrelated Service-centric ones, under what Senator Hill describes as 'rebalancing' of overall defence capabilities. This is the first step in a wholesale shift by the ADF involving:

- adapting the Navy's prime function of open-sea, maritime warfare to make it a force better honed to operate away from Australia or in support of amphibious operations (also involving land forces);
- better integrating land forces into Australia's overall maritime defence strategy through modernising and hardening various land force elements and integrating them with maritime, air transport and strike elements;
- relying on unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) for the bulk of future broad-area maritime surveillance; and
- moving away from specialised, manned platforms for long-range strike to 'new generation' missiles on a range of platforms.

Rather than being this specific, the Defence Minister, instead, preferred to describe the shift in DCR outcomes via deference to the conclusions of Defence Update 2003, which more specifically noted global terrorism, the spread of weapons of mass destruction, and instances of regional deterioration now demanded new prominence in the ADF's frontline capability. Senator Hill nevertheless conceded the DCR process had identified 'an increased requirement to strengthen the effectiveness and sustainability of the Army, to provide air defence protection to deploying forces, to enhance the lift requirement for deployments, and to position the Australian Defence Force to exploit current and emerging Network Centric Warfare advantages'.

Enhancing the ability to operate in the region

The DCR has therefore re-emphasised the Government's desire to ensure an ability to safely deploy, lodge and sustain Australian forces offshore. This means Australian forces need to be better protected, with Senator Hill stating, 'we do see the threat that's associated with long-range missiles launched from the air as a growing threat. And we see no other alternative, in order that we are able to answer that threat, but to move to this new capability'. As such, the government has accepted advice to strengthen the Navy's defensive air warfare capability.

The RAN lost its area air warfare capability when the last of the three 1960s vintage Charles F. Adams-class guided missile destroyers (DDG) was retired in 2001. Under the DCR this essential capability is now to be regained from

2013, with the construction (preferably in Australia) and delivery into service of the first of three new Air Warfare Destroyers (AWD). Navy insiders apparently prefer the nomenclature—Sea Control Combatant or Air Warfare Capable Destroyer—to emphasise the vessels are multi-functional not unitary platforms and will therefore be capable of a broad range of military, constabulary and diplomatic tasks.

Through the DCR the Government has further agreed that such vessels will be equipped with a US-designed combat system, most likely to be a variant of the Lockheed Martin Aegis system—said by the Minister to be able to track or simultaneously destroy numbers of aircraft or missiles at ranges in excess of 150 kilometres. Initially, this decision appears to be using the same SM2 missile proposed for incremental upgrades to four existing guided missile frigates (FFG), although Senator Hill latterly confirmed 'there is the possibility in the future for upgrading to that type of capability (SM3), if the need is there'.

In anointing the Aegis system, the Government has apparently decided to limit options to American systems for interoperability purposes and to avoid another technological orphan of the type that have bedevilled Australia with other 'adapted' projects. Senator Hill considered the decision to limit combat system choice to US air warfare systems, probably mean 'a derivative of the Aegis system, but there are some other possibilities in that regard, and work has already commenced on an examination of those alternatives'. The Minister further confirmed adherence to the original project schedule (first ship ready in 2013) saying, 'the timelines we have for these ships are really quite demanding, but we're going to make every endeavour to stick to those time lines. It'll mean decisions in relation to designers will have to be settled in the very near future.' Senator Hill added, 'while not surprisingly they (AWD) were a little more expensive than what we might have first thought, we have factored that into the revised (capability) plan'.

Responding to media questioning regarding the need for a new air warfare destroyer, the Senator replied 'they're not commonplace, but they're becoming more commonplace. As you know, apart from the Americans now, the Japanese have them, the Korean's are getting them, the Spanish have got them, and the Norwegians have got them. I think they're becoming really an essential and affordable capability, and that's why we have firmed-up on that decision.' The decision is fully consistent with the overall thrust of the DCR. Few serious defence commentators question the need for a strategically and operationally mobile ADF to have some ability to flexibly operate outside the range of shore-based air cover.

In terms of the current program to improve the war-fighting capability of Australia's guided missile frigate (FFG) fleet, the Government has decided the SM1 missile defence capability of the four youngest vessels (*Sydney*, *Darwin*, *Melbourne* and *Newcastle*) will be upgraded by the installation of SM2 missiles by 2007 (at an estimated

cost of \$A500m). Such an approach can at best only offer an interim solution as the FFG do not currently possess a 3-D radar fit to fully utilise the SM2 in an area air defence role. According to Senator Hill, 'whilst recognising that upgrading the SM1 missiles to SM2 versions on the FFG is a challenging project, we're going to apply it to four of the FFG to provide an interim capability towards the introduction of new air warfare destroyers'.

Corresponding savings offsets will see the two oldest FFG (*Adelaide* and *Canberra*) paid off from 2006, when the last of the eight new Anzac-class frigates is scheduled to be delivered.

Big improvements to amphibious and sealift capacity

The East Timor deployment in 1999, although relatively close to Australia, is acknowledged by many as demonstrating the clear need for the ADF to be much better prepared to operate in our region. Even though it helped when *Kanimbla* and *Manoora* subsequently came on line, further experiences, and more likely than not contingencies, in the region have strengthened the requirement to substantially modernise and upgrade ADF amphibious, sealift and sustainment capacity.

As a result of DCR decisions, the Government is proposing to replace the 5700-tonne (full load) *Tobruk* (which has been in service since 1981) with a much larger, 20,000-tonne plus, amphibious vessel by 2010. Such a vessel is seen, at a minimum, as being much more capable of satisfying ADF operational requirements to lift a battalion group and be able to tactically deploy an infantry company (with some attached elements) at any one particular time, using the simultaneous operation of at least 5–6 utility helicopters of the type to be acquired under Project Air 9000.

In effect, the broad functional specification for new amphibious vessels now being expressed by the Government resembles closely the characteristics of modern landing platform dock (LPD) and Landing Platform Helicopter (LPH) ship designs. It may very well be that the upper tonnage limit of these vessels may have to increase to the 25–30,000-tonne range, especially if more advanced technologies (UAV, JSF) were to be accommodated. Interestingly the Chief of Navy, Vice Admiral Chris Ritchie—in response to media questions regarding the basing of VSTOL-type aircraft on such ships—said, 'no, this is an amphibious capability, and the purpose of it is to provide lift in the first case for a battalion, and to provide the transport ability ashore to a company at the time'.

The Government further proposes a second large amphibious ship to be acquired in time to replace the older of the current 8500-tonne (full load) landing platform amphibious (LPA) ships (probably *Kanimbla*, which was bought second-hand in 1993, commissioned in 1994 and then substantially modified before entering operational service in late 2000). The second LPA, *Manoora* (of similar vintage), will also be replaced around 2015, not by a large

amphibious vessel but by a new class of sea-lift ship. Senator Hill noted 'the form of that ship is not a decision that's been taken to date. There are a number of different options in that regard'.

Summing up in regard to amphibious capabilities, the Minister said that overall the DCR announcements embody 'a very significant increase in the Navy's capability to transport troops and, in conjunction with the air warfare destroyers, will significantly increase the capability of protecting those troops during the course of deployment'.

Marking time in afloat support

To help offset the costs of the three new amphibious or sealift ships, the 40,800-tonne (full load) fleet oiler, *Westralia*, is to be replaced by a second-hand vessel that meets International Maritime Organisation maritime pollution regulations, chiefly a double-skin hull, to be introduced in 2009. This vessel will be refitted in Australia to RAN requirements. Senator Hill says the new vessel—described as a 'substitute oiler'—and expected to be in service in 2006, will be 'a less ambitious replacement than that envisaged by the White Paper, and therefore, there'll be some savings from that decision'.

This 'substitute oiler' can surely be only an interim solution to a major problem facing the Navy. There is understood to be disappointment within senior ranks that *Westralia* is being replaced with 'just another oiler', rather than a substantive underway replenishment ship capable of also resupplying bulk petrol, oils, lubricants and water (POLW), munitions, and dry and refrigerated cargo. Having to rely on only one underway replenishment ship (*Success*) continues to be a major constraint on ADF flexibility. The long-term requirement remains that when *Success*, which entered service in 1986, and the second-hand replacement oiler are retired, they will both need to be replaced by at least two (possibly three) modern underway replenishment vessels.

Modifying the mine countermeasures force

DCR-driven savings will also lead to the mothballing of two of the six Huon-class coastal mine hunters (MHC), on the basis that should strategic requirements change, such vessels could be mobilised and brought back into service quite quickly. If savings do need to be found, this approach is a sensible compromise, and reflects the Navy's increasing embrace of mobilisation principles and practices long accepted in comparative defence forces around the world.

Given overseas experiences, it may also be possible, at some future time, to bring the mothballed MHC back into limited service as a naval reserve capability. There is no doubt that a mine warfare capability remains essential to national defence. Australia's economic reliance on bulk exports from widely dispersed mainland ports, often then passing through noted regional chokepoints such as the Lombok, Sunda and Malacca Straits, means the nation needs to retain a reasonable ability to keep sea lanes open from a threat well within both regional, and potentially even

terrorist, capabilities.

Still, the Huon-class construction program was only recently completed, with all six ships being commissioned in the May 1999 to December 2002 period. Rather than mothballing older vessels, the RAN might alternatively choose to mothball the newest two ships (*Diamantina* and *Yarra*) commissioned in 2002, thus providing an ability to substantially increase the overall life-of-type of the class. The decision to mothball two MHC does, however, slightly reduce the ADF's ability to supplement the patrol boat force, when required, or employ MHC in a general support role as with *Diamantina* in the Solomon Islands deployment.

Hardening and modernising land forces

As recognised by substantial equipment supplementation programs since the East Timor deployment, the Government's DCR conclusions continue to support initiatives for the Army to become more sustainable, better protected and more lethal in close combat. As such, the Government continues to view the combined-arms approach favoured by Army Chief, Lieutenant General Peter Leahy, whereby infantry, armour, artillery, aviation and engineer elements work together to support and protect each other, as being 'the best way of achieving rapid success while minimising friendly casualties'.

Much public attention has focused on the DCR decision to replace the Army's relatively small number of aging Leopard AS1 tanks, which are 1960s technology introduced into service in 1978, with more modern (but still perhaps second-hand) ones. The contenders are the American Abrams, the German Leopard 2 or British Challenger 2. [For further information see Ian Bostock's article p. 30.] According to Senator Hill, 'which tank, and how many, are decisions yet to be made, but we intend to move that decision-making process now really quite quickly. This decision has largely been based on experience in recent operations, and the importance that tanks have played in the protection of forces—particularly forces on the ground'.

The decision to replace the Army's tanks, however, should not be looked at in isolation from the need to 'harden' the Army across the board. As several recent deployments have shown, Australia cannot continue to rely on just maintaining an Army of predominantly light infantry forces, which, in reality, have changed little in structure and basic equipment types for over 50 years. The increased lethality of modern combat, even low-intensity conflicts, requires the Government to fund a substantial increase in the protection, mobility, firepower and communications of our land forces for joint operations.

Not all are agreed on this, however. Some subsequent press comment about the utility of tanks in South-East Asia and the South Pacific, or in campaigns against terrorism, appear to have been driven by ideological and academic fixations rather than understanding of modern warfare. They also tend to ignore the ADF's successful operational experiences when using tanks in the region since the early

1940s, in New Guinea, Bougainville and South Vietnam, during a range of high-intensity and low-intensity conflicts. Recent papers by the Land Warfare Studies Centre bring these observations out in more detail.

Senator Hill also confirmed Government support for the raising of new projects to 'rapidly acquire' combat identification (IFF) for Australian ground forces, more capable communications (including to increase interoperability with allies), and increased purchases of night-vision equipment. Such additional capabilities, says the Minister—along with the introduction of the Tiger-armed reconnaissance helicopter and additional troop-lift helicopters, to equip current (and future) amphibious transports—will result in a force 'significantly hardened and better networked'.

The Army has often been described as the 'poor relation' in ADF equipment procurement priorities over the last thirty years. The DCR announcements, encompassing lessons learnt from East Timor onwards, along with other recent initiatives, are a long overdue recognition of this state of affairs.

Focus on the JSF and new generation airborne reconnaissance-surveillance capabilities

Ongoing decisions on restructuring the air force appear to be based, in particular, on firming confidence in the assumption that Australia faces little likelihood of a major invasion in the next 10 years. In its DCR conclusions the Government notes it remains satisfied with advice from the Chief of Air Force, Air Marshal Angus Houston, for continued investment emphasis on 'a balanced and flexible Air Force comprising intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, air combat, strike aircraft and combat support elements'.

Consistent with May 2003 announcements regarding the need for all future ADF investment programs to be governed by a Network Centric Warfare (NCW) 'Road Map', Senator Hill noted the Air Force 'must be networked, flexible and adaptable with modern versatile, multi-role capabilities that can contribute to joint and combined operations across the spectrum of conflicts. The Government is of the view that a sound pathway to the future has been laid'.

The ADF currently has in train plans to acquire up to 100 Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) aircraft with the key decision date being 2006. New Airborne Early Warning and Control (AEW&C) aircraft are also in production, and a tender has been released for new air-to-air refuelling aircraft. According to Senator Hill, the ADF, 'also has plans for the acquisition of Global Hawk unmanned aerial vehicles, and a replacement for the AP-3C [Orion] under the further maritime patrol and response capability' (Project Air 7000).

Air Marshal Houston noted at the DCR press conference, 'I think into the future unmanned vehicles will proliferate—they really will. As to whether that's the end of manned

combat aircraft, I wouldn't want to make that prediction at this stage. I think it's too early to tell. In terms of a UAV that we might get for surveillance, I think we need something of the Global Hawk type—it can stay up for over 24 hours, and with two Global Hawks, or that sort of platform, you can do the work of five, six or seven P3s with much reduced manpower. So it's a very persistent way to provide a surveillance capability'.

Air Marshal Houston continued by saying, 'we are very focused on the JSF for the future of the Air Force, and indeed the future of the ADF. I think the JSF will be effectively networked with not just Air Force capabilities, but also the air warfare destroyer, and all the other capabilities we're going to get into the ADF into the future. I think it's exactly the right sort of multi-role platform that a relatively small nation like Australia needs—it will be highly flexible, very adaptable, and ideally suited to the network warfare of the future.' He added, 'obviously a lot of studies have to be conducted to determine what our (numerical) requirements are into the future'.

Air Marshal Houston also remarked, 'we spent a reasonable amount of money upgrading the P3 to AP3 standard, but the reality is that the airframe will only last until about 2015, and we will then have to have some form of replacement. Now the way of thinking at the moment is to go for a mix of unmanned and manned platforms. So what we'll be looking at is some sort of project where the mix of unmanned aircraft is probably about five, and somewhere in the order of eight (in terms of) manned platforms. The manned platform would be capable of doing all the operational tasks the AP3 currently do—underwater warfare and also anti-surface warfare.'

Earlier retirement of the F-111 fleet

Given Air Marshal Houston's summary of the RAAF's overall outlook, Senator Hill surprised many defence commentators by stating that the Government had adopted Air Force advice that, 'by 2010—with full introduction of the AEW&C aircraft, the new air-to-air refuellers, (and) completion of the F/A-18 Hornet upgrade programs—including the bomb improvement program [Project Air 5409], and successful integration of a stand-off strike weapon on the F/A-18s and AP-3C [Project Air 5418]—the F-111 could be withdrawn from service.'

Supporting Senator Hill's announcement, Air Marshal Houston added, 'what will dictate the retirement of the F-111 will be the achievement of a suitable capability to replace the F-111. Now we think that will be somewhere from 2010 onwards. We're very much focused on the capability the JSF will provide. And of course, what you've seen in recent times is the increasing fragility of our F-111 capability. By 2010 it will be almost 40 years old, and our studies suggest that, beyond 2010, it will be a very high-cost platform to maintain. And there's also a risk of losing the capability altogether through ageing aircraft factors.'

From the whole-of-defence perspective, Senator Hill added that, 'in light of the increasing strike capability that's going to be attached to principally the F/A-18s, but also the Orions, it's believed that the retirement date of the F-111 can be brought

forward a few years. That's guidance that's been given to government by the Air Force, and guidance the Government has accepted.' It is understood that elements of the RAAF's classified report to the Government on the future of the F-111s are now being reviewed for public release, and will contain full details of which planned F-111 upgrades will now be cancelled.

The Government's decision is to concentrate investment on sustainment and enhancement of the FA-18 fleet as it awaits delivery of the new JSF in the years after 2012, and not replace or upgrade current-generation weapons. Plans will instead concentrate on new-age weapons common to the JSF program such as the Joint Direct Attack Munition (JDAM), Small Diameter Bomb, Joint Advanced Stand-off Strike Missile (JASSM), Storm Shadow and Joint Stand-off Weapon (JSOW). In the meantime, the RAAF will maximise savings (estimated as at least \$A500 million per year and probably much more as the aircraft ages) that otherwise would have been required to operate the F111s through to the 2015 plus life-of-type originally envisaged in the 2000 Defence White Paper.

Overall thrust

In a subsequent media interview Senator Hill summarised the DCR by noting, 'we believe that these changes, not surprisingly, will lead to enhanced capability for the ADF, well into the future. They provide for a balanced force, which we think is necessary in these times of great uncertainty, and times when it's very difficult to predict the threat that we might face, particularly the threat into the future, to any extent.'

The overall thrust of the DCR reflects the large and coherent input of the CDF and Service Chiefs. The 'end user' language of the review also reflects more of an integrated, joint-force approach to capabilities and the strategic, operational and tactical concepts driving their employment.

The DCR appears to be a firm step forwards in acknowledging the need to match the strategic fluidity of the times by maximising balance and versatility in the force structure of the ADF, and in adopting an integrated approach to executing defence strategy. It also appears to be a long overdue rejection of the repetitive and unimaginative 'platform replacement' thinking that has for too long dominated the more hidebound parts of the Services, much of the Defence civilian bureaucracy and some elements of defence industry. ♦

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Indonesian ambivalence

towards terrorism

Greg Fealy

In the wake of the Bali bombing commemoration on 12 October, many Australians probably have the impression that most Indonesians share our distress at the tragic consequences of terrorism, and that they strongly support the US-led international campaign against terrorist groups such as Jemaah Islamiyah. This impression is largely due to the Australian media's focus on the responses of the predominantly Hindu Balinese, and on sympathetic comments by several senior Indonesian officials.

Images of grief-stricken Balinese dominated media portrayals of 'local reactions' and the press featured interviews with Balinese from various sections of society. Nearly all of those featured expressed dismay and anger at the terrible human and economic toll of the bombing and denounced the perpetrators.

A closer look at the public debate in Indonesia suggests, however, that Balinese responses may not fully represent those of the broader Indonesian community and that there are important differences between Australian and mainstream Indonesian reactions to the bombings. For example, few Australians would doubt that the Bali bombing was the work of Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) and that this group is centred in Indonesia and led by Abu Bakar Ba'asyir. They would also accept that the US and Australian campaign against transnational terrorism targets violent extremists only and is not aimed at Islam per se or its law-abiding adherents.

By contrast, a majority of Indonesians appear not to believe that JI is an Indonesian organisation, nor are they convinced that the Bali bombers came from JI. This is hardly surprising given that most government officials and Islamic community leaders publicly assert that there is no evidence JI exists in Indonesia. The Minister of Religious Affairs, for example, instructed the media in August 2003 not to mention JI when referring to terrorists within Indonesia.

Most Indonesians were genuinely shocked, however, by the Bali bombings and do accept that terrorists are active in their country. But they seem to believe that JI operatives are recruited and commanded by outsiders. Many Indonesians are also very sceptical about the 'war on terror' and believe that the 'West' is using the international counter-terrorism issue to oppress Islam and keep Muslim-majority countries, such as Indonesia, subservient to 'Western' strategic and economic interests.

Evidence of public scepticism about JI and the terrorism

issue can be found in opinion surveys. Shortly after the Bali bombing, 72 per cent of respondents to a Detik.com poll said that the CIA was responsible for the attack. In September of this year, a survey by the current affairs journal, *Gatra*, showed 52 per cent of those polled thought 'JI was a creation of the US'.

The comments of a wide range of prominent Islamic leaders are even more telling. Vice-president Hamzah Haz, who is also chairman of the second-largest Islamic party, has flatly asserted that JI exists in Singapore and Malaysia but not in Indonesia. He has also called President George W. Bush 'the king of terrorists'. Hamzah has a long record of provocative anti-Western remarks and captured headlines in September 2001 when he said the 9/11 attack was expiation for the United States' sins.

Of more concern to Western countries are the views of 'moderate' Muslim leaders such as Hasyim Muzadi, the chairman of Indonesia's largest Islamic organisation, Nahdlatul Ulama. In September 2003, he declared that JI was part of a US strategy to 'force Islam into a corner' and he called on the Indonesian and foreign governments to refrain from mentioning Jemaah Islamiyah because of the unease this caused among Muslims. His statements on this matter are noteworthy because he is a well-known champion of interfaith dialogue and religious tolerance, and he is a frequent visitor to Western countries (including Australia) where he is praised for his stand against Islamic extremism.

Solahuddin Wahid, a prominent human rights official and younger brother of former President Abdurrahman Wahid, stated that JI had been trained by the US and that foreign agencies were 'steering' the Indonesian police into blaming JI without adequate evidence.

Similarly, the deputy chairman of Muhammadiyah, Indonesia's second largest Muslim organisation, Dr Din Syamsuddin, claimed that JI was a foreign creation designed to 'stigmatise Islam' and make it easier to bend Indonesia to the will of the US. He believed the US had instructed 'its JI' to undertake the Marriott bombing as a way of justifying new measures against Islamic groups in Indonesia. These views were echoed by the head of the Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals' Association (ICMI), who warned Muslims not to trust 'Western-engineered' reports on JI.

Part of the problem is the generic nature of the term Jemaah Islamiyah (literally 'Islamic congregation'). There are probably many thousands of 'Jemaah Islamiyah' across

Indonesia, nearly all of them informal and committed to peaceful religious activity. Thus, when Western leaders refer repeatedly to Jemaah Islamiyah, it is liable to be seen as a broader attack on Islam itself. As an analogy, Roman Catholic Australians would be uneasy if a terrorist movement called itself 'The Catholic Congregation' and government officials repeatedly condemned such an organisation. Whether by design or good fortune, the leaders of JI have chosen a name that arouses a strong defensive reaction in the Islamic community.

But there are other reasons for Indonesian scepticism on the terrorism and JI issues. Political expediency is undoubtedly a factor. Parliamentary and presidential elections will be held next year and Indonesian politicians are already jostling for advantage. In the case of Islamic parties, being seen to defend the Muslim community is a sure way to burnish their Islamic credentials in what is likely to be a closely fought election. President Megawati is also vulnerable on Islamic issues. Her Islamist rivals are keen to exploit the JI issue to portray Megawati as compliant to Western demands on terrorism and as not protecting Indonesia's Islamic community.

A further element is the strong sense in Indonesia that the world has become far more hostile in recent years. Suspicion of powerful Western nations and their perceived exploitative tendencies has long historical roots in the Indonesian national psyche. But this sentiment has intensified in last six years.

In 1997, Indonesia became the country most severely affected by the Asian financial crisis. Many Indonesians, both at the elite and the grassroots levels, laid blame for the crisis largely on the 'West' rather than home-grown structural, political and social problems. They believed that 'predatory' international financial markets had manipulated Indonesia's currency and that the prescriptions of Western-dominated multi-lateral agencies, such as the IMF, served to increase the country's vulnerability and suffering. The separation of East Timor in 1999 was also seen as the result of 'Western' (particularly Australian) interference in the province's affairs. Since then, some Indonesians have accused the 'West' of intervening in other trouble spots, such as the Muslim-Christian conflict in Maluku, and the separatist movements in Aceh and Papua.

All of these issues have created a sense of external threat more powerful than at any time since the early 1960s, when Indonesia challenged the formation of Malaysia as a 'neo-colonial plot' by Britain (and Australia). Many Indonesians now regard the world as a more hostile place, and believe that powerful forces have a vested interest in keeping Indonesia internally divided and biddable to Western dictates. Indeed, there is once again a proclivity to blame many of the country's present economic, political and security problems on external rather than internal factors.

These are the political, religious, economic and social contexts in which the terrorism issue should be placed. For many Indonesians, the US-led 'war on terror' is but the latest instance of the West pursuing a self-serving agenda under the guise of international cooperation and mutual benefit.

Indonesian government responses

Given the widespread ambivalence within Indonesian society regarding the terrorism issue, the Indonesian government's response to counter-terrorism has been surprisingly, indeed uncharacteristically, resolute. Immediately after the Bali bombings, it took the unprecedented step of allowing foreign police and intelligence agencies to join the Indonesian police in investigating the attacks. Two weeks later, new retrospective anti-terrorism laws were introduced that gave the police and judiciary special powers in tracking down and prosecuting suspected terrorists. These included the ability to use raw intelligence data in prosecuting alleged terrorists. Importantly, the government took the rare step of giving its unequivocal support to the police and courts in carrying out their tasks.

The speed and rigour of the investigation and trial process has surprised anyone familiar with Indonesia's corruption-ridden and inefficient legal system. Twenty of those charged with involvement in the Bali bombings have now been tried. All have been found guilty and three—Amrozi, Imam Samudra and Mukhlas—have been sentenced to death. It is doubtful that Australia's police and judicial system could have acted with such dispatch if faced with a case of this magnitude. At least another 30 JI members are in detention awaiting prosecution.

In contrast to its operational successes, the Megawati government has failed dismally to lead or nurture the public debate on Islamic extremism. The President had to be persuaded by her advisors to go to Bali the day after the bombings and she refused to act on offers from key mainstream Muslim leaders to help the government campaign against religious extremism. Indeed, she later declared that responsibility for combating Islamic militancy rested with the Islamic community, not the government.

Furthermore, few of Megawati's ministers have sought to engage in public discussion on terrorism-related issues, though in private, many are reportedly convinced of JI's centrality to the country's terrorism problem. A good example is the Co-ordinating Minister for Politics and Security, retired Lieutenant General Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. On recent visits to Australia and the United States he spoke candidly about the challenge of terrorism, referring directly to JI. His comments to the Indonesia media, however, have been extremely cautious and have avoided naming JI. Even ministers with a good knowledge of Islam have failed to offer counter arguments to extremist Islamist doctrines. As a result, much of the burden of presenting information to the public and rebutting the extremist position has fallen to the police, and to leaders of Muslim socio-religious organisations such as NU's Hasyim Muzadi and Muhammadiyah's Syafii Maarif. Foreign funding has now made possible large-scale public information campaigns regarding moderate interpretations of the faith.

Australian responses

The sensitivity of the terrorism issue has obvious implications for Australian policy regarding Indonesia. The Australian government has stated that the Bali bombing has led to a new level of bilateral cooperation between Indonesia and Australia. In a narrow sense, there is some justification for this judgement. The close working relationship established between the Australian Federal Police and the Indonesian police (Polri) is a development that few might have thought possible prior to October 2002. Polri has relied heavily on AFP technical expertise in forensic analysis and electronic surveillance of suspected terrorists. The capture of the senior JI figure, Imam Samudra, for example, was made possible by AFP officers tracking his mobile phone signal to a village in West Java. There are also extensive intelligence and defence exchanges between the two countries focusing on counter-terrorism.

Viewed more broadly, however, the bilateral relationship is strained. Anti-Australian sentiment (directed largely at the government rather than individual Australians in Indonesia) remains high. This is especially so within the country's political and diplomatic elite. In Jakarta, John Howard continues to be one of the most disliked foreign leaders and few of his senior ministers appear well-regarded by their counterparts in Jakarta. Some of this irritation with the Howard government is a legacy of Australia's role in East Timor in 1999 and the boatpeople crisis of 2001. Canberra's handling of the terrorism issue has, however, added to the tension. Key Indonesian officials see the Howard Government as pushy and at times insensitive on terrorism and related Islamic questions. They sense that Howard plays to his domestic audience rather than follows diplomatic protocols. Indonesian officials complain about learning of new Australian initiatives via the media rather than through diplomatic channels.

Moreover, Australia is often criticised in the Indonesian media for being too close to the US and as one of the countries engaged in undermining Indonesian unity and independence. No credible evidence is offered to support the latter proposition, but it remains a persistent and common belief among Indonesians.

For its part, the Howard Government has reason to be dissatisfied with aspects of Indonesia's anti-terrorism measures. The Megawati Government has been slow to act on flows of terrorist funds and has also been hesitant in implementing the UN-sanctioned ban on JI. The complexity of Australia's strategic relationship with Indonesia is highlighted by the simple fact that most Indonesian complaints about, and negative perceptions concerning, Australia are mirrored by similar frustrations and viewpoints in Australian political and official circles about Indonesia.

Both sides apparently feel there is too often a lack of gratitude and reciprocity in their cooperation.

Despite their frustrations, Australian leaders should continue to be circumspect in their public remarks on terrorism and Indonesian radical Islam. Mr Howard's own statements shortly after the 5 August Marriott Hotel bombing in Jakarta that JI had carried out the attack drew

sharp criticism from some Indonesian commentators. They asked how the Prime Minister could be so sure when the police investigation was only in its initial stages. They questioned Australia's motives in so quickly asserting that it was an 'Islamic' terrorist group that was responsible. In fact, many Indonesian officials and most Jakarta-based and foreign observers assumed that JI was responsible and said so soon after the bombing. Subsequent police investigations and research by the International Crisis Group have shown JI was indeed responsible.

Similarly, the Australian Federal Police commissioner, Mick Keelty, has spoken on several occasions of the need to address problems in the Islamic education system in Indonesia. Most scholars of JI regard Islamic education as a critical factor in the perpetuation of terrorism. This is, however, a highly sensitive issue in Indonesia. Most Islamic schools do not teach extremist versions of the faith and there are only a handful of schools with close links to JI. Commissioner Keelty's remarks carry the risk of being seen by many Indonesian Muslims as 'Christian meddling' in the affairs of their country. Hence, such statements can easily have a counterproductive effect on the broader fight against terrorism in Indonesia.

The terrorism issue will continue to dominate and complicate Australia-Indonesia relations for many years to come. Most scholars of JI believe that the organisation will remain a serious threat. There is some evidence that the children of current JI leaders are now being educated in schools noted for their militant jihadist teachings. It is also apparent that JI has an in-built capacity to evolve and adapt to changing security conditions. This will require ongoing bilateral co-operation in order to deal effectively with this threat.

Although Australian officials may be exasperated by what they see as the poorly informed public debate in Indonesia on JI and terrorism, they have little option but to accept that community opinion has an impact on the Megawati Government. In Indonesia's renascent democracy, no political leader can afford to ignore community sentiment even if it is uninformed or misguided. On the other hand, robust civil society will not flourish in Indonesia without genuine debate among Indonesians.

To win the campaign against transnational terrorism by Islamic extremists, both across the world and regionally, Australia needs to avoid actions that may deepen the scepticism and ambivalence towards the terrorism issue in the world's largest Muslim country. Hostile Indonesian public sentiment would be a severe setback for the campaign against terrorism, both regionally and generally. ♦

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Nuclear proliferation

treaty under threat

Robyn Lim

Australia remains attached to disarmament diplomacy, but we need to think realistically about what happens when it fails to work. There is now a serious threat of a break-out from the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT). North Korea defied the ‘international community’ by proceeding with a clandestine nuclear weapons program while still a member of the NPT. North Korea then kicked out inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and left the NPT. North Korea, having flouted the Treaty, and flaunted its nuclear weapons program, now says it is legally entitled to leave the NPT and so should not be held accountable for what it did when it was a party to the Treaty.

Yet the Security Council has not even met on the issue.¹ So much for the so-called ‘international community’ in which so many Australians evince a touching faith. Worse, North Korea’s successful defiance is highly encouraging to other would-be clandestine proliferators, notably Iran. What would it mean for us if the ‘NPT regime’ was seen to be breaking down? We can hardly fail to notice, for example, that in Japan it is no longer taboo to talk about nuclear weapons. That is a consequence of the Japanese public’s growing fear of North Korea’s nuclear ambitions and its missile program.²

North Korea’s Nodong missiles, whose numbers grew from zero to some two hundred on President Clinton’s watch, need not be accurate in order to create panic in Japan—especially if they were thought to have chemical or biological warheads. And it seems unwise to assume that Pyongyang is incapable of putting a nuclear warhead on a missile.

Moreover, some in Seoul make no secret of the fact that they would like to inherit the North’s nuclear program, once the peninsula is reunified, and point it at Japan. If that were to come to pass, how long would Japan be willing to continue to shelter under the US ‘nuclear umbrella’?

In Australia, clear thinking in this matter is not helped by our history of naïveté in relation to nuclear arms control. Indeed, most of those responsible for Australia’s disarmament diplomacy misread the history of the Cold War.³ They never understood that most of the nuclear arms control agreements—products of US strategic paralysis following the Vietnam War and the Watergate scandal that

destroyed the Nixon presidency—played greatly into Moscow’s hands. Indeed, throughout the Cold War, the USSR sought to paint American nuclear weapons as the main source of danger. That was because the abolition of nuclear weapons would have left Moscow with unchallenged hegemony over Eurasia as a consequence of its overwhelming conventional power.

True, the ‘NPT regime’ is something of an exception to this sorry tale of arms control during the Cold War. Indeed, the NPT did help stability because it helped convince the aggressors of World War II, Germany and Japan, that they did not need nuclear weapons for their security.

Then the winning of the Cold War restored equilibrium to the western end of Eurasia. It is now unthinkable that Germany, reunited under eastwardly expanding NATO and EU umbrellas, would be likely to seek security in nuclear weapons. That is basically because the collapse of the USSR made great power war unthinkable in Europe. But Japan lives in a much more dangerous region, where indigenous strategic conflict was not resolved with the end of the Cold War. Indeed, North Korea has become more dangerous.⁴

Currently, the United States is keen to reassure Australia that Japan will remain its strategic dependant—not least in order to maintain Australian confidence in the US nuclear deterrent. But that should not relieve us of the need to do some hard thinking about our security.

The disarmament mantra: A garlic necklace to ward off vampires?

We won’t get far by repeating the mantra, so popular with much of the Australian Left, that because nuclear weapons are the source of danger, all problems would be resolved if they were abolished. Nuclear weapons exist and cannot be ‘disinvented’. Moreover, the seven declared nuclear weapons states—US, Russia, China, Britain, France, India and Pakistan—have no intention of giving up these weapons, whatever they may say.

Nuclear weapons may not be usable in anger, but they remain the ultima ratio of states—the final answer. Moreover, the five states that were declared nuclear weapons states before India and Pakistan tested in 1998

are also permanent members of the UN Security Council.⁵ When the P-5 close ranks in order to protect their shared interests, there is no power on earth that can make them do anything they do not want to do.

In any case, does Australia really want America to abandon its nuclear weapons? As the old Chinese saying goes, 'be careful what you wish for'.

The essential bargain of the NPT, which entered into force in 1970, was that states that did not possess nuclear weapons would choose to give up any nuclear ambitions. In return, the non-nuclear states would be given help with their civilian nuclear programs, which were to be monitored by the IAEA. The five nuclear weapons states also pledged themselves to move towards total nuclear disarmament.

True, the spread of nuclear weapons has been much slower than was expected in 1968. Currently, all but four countries (India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea) are formally committed to the NPT. But who can say how much the NPT itself was responsible for the unexpectedly slow pace of proliferation during the Cold War?

'Superpower collusion' during the Cold War

An alternative explanation is that the spread of nuclear weapons was slow because this was one of the few interests genuinely shared by the Cold War superpowers. They were able and willing to enforce discipline within their blocs—and, in America's case, to provide nuclear protection to West Germany and Japan.

'Superpower collusion' took off after Khrushchev gave China help with its missile and nuclear programs, and this policy backfired when China tested a nuclear weapon in 1964.⁶ That meant that nuclear weapons were no longer the preserve of the strong. Indeed, at different times, both superpowers contemplated taking out the Chinese nuclear facilities, and then thought better of it. Their shared superpower interests thus led to the NPT.⁷

As long as the Cold War lasted, none of the Soviet satellites dared to harbour nuclear ambitions. (In any case, their military and intelligence apparatus were thoroughly penetrated by Moscow.) The United States also cracked down on would-be proliferators among its allies, such as South Korea and Taiwan.⁸

Post Cold War optimism

In the early 1990s, optimism about the 'NPT regime increased as many undeclared' nuclear weapons states abandoned their nuclear ambitions. These included the former members of the Soviet Union that had been 'born nuclear' (Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan). In addition, South Africa was persuaded to give up its nuclear weapons, which were irrelevant to its needs anyway after the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the white minority government. Brazil and Argentina were also persuaded against 'going nuclear'. The NPT did help in giving these states the confidence that they could get rid of their nuclear weapons. That was because the NPT held out some rewards,

and encouraged these states to examine whether proliferation would really increase their security. But optimism about proliferation started to fade in 1998, when India and Pakistan engaged in tit-for-tat nuclear tests.

Optimism fades: India and Pakistan test

In fact, India had staged a so-called 'peaceful nuclear explosion' in 1974, and many Indians had long railed against 'nuclear apartheid'—why should authoritarian China be 'entitled' to nuclear weapons, while democratic India was not? So India and Pakistan refused to sign the NPT. And their nuclear tests in 1998 heralded the end of optimism about the non-proliferation regime.

Those states that have opted for nuclear weapons have done so for a variety of reasons—power, status and security. Of these, the most important is security. India was deprived of any prospect of great power protection when the Soviet Union collapsed. Then India was faced with a 'rising' China that was arming India's arch-enemy Pakistan with missile and nuclear technology.⁹

Now even those who believed (rightly, in my view) that the existence of nuclear weapons did much to keep the peace during the Cold War—because it made head to head confrontation simply too dangerous—now had cause to worry. The two superpowers had had no previous history of conflict. To the contrary, they had been allies in the two world wars. Moreover, they had no territorial dispute, and were geographically distant.¹⁰ (The roots of their struggle lay in the fact that the outcome of the World War II had left the USSR in a near-hegemonial position in Europe, and the United States came to realise that Soviet assertions of hegemony over Eurasia represented an intolerable threat to America's own security.) Yet the fact that nuclear weapons had done so much to help the Cold War from turning hot did not mean that we could assume that nuclear weapons were a 'good thing' in all hands and in all circumstances.

That's what made the Indian and Pakistan 'tit for tat' tests so worrying. These were states that had been established on the basis of religious differences, in bloody circumstances. They had a territorial dispute over Kashmir, and had fought three wars. Indeed, Pakistan, as the weaker party, had a history of pre-emption. Moreover, they shared a long border. Indeed, in 1971 India (with Soviet backing) had exploited Pakistan's crackdown in East Pakistan to achieve the dismemberment of its rival when East Pakistan was detached (as Bangladesh.)

Perhaps there is some consolation to be sought in the fact that both India and Pakistan are democracies, of a kind at least. But the risk on the subcontinent is of accidental exchange, which was the great concern during the crisis in the (northern) summer of 2002. There is also the risk that Musharraf could fall, and be replaced by an Islamist regime. And whatever shreds of hope are to be found in the 'democracy' argument, few observers think that it is a 'good thing' to have nuclear weapons in the hands of 'rogue'

regimes that terrorise their own people and threaten their neighbours—such as Saddam Hussein’s Iraq.

Iraq: Saddam’s fatal error

By the early 1990s Iraq had a nuclear weapons program that was not detected by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).¹¹ There is no point in blaming the IAEA for this, because the Agency had been given no mandate to discover and frustrate secret weapons programs.

Eventually, in early 2003 the United States disarmed Iraq by invading it and removing the regime—though the trigger for that invasion was not so much anything happening in Iraq itself, but rather the terrorist attack on the United States in September 2001.¹² For America, 9/11 raised the intolerable threat that Iraq might link up with terrorist groups such as al Qa’eda.

But other rogue states had already learned the ‘wrong’ lesson—that Saddam’s fatal error had been to invade Kuwait before he possessed a credible nuclear deterrent. It was soon apparent that the lesson had been well learned in Pyongyang—if you wish to defy Uncle Sam, get a nuclear weapon.

Iran: Learning From Saddam’s mistakes?

Iran also seems to have taken the lesson to heart. It’s hard to believe that Iran, with the world’s third largest oil reserves, as well as the second largest reserves of gas, needs nuclear energy for civilian purposes. Ever since the IAEA came to suspect that Iran had an illegal uranium enrichment plant, Iran has played fast and loose with the ‘international community’. Now Iran says it will sign the ‘additional protocol’ demanded by the IAEA, but only in relation to its declared nuclear sites. IAEA inspectors will not be given unfettered access.¹³ That tells us all we need to know.

A glance at the map shows why Iran might think it needs a nuclear weapon.¹⁴ Israel, an undeclared nuclear weapons state, is a sworn enemy. (How could it be otherwise, when Iran sponsors terrorist groups such as Hezbollah, Islamic Jihad and Hamas?) Moreover, Iran has borders with fifteen other states, none of which it can call a friend. And to Iran’s southeast lies less than friendly but nuclear-armed Pakistan, which has close links with fellow Sunnis in Saudi Arabia. Concerns about political stability in Pakistan must register in Tehran.

And now the United States has invaded both Afghanistan and Iraq, and installed pro-American governments there. Even the so-called moderates in Iran, where political power is contested, now seem to believe that nuclear weapons will enhance their security. They are unlikely to reflect on the fact that if Iran ‘goes nuclear’, others will follow—and that may not enhance Iran’s security in the longer run.

The United States is making no secret of its alarm at these developments, and urged the Europeans to take a tough line when the IAEA board met on 20 November. One reason of course for US alarm is that an Iran armed

with nuclear weapons could exclude Western navies from the Gulf, and thus plant its foot on much of the West’s oil pipeline.

Who’s next?

Candidates for proliferation include Saudi Arabia, which has long helped to finance Pakistan’s nuclear weapons program. Yet as long as Pakistan retains control of the nuclear weapons it might station on Saudi soil, Riyadh can claim that it remains in compliance with the NPT.¹⁵ Other possible candidates are Libya, Syria, Algeria, Turkey and Egypt. There are even new question marks about Brazil.¹⁶

What about Japan?

Currently, there is no shortage of alarmist reports about Japan.¹⁷ Much attention is focused on Shintaro Ishihara, the populist Governor of Tokyo. For the last thirty years, Ishihara has argued that Japan cannot afford to rely on America for its nuclear security, and should go it alone. Any country that relies on another, Ishihara says, risks being abandoned in a crisis.

That remains very much a minority view in Japan. Indeed, Japan’s strategic needs are best served by what it has now—extended deterrence, its own ‘virtual deterrent’ and means of delivery, and the prospect of missile defence, which is non-nuclear and defensive. Moreover, ‘going nuclear’ would be highly divisive at home.¹⁸

Still, the growing threat from North Korea has ended ‘head in the sand’ pacifism in Japan. Ishihara is not mistaken when he says that far from being a disinterested broker, China has proliferated missile technology to North Korea. The Peoples’ Liberation Army also winked when Pakistan proliferated nuclear technology to North Korea in a missiles-for-nuclear technology exchange.¹⁹ Without China’s help, North Korea could hardly make a bicycle.

Moreover, the connection that Ishihara draws between distrust of allies and the imperative to go it alone is not unique to Japan. Indeed, the French strategist Pierre Gallois always argued that there can be no true alliances in the nuclear age. That’s because the smaller ally that was supposed to benefit from ‘extended deterrence’ could never be sure that it would not be abandoned by its great power protector in a crisis. Would the United States really risk New York in order to save Paris? Gallois’s fears were shared by at least some in Australia in the late 1960s.

Australia’s nuclear temptation in the late 1960s

Given the strategic circumstances of the time, Australia’s attraction to a nuclear option was hardly surprising. Mao’s China, at the time in pursuit of a revolutionary foreign policy aimed equally at Moscow and Washington, tested a nuclear weapon in October 1964. A year later, China made a concerted attempt, via the Indonesian communist party, to control the succession to Sukarno. For his part, Sukarno was shouting from the rafters that he wanted nuclear weapons.²⁰ In addition, soon after Confrontation, the UK

was retreating 'East of Suez'. And by 1968, the United States was signaling retreat in Vietnam. Moreover, in the wake of China's nuclear test, there was much speculation that Japan might follow suit.²¹

And in John Gorton, we had a nationalist if somewhat maverick prime minister (1968–71) whose personal experience just before the fall of Singapore in 1942 led to an abiding distrust of allies.²² So Australia did not say it would sign the NPT until the last minute, and then only after Japan had actually signed. But it seems likely that it was Indonesia, rather than Japan, that Gorton had in mind as a possible proliferator.

Australia's nuclear attraction faded after Gorton lost office. The mainstream conservatives believed there was little to be gained, and much to be lost, if we isolated ourselves by refusing to join the non-nuclear club. Even so, it was left to the incoming Whitlam Labor Government to sign and ratify the NPT in 1973. So it's all ancient history now.

Or is it? The nuclear attraction diminished, but never quite died. That led to some notable contradictions. For example, the former Labor Foreign Minister and subsequent Governor-General, Bill Hayden, shared Gorton's nuclear attraction and distrust of allies, even though he also subscribed to the ALP's traditional attachment to nuclear disarmament. Like Gorton, Hayden saw Indonesia as a possible proliferator. In Hayden's 1996 memoirs, he noted his worries about Indonesia's plans to build nuclear power plants in Java.²³ (Those plans are now on hold as a consequence of Indonesia's 1998 economic and political crisis, which saw the demise of Suharto.)

The wider contradiction, of course, was that the Labor Party sought the benefits of extended deterrence, but pursued policies of nuclear disarmament that undermined it. Moreover, that was a legacy that John Howard did not disavow. To the contrary, soon after coming to power Howard—never a slouch when it comes to outfoxing the chattering classes—seized the opportunities presented by the outgoing Labor government's establishment of the Canberra Commission. The Commission was set up as a response to the furore in Australia in the wake of the resumption of French nuclear testing in the South Pacific. So Howard seized the chance to outflank Labor from the left by extolling the virtues of nuclear disarmament. But such expediency creates hostages to fortune. Indeed, the Canberra Commission became an icon that has helped to muddle strategic thinking in Australia ever since.²⁴

Future options?

So what might happen in Australia today if we concluded that the nuclear attraction was growing in Japan?

Some would see that as an invitation to develop our own nuclear weapons, and remember why we kept our options open, including by retaining the nuclear reactor at Lucas Heights in Sydney.²⁵

Others would see any nuclear option for Australia as likely to detract from our security. Nuclear weapons might be the 'isolationists' dream', but would it really be in our interest to encourage the United States to pursue its own isolationist options? That's even more of a risk now that the Cold War is over, and missile defence offers the US new possibilities for homeland defence.

Those influenced by the disarmament lobby would argue that nuclear weapons themselves were the sources of danger, and so become even more determined to get rid of them.

In considering our options, we would also have to think about the likely knock-on effects if we were to acquire our own deterrent. As noted, states are more influenced by the example of their rivals proliferating, as well as considerations of their own ability to follow suit, than they are of the need to think about the downstream consequences of their own actions.

The most likely consequence of Australia's developing nuclear weapons would be if Indonesia were to follow our example. Would we be more secure then? But the worst case we would face might be if Indonesia developed nuclear capability for reasons that had nothing to do with Australia.²⁶ We'd still be under great pressure to follow suit—even though doing so would be likely to reduce our security because of its impact on the US alliance.

These are not happy thoughts. But there seems little doubt that the 'NPT regime' is now under threat. While negotiations and six-party talks go on, North Korea is buying time with which to develop its nuclear weapons.²⁷ Iran can be expected to do the same. Having been caught in violation of its obligations to the NPT, Iran is now backtracking—in order to gain time, and drive wedges between the US on the one side, and Europe on the other.

Both China and North Korea have proliferated missile technology to Iran. It suits China, of course, to have the US distracted, not least because of the growing Iranian missile and nuclear threat to Israel. There are also suspicions that North Korea has proliferated nuclear technology to Iran.²⁸ Can that have been done without the knowledge of China's Peoples' Liberation Army, if not its political leaders? Yet China is one of the great beneficiaries of the NPT regime, which among other things, has helped reassure Japan that it does not need nuclear weapons.

One might hope that, in relation to North Korea and Iran in particular, that the five declared nuclear weapons states on the UN Security Council would combine in defence of their interests—in order to prevent the weapons of the strong from becoming the weapons of the weak. But states do not always pursue their best interests. That's why strategic history is the story of calculation and miscalculation.

And that's why we need to think through the likely consequences for us if disarmament diplomacy fails to work. ♦

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Endnotes:

1. Mostly because South Korea, for fear of war and afraid of the costs of absorbing the North, actively discouraged it. That meant China did not even have to threaten a veto.
2. Japan's military is more focused on the longer-term threat from China, not least with a Taiwan contingency in mind.
3. See Patrick Glynn, 'Closing Pandora's Box: Arms Races, Arms Control, and the History of the Cold War', New York: Basic Books, 1992. Especially chapter 8, 'The Age of Arms Control'.
4. North Korea was 'orphaned' by the end of the Cold War because it could no longer play off China and Russia to its own benefit. Moreover, it was threatened by the economic supremacy and democratic legitimacy of South Korea. So North Korea has developed missile and nuclear capabilities as means of extortion and blackmail, and thus of regime survival.
5. That is, the five declared nuclear weapon states before the 1998 tests by India and Pakistan.
6. The Moscow-Beijing relationship, which always had its nuances, started to go downhill after the two Taiwan Strait crises of the 1950s precipitated by China. The USSR saw no interest at stake in the Taiwan Strait that justified the risk of nuclear war with the United States. China, for its part, saw that the nuclear umbrella was leaking, and went gangbusters to acquire nuclear weapons.
7. These were shared, but not identical, superpower interests. The United States chose to rely on nuclear weapons to contain the USSR. The Soviet's first preference was for complete nuclear disarmament, so they could maximise their strategic advantage in conventional power. Thus from the Soviet viewpoint, nuclear weapons plus the superpower condominium were second best.
8. South Korea had a nuclear attraction as a consequence of the fears for its security induced by the Nixon Doctrine, and the US strategic paralysis induced by Vietnam and the Watergate scandal. Taiwan had reason to fear that it would be abandoned by the US after Nixon made the opening to China in 1971, so it also had a secret nuclear weapons' program.
9. China was not really 'rising' in the sense that it had suddenly become more powerful. It would be more accurate to say that China was now enjoying much greater strategic latitude as a consequence of the collapse of the USSR, so was starting to feel its oats.
10. True, their distance looked much greater on a Mercator map projection than on a polar one. Flight times of a Soviet ICBM to the US, and vice versa, would have been about thirty minutes, with a reaction time of fifteen minutes.
11. In 1981, Israel attacked Iraq in order to destroy its nuclear weapons facility at Osirak.
12. The US and UK had been in effect at war with Iraq since 1991, for example by their enforcement of Kurdish sovereignty in northern Iraq, and the enforcement of 'no fly zones', by military means, against the wishes and interests of the government in Baghdad.
13. An Iranian diplomat said, 'it's not going to be like Iraq, with UNSCOM (arms inspectors) kicking down doors and this kind of thing'. AFP, 9 November 2003.
14. See Assad Homayoun, 'Iran and Nuclear Weapons: A Review of Imperatives and Options', 'Defense and Foreign Affairs Daily', Vol. XXI, No.53, 25 September 2003.
15. Henry Sokolski, 'Pyongyang: The Case for Nonproliferation with Teeth', 'Arms Control Today', May 2003.
16. See Daniel Koik, 'Brazil Prepares to Enrich Uranium for Reactors', 'Arms Control Today', November 2003. President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva has criticized the NPT as discriminatory. It is also worth noting that Lula has been courting Cuba, where China now has a foothold at the old Soviet facility at Lourdes. Some see this as the beginning of a Brazil-China alignment pointed at the US.
17. See for example, Eugene A. Matthews, 'Japan's New Nationalism', *Foreign Affairs*, November-December 2003, pp.74-90. In my view, it's not 'rising nationalism' we should worry about, but rising insecurity and its likely consequences.
18. The 'Hiroshima Cult', the cult of the 'unique victim', has served the interests of most factions in Japanese politics. It was started as a Moscow operation, run by the Japanese Communist Party. Throughout the Cold War, of course, the USSR sought to convince others that America's nuclear weapons threatened world peace, rather than Soviet hegemonic ambitions. But the Japanese right wing soon came to see utility in the Hiroshima Cult, because it diverted attention from the enormity of what Japan had done in the 'Holy War' in China, and then in World War II.
19. See Mohan Malik, 'The Proliferation Axis: Beijing-Islamabad-Pyongyang', *The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis*, Vol. XV, No.1, Spring 2003, pp.57-101.
20. See Robert M. Cornejo, 'When Sukarno Sought the Bomb: Indonesian Nuclear Aspirations in the Mid-1960s', *The Nonproliferation Review*, Summer 2000, pp.31-43.
21. Eisaku Sato, Japan's prime minister, said in December 1964 that 'if the other fellow has nuclear weapons, it is only common sense to have them oneself. The Japanese public is not ready for this, but would have to be educated. Nuclear weapons are less costly than is generally assumed, and the Japanese scientific and industrial level is fully up to producing them'. Kase, 'The Costs and Benefits of Japan's Nuclearization', pp.58-59.
22. Gorton had been a fighter pilot, evacuated just before Singapore fell. He had been badly burned, and his face reconstructed.
23. 'Bill Hayden, An Autobiography', Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1996, p. 404.
24. Canberra Commission on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, Report, August 1996.
25. Japan has also hedged in a number of ways, including by ensuring that its three 'anti nuclear principles' are not in the constitution, which is difficult to amend. To be noted in this context is that neutral Switzerland, despite signing the NPT in 1970, maintained a secret stockpile of uranium for 400 nuclear warheads that could have been mounted on aircraft, artillery and guided missiles' systems. This program was maintained from 1945 through 1988. Avery Goldstein, 'Deterrence and Security in the 21st Century: China, Britain, France, and the Enduring Legacy of the Nuclear Revolution', Stanford Ca: Stanford University Press, 2000, p.256. No doubt, the Swiss never forgot West Germany's strong nuclear attraction in the 1960s, and that Konrad Adenauer had gone to his deathbed still railing against the NPT.
26. Indonesia, greatly weakened since the fall of Suharto, has no great power protector. It is also now faced with two rising and rival Asian nuclear powers, India and China, which are both manifesting blue water ambition. The prospect of future clashes between Chinese and Indian warships in the South-East Asian straits cannot be of much comfort to Jakarta, not least because of its own maritime weakness. It is not unthinkable that Indonesia would one day come to believe that nuclear weapons might enhance its security.
27. Japan's concerns about this are palpable. See Masashi Nishihara, 'North Korea's Trojan Horse', *The Washington Post*, 14 August 2003. Professor Nishihara is President of Japan's National Defense Academy. US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, just before he arrived in Japan in mid-November 2003, his first visit as Defense Secretary (in the Bush administration), sought to reassure Japan that any US security assurances to North Korea would not undermine US commitments to Japan's nuclear security. While no doubt sincerely meant, these reassurances will not convince sceptical Japanese that the US will not cut a deal with North Korea if its own interests demand it, via some kind of multilateral figleaf, especially since the Bush administration does not have a viable military option against North Korea. With the occupation of Iraq going poorly, Bush's priority in relation to North Korea now is to 'kick the can' down the road until after the US presidential elections next year.
28. John Larkin and Donald Macintyre, 'Asia: Arsenal of The Axis', *Time*, 14 July 2003. According to some reports, the number of North Korean weapons experts in Iran is now so large that they have their own seaside community. Henry Sokolski, *The Wall Street Journal*, 19 August 2003.

Army spoilt for choice

in tank quest

Ian Bostock

Now that the Australian Army's search for an improved tank capability has been endorsed, it is appropriate to conduct a paper evaluation of the materiel solutions currently under consideration to fulfill this essential requirement.

At time of writing (late November), no decision had been announced as to the government's preferred option for a new tank capability. If, however, a source selection is made in the interim, the following will still be of relevance in comparing the chosen platform with the other two systems on offer.

M1 Abrams

Currently in service in four countries, including some 8000 in use by the US Army and US Marine Corps (USMC), the M1 Abrams is widely considered an excellent main battle tank (MBT) in all the key areas: protection, mobility and firepower. It would appear that from a platform perspective the M1 Abrams is at least as capable as the Leopard 2 and Challenger 2.

Protection: Recent combat experience in Iraq would suggest that the M1 Abrams is very well protected and able to survive kinetic energy projectile attack during close combat across a variety of battlespaces. The M1 Abrams was the spearhead of the US advance into the Iraqi interior—an operational environment as complex as any—and it survived under medium- to high-intensity conventional warfighting conditions and some asymmetric attacks about as well as can be expected. No other armoured fighting vehicle (AFV) used by the US afforded the same level of battlefield protection.

The well-sloped glacis plate and frontal turret armour seem sufficient to prevent penetration from RPG fire and 23mm cannon fire from any angle. And, of course, it should do that and more at a combat weight of 65 tonnes (M1A1 version). The rear-mounted engine grille is reportedly vulnerable to armour-piercing (AP) rounds fired from cannon of 25mm calibre and above, but then again, how often does a tank (used in a combined arms battlegroup and supported by mechanised infantry as the Australian Army would) come under attack from behind?

The deal...

It is understood that the model on offer to Australia is the M1A1 AIM (Abrams Integrated Management). This upgrade has seen the oldest M1A1s (around 770 vehicles in all) rebuilt to an 'as new' standard. The AIM program seeks to improve fleet readiness and reduce life-cycle costs. These vehicles are digitally capable and thus also referred to as M1A1D ('D' for digitised).

It should come as no real surprise given strategic circumstances and the excellent relationship between the two countries, that the Americans are offering the M1A1 AIM Abrams at 'mate's rates', thereby negating the typically higher unit cost of the type over the Leopard 2 and Challenger 2.

From the information available, the Americans are proposing the closest thing to a true package deal, which includes not only the gun tanks but extensive provisions for local in-service logistic support, ensuring that the capability is actually able to be deployed and sustained on operations, a distinct weakness within 1st Armoured Regiment currently.

As in all late-generation MBTs, the turret roof of the M1 Abrams remains vulnerable to overmatch from top attack anti-tank guided weapons, of which there exist numerous types in widespread use.

Given that the Australian Army tends not to use its tank force for tank-on-tank missions, precisely how much emphasis should be placed on the M1 Abrams' ability to absorb punishment from enemy tank guns needs to be accorded the proper priority. However, it is significant to note that its base level frontal armour proved impervious to Iraqi tank (T-54/55 100mm gun; Type 59 100mm gun;

T-62 115mm gun; Type 69 100mm gun and T-72 125mm gun) fire during the 1990–91 Gulf War.

M1A1 Abrams tanks produced after 1988 incorporate significantly improved armour consisting of steel-encased depleted uranium in vital areas.

The M1 Abrams' armoured side skirts are a stand-out feature of this vehicle and appear to be at least 60mm thick. Unlike the rubber-armoured skirts fitted to Army's current Leopard AS1, these skirts are all armour and would clearly be effective in stopping AP heavy machine (HMG; 12.7-14.5mm) rounds and RPG fire from close range.

Firepower: While it is common knowledge that the 120mm tank gun equipping late generation Western tanks is superior in every ballistic sense to 105mm ordnance in the tank-on-tank role, a chief concern for Army will be to ensure it has access to a variety of 120mm ammunition natures better suited to providing direct fire support to infantry than high explosive anti-tank and armour-piercing fin-stabilised discarding-sabot (APFSDS) rounds. These include high explosive squash head and canister rounds; the latter proved so devastating against enemy infantry in Vietnam.

One firepower advantage the M1 Abrams has over the Leopard 2 and Challenger 2 is the secondary armament array at the crew's disposal. Together with the standard M240 7.62mm machine guns mounted alongside the main gun and at the loader's hatch, a 12.7mm M2 Heavy Machine Gun (HMG) weapon station is installed in front of the commander's station. With a 360-degree, electrically-powered traverse and 1000 rounds of 12.7mm ammunition stowed on board, the crew is able to engage a wider selection of targets of opportunity without resorting to use of the main armament — particularly crew-served weapon teams, exposed infantry, soft-skinned and light armoured vehicles. American crews fighting in Iraq found the versatility of the M1 Abrams' secondary armaments highly effective, particularly when ranges were too short to use the main gun or when its use was restricted due to collateral damage considerations.

Total main gun ammunition loads stowed onboard the M1 Abrams and the Leopard AS1 are 40 x 120mm rounds and 59 x 105mm rounds respectively.

Mobility: There have been no adverse reports concerning the mobility of the M1 Abrams, at least none that this author knows about. Like all modern tracked AFVs it is safe to say that the M1 Abrams enjoys superb cross-country mobility across a variety of terrain types.

Of more interest to the Australian Army is how well the M1 Abrams will perform in the varied but typically confined terrain of Australia's immediate region of interest. Clearly, there are those who believe that a tank of this weight cannot traverse the jungle and tropical terrain encountered across our region (in spite of Australia's success at operating the 50-tonne Centurion in Vietnam). But it should be borne in mind that the M1 Abrams is a highly manoeuvrable platform with a good power-to-weight ratio (better than that of the Challenger 2 but not as high as the Leopard 2A5) and will be operated by a unit (1st Brigade's 1st Armoured Regiment) noted for its expertise in operating in close country.

Those who have operated with tanks in the bush will know

that most tank movement is carried out deliberately and cautiously and that difficult terrain or obstacles are approached with a view to ensuring both the crew and vehicle come out the other side. It is impossible to leave the human factor out of any discussion on tank mobility, since it is the expertise (or otherwise) of the crew that often determines where a vehicle will or will not go. It has been the author's experience that young AFV drivers invariably acquire an affinity with their vehicles and learn how to get the most out of them as a mobility platform. Whichever tank is selected for Australia, the drivers and crew commanders will quickly get to understand the limits of that vehicle and know where they can and cannot go with it. Just as crews operating ASLAV and M113 have already learnt to do and those to be allocated the new Bushmaster will soon discover.

While the M1 Abrams is wider than Army's legacy Leopard AS1 (by about 25cm overall), it will make mince meat of 'track bashing'. Same goes for the Leopard 2 and Challenger 2.

Interestingly, the 406 M1A1 Abrams of the USMC are fitted with a deep-water fording kit for amphibious operations and additional tie-down points for ship-to-shore movement in landing craft.

Deployability: With the new tank (regardless of type) likely to be in service within 12–24 months at the very latest, the way in which the ADF's existing infrastructure and support equipment will accommodate and cope with the introduction of a larger and heavier tank will become an issue. Army will most certainly need new low-loader tank transporters. Each tank squadron will need new recovery vehicles able to lift and winch the new tank. Rail rolling stock will need to be assessed as to its ability to carry heavier tanks, where vehicle width will also be a factor. Same goes for rail and ground infrastructure such as tunnels, bridges, crossing points and road surfaces around base and training areas.

Despite being the heaviest tank under consideration (the Challenger 2 is longer and the Leopard 2 is wider), the M1 Abrams is, in fact, no less deployable than the Leopard 2 or Challenger 2, as has been widely assumed in the mainstream media. Whether a tank weighs 55 or 65 tonnes is of little relevance; it's the support equipment and infrastructure a deployable force has in place that makes the difference. Compatibility with the RAN's existing amphibious transport vessels is certain to be one area where remedial work will need to be undertaken. Again, this will be irrespective of which tank is selected. For example, the rear ramp of an LPA is rated to only 50 tonnes. Basically, this enables the ramp to support a 50-tonne load unsupported (i.e. relying on its support chains and own structural strength). Given that the last of the LPAs (probably *Manoora*) is not due to pay off until 2017, this will need to be rectified. From an engineering perspective, it is understood that beefing up the structural strength of the ramp is achievable; the RAN recently made similar changes to ensure the LPA stern ramp could support the 42-tonne Leopard AS1.

Perhaps more difficult to achieve will be any design changes that may be required to the Army's six new amphibious

watercraft carried by the LPA, the first of which is currently under construction by ADI Limited at its Newcastle yard. These medium landing craft were designed to be able to carry a single Leopard AS1 tank and so have a maximum payload capacity of around 50 tonnes. Just how adaptable the design is to modification to support the extra weight of the chosen new tank is unclear, but no doubt some form of contract change proposal will be required before work can commence on the remaining five craft. This will inevitably incur a slippage to the right in the construction/delivery timetable, but will be entirely necessary if the newly equipped 1st Armoured Regiment is to be deployable by sea using RAN assets.

There is some (consistent and persistent) suggestion within Army itself that the infrastructure of the kind found across Australia's immediate region of interest cannot support road traffic of the size and, in particular, the weight of the M1 Abrams. Concurrence with this theory varies depending upon with whom one talks, but clearly washaways during monsoonal wet seasons, which presented a hazard to light AFVs in East Timor (both ASLAV and M113), will also prove troublesome to tank movement. It could be argued that until a heavy MBT unit is actually deployed to such environments, the jury will probably remain split down the middle over this issue.

Supportability: This is an area where the M1 Abrams has it all over the other two contenders, with the enormous production quantities in US service alone resulting in unbeatable economies of scale for the original equipment manufacturer (General Dynamics Land Systems) and associated sub-contractors, and therefore M1 Abrams users. The depth of supporting industrial infrastructure, investment in research and development, ongoing product improvement and the reliability of suppliers are unmatched.

The US offer of the M1 Abrams to Australia is understood to involve a fully optioned package that includes open and ongoing access to US Army and USMC M1 Abrams upgrades and rolling technology insertion programs out to 2020 and beyond. This will enable the Australian Army to tap into the product improvement initiatives for the US M1 Abrams fleet throughout life-of-type — picking and choosing those most applicable to our strategic circumstances and capability requirements, including those implemented as a result of the most recent combat experiences.

The AGT 1500 1500hp gas turbine engine — or more strictly speaking its poor fuel economy — continues to be a weakness of the M1 Abrams. Feedback from experienced tank commanders in 1st Armoured Regiment suggests that the fuel consumption of the gas turbine is so heavy that a dedicated fuel tanker vehicle will be required within each tank squadron to ensure that the gun tanks have adequate tactical endurance. The fact that the engine uses aviation fuel (kerosene) and not diesel, like the M113-equipped artillery forward observers and logistics echelons, and tank variant recovery vehicles, attached to each sub-unit formation no doubt presents a challenge that will take some figuring out, not least of which when vehicles in a tactical setting move to get refuelled at a forward arming and refuelling point.

According to General Dynamics, there are moves afoot to improve the fuel efficiency of the M1 Abrams' gas turbine through component modification. German engine maker MTU markets a drop-in replacement diesel engine for the M1 Abrams that has been trialled, but this has yet to be adopted by any user. It could be an option, however, for the Australian Army as part of a future upgrade. While production of the AGT 1500 engine ceased in 1992, a stockpile is maintained.

Industrially, General Dynamics has a significant local presence in Australia, which would auger well for the provision of through-life support of the capability.

Leopard 2

Current German Army plans call for the existing Leopard 2 fleet to be rationalised down to 852 tanks by 2006. This is to consist of 350 of the latest 2A6 variants and 502 of the older, non-modernised, 2A4 models.

With the Leopard 2A5/A6 currently the dominant MBT design in Europe, further development will likely continue via the recently established Leopard 2 Working Group formed by Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland, which have a combined total of around 580 Leopard 2A5/2A6s in service. Spain, which plans to introduce 219 Leopard 2A5s, may also join the group. In March 2002, Greece signed up for 170 Leopard 2A6s.

Protection: Even the oldest Leopard 2A4 enjoys better all-round armour protection than the Leopard AS1, particularly over the critical hull and turret front and sides. The Leopard 2A5 features additional passive armour on the front hull sides and in a wedge-shape over the turret front and gun mantlet. The Leopard 2A6 has the same armour package but a new 120mm, 55-calibre smoothbore gun, which grants increased engagement ranges and lethality against enemy armour.

The deal...

The 2A4 is believed to be the baseline Leopard 2 version under consideration. It is available in large numbers from surplus stocks, and so is the cheapest with regard to unit cost. The upgraded 2A5 and 2A6 variants are also on the list, with 70 ex-Dutch Leopard 2A6s recently becoming available, although Norway and Turkey have both expressed early interest in snapping these up.

The newest Leopard 2A4 vehicles (Batch 8) were manufactured between January 1991 and March 1992. The Leopard 2A5 was modernised during 1996–97, while 2A6 versions were upgraded very recently, some less than 12 months ago. Any deal for surplus Leopard 2 tanks would likely be a government-to-government arrangement.

It is interesting to note that while the Leopard 2 user community has clearly embraced the need to up-armour its tanks in the face of modern threats, the M1 Abrams' armour has remained unaltered since introduction of the M1A1 version more than a decade ago. Does this signify a higher level of baseline armour protection in the M1 Abrams over other competing tank designs? An underbelly add-on armour kit for the Leopard 2A6, to provide improved protection against anti-tank mines, is under development.

The latest variants of the Leopard 2 MBT family (particularly that entering service with the Swedish Army) are fitted with add-on armour, which is at the forefront of MBT armour technology development in Europe. This is provided almost exclusively by German firm IBD Deisenroth Engineering.

Firepower: The Leopard 2A4 and Leopard 2A5 sport the same 120mm smoothbore gun as the M1 Abrams. The Leopard 2A6 upgrade, however, includes replacement of the old 44-calibre ordnance with the new high velocity 55-calibre 120mm gun from Rheinmetall.

The secondary armament of all variants of the Leopard 2 gives away its design origins in the middle of the Cold War when the Soviet tank threat predominated. As such, only a 7.62mm coaxial machine and 7.62mm MG3 machine gun mounted at the loader's hatch are fitted. This cannot be considered ideal for a vehicle tasked with providing intimate fire support for infantry as any Leopard 2 acquired by Australia would be. The total number of 120mm rounds carried on board is 42.

Mobility: The Leopard 2 family of MBT, like the Leopard 1 series before it, is highly mobile and more than a match for either the M1 Abrams or Challenger 2 in this area. Typically sound German automotive and mechanical engineering has resulted in a platform with no known mechanical or performance deficiencies.

Of note is the lower ground pressure figures of both the Leopard 2A4 and 2A5 (0.83kg/cm² and 0.89kg/cm² respectively) compared to those of Challenger 2 (0.90kg/cm²) and M1A1 Abrams (1.08kg/cm²). This infers a slight advantage in cross-country mobility over soft ground or sand for the Leopard 2A4/2A5. As an aside, Army's current Leopard AS1 has a ground pressure of 0.88kg/cm².

Deployability: Coming in around five tonnes lighter than the M1A1 Abrams, there is likely to be little difference in the nature and scope of challenges encountered in introducing into service a late variant of the Leopard 2. Contrary to media reports, Army will still require new tank transporters, recovery vehicles and modifications to its existing infrastructure and the RAN will have to modify the LPA ramps and perhaps the new Army watercraft.

Supportability: It is claimed that from a logistics standpoint there is some commonality between the Leopard AS1 and Leopard 2, although this is difficult to see considering the two were designed some 10–15 years apart and are separated by light years in terms of capabilities. Engines are from the same manufacturer (MTU) but from a different series. Transmissions are from different manufacturers.

Despite feedback from some long-serving members of

1st Armoured Regiment to the effect that there is a degree of cross-over between the overall design and workings of the Leopard AS1 and Leopard 2 series that would help alleviate the initial training burden and facilitate a rapid transition between the two types, complete re-training of instructors, vehicle crews and maintenance/support personnel would still be necessary. So too would the acquisition of new training simulators and the modification of live fire gunnery ranges to cater for and exploit the longer engagement ranges inherent in the 120mm ordnance.

One area of concern with adopting the Leopard 2 is the possibility, however remote, of the German government withholding, interrupting or otherwise interfering with the provision of spare parts and logistic support should it take issue with the ADF's intended use of an Australian force deployed offshore equipped with Leopard 2. Although this assumes that spares holdings of mission essential items would be so low that non-delivery of a single shipment would jeopardise a 1st Armoured Regiment deployment and/or its ability to sustain combat operations.

As far-fetched as such a proposition may sound, it does have considerable precedent. Not the least two examples of which, include the time when Sweden refused to supply ammunition for the Australian Army's Carl Gustav 84mm recoilless rifles for use in Vietnam, and the threatened French boycott of logistics support for the RAAF's Mirage fighters during the same period.

Challenger 2

The UK's only MBT, the Challenger 2 has a solid reputation and reportedly performed very well during recent combat operations in Iraq. Receiving the last of its 386 vehicles in February 2002, the British Army intends to keep its Challenger 2s in service until at least 2025. Oman operates 38 Challenger 2s.

The deal...

The only known surplus Challenger 2s available are those earmarked to be made redundant under British Army plans for a family of Future Rapid Effects Systems vehicles. This is to involve a total of around 40 vehicles; not enough to equip 1st Armoured Regiment with or without an Army Reserve tank squadron. It is unclear when the 40 surplus Challenger 2s will become available.

While the baseline Challenger 2 is a fine tank, it is understood that to bring the vehicle up to the E (export) configuration should a user wish to do so, would cost around A\$2.3 million per unit. This would make for an expensive upgrade option considering the improvements in some areas are marginal.

Protection: There are no known accounts of any Challenger 2 being penetrated by enemy fire in Iraq, except for a blue-on-blue incident where a Challenger 2 crew mistook another Challenger 2 for enemy.

Based on photographs and footage of Challenger 2s operating in Iraq fitted with additional armour, the British Army clearly feels the need to improve the protection levels of the vehicle's baseline armour. This add-on armour consists of explosive reactive armour 'bricks' over the nose (known as ROMOR A) and ceramic/composite passive armour panels on the glacis plate and hull sides. It is the same armour kit installed on British Challenger 1 tanks during the 1990–91 Gulf War. Presumably this provides an even higher level of protection on top of the Challenger 2's still largely classified Dorchester baseline armour (a more advanced form of the composite Chobham armour) in those areas of the tank most susceptible to enemy fire. The weight penalty this extra armour incurs is estimated at several tonnes.

Firepower: The Challenger 2 is armed with a L11 120mm rifled gun. While a superbly lethal weapon in itself, the British Army now acknowledges the drawbacks of adopting rifled tank gun technology, an area where little or no research and development resources are being directed and ammunition is becoming increasingly expensive. In an effort to achieve better interoperability with its allies (particularly the US), the British Army seems certain to retrofit its Challenger 2 fleet with a 120mm smoothbore gun. However, those Challenger 2s to be made surplus under the current transformation plans will still have the 120mm rifled gun, leaving the new owners with an ordnance orphan. The total number of 120mm rounds stowed onboard the Challenger 2 is 50.

Mobility: From all accounts the Challenger 2 is a highly mobile tank, with no known deficiencies in this area. Its power-to-weight ratio is sufficient to enable all-up weight to be increased (due to the fitting of extra armour) without a significant degradation in performance.

It must be said that like the M1 Abrams and Leopard 2, the modest maximum range of the Challenger 2 is a limiting factor in its operation as part of a fast moving and far-ranging armoured battle group. For the two former vehicles this is another leftover from the tank warfare-centric approaches taken to design of Western MBTs during the 1970s and 1980s. But with a design history dating back only about 15 years, the Challenger 2 should possess better endurance than it does.

According to the British Ministry of Defence's 'First Reflections' lessons learnt report from Iraq, the Challenger 2 achieved an availability rate of more than 90 per cent. ♦

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At a glance

M1 Abrams

Manufacturer: General Dynamics Land Systems, USA

Users: USA, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait

Combat Weight: 63 tonnes (M1A2), 65 tonnes (M1A1)

Max. Road Speed: 68km/h

Max. Road Range: 450km

Combat Pedigree: 1990–91 Gulf War; Balkans (peace enforcement); Iraq (ongoing)

Unit Price: Approximately A\$7 million (new)

Comment: Aside from its very thirsty gas turbine engine, the M1 Abrams is hard to fault. If one was to judge the type of tank Australia should procure based on whichever platform a potential enemy would least like to face, the M1 Abrams would probably be it.

Leopard 2

Manufacturer: Krauss-Maffei Wegmann, Germany

Users: Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, Norway, Spain, Greece

Combat Weight: 60 tonnes (2A5/A6), 55 tonnes (2A4)

Max. Road Speed: 72km/h

Max. Road Range: 500km

Combat Pedigree: Balkans (peace enforcement)

Unit Price: Less than A\$2 million per tank for used 2A4 models

Comment: A fine tank in whatever version is offered. Would, however, make sense to acquire the latest version now rather than face the need to upgrade in the near future.

Challenger 2

Manufacturer: Alvis Vickers Defence Systems, UK

Users: United Kingdom, Oman

Combat Weight: 62.5 tonnes

Max. Road Speed: 56km/h

Max. Road Range: 450km/h

Combat Pedigree: Balkans (peace enforcement), Iraq (ongoing);

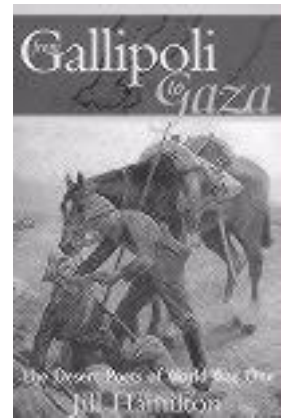
Unit Price: Unknown, but the cost to upgrade to the E (export) standard is around A\$2.3 million per tank.

Comment: While an outstanding AFV, it is quite possible the Challenger 2 has been thrown into the mix of MBTs under consideration simply to give the impression of an even contest and that a wide selection of types were evaluated.

From Gallipoli to Gaza: The Desert Poets of World War I

Jill Hamilton

Reviewed by Michael Thwaites



The heroism and horror of war have been a theme of poetry from Homer to the present day. Jill Hamilton's work does not attempt an historical or literary survey but weaves the poetry into brief accounts of the campaigns that inspired them.

Her choice of poetry is limited to the writing of those who were present and actively engaged in the Gallipoli, Palestine and Mesopotamian campaigns. It is an accumulation of 'I was there' evidence—some compellingly vivid, like Harley Mathews' account of the landing on Gallipoli Beach.

ANZAC rightly remains central to the story of Australia's nationhood, as Alan Moorehead and many others have established. But Jill Hamilton adds an important perspective. She argues that to write off Gallipoli as a heroic but total defeat is misleading.

'Gallipoli was not a failure, for its aim was eventually achieved.' The four years of costly and fluctuating fighting that followed the withdrawal from Gallipoli included the Light Horse capture of Gaza and Beersheba, opening the doorway to Palestine and the Holy Land to western powers for the first time since the Crusades. The Ottoman Empire finally surrendered on 31 October 1918 because it was outflanked and beaten by these campaigns.

Wavell called it 'the greatest exploit in the history of horsed cavalry, and possibly their last success on a large scale'. The poet Banjo Paterson played a key role. Too old to be accepted into the army, he was put in charge of the Remount Service (nicknamed the 'Horse-dung Hussars'), which trained and deployed 50,000 horses and 11,000 mules. A genius with horses, the author of 'The Man From Snowy River' provided the main means of mobile desert transport for the allied forces in Egypt, Palestine and Syria.

Among the best-known poets featured in the book is Rupert Brooke, who died of blood poisoning on his way to Gallipoli. His heartfelt Englishness spoke to a whole nation. But he marked a boundary, a faith and idealism that could not be sustained. Lyrics like: 'Now God be thanked who has matched us with His hour, And caught our youth, and wakened us from sleeping' could not survive the holocaust years ahead. Siegfried Sassoon in contrast savagely voiced the horror, disillusionment and waste of war. Living on until 1967 he wrote fiercely against callous complacent snobbery in the officers and all who from secure Base

positions sent young men to their death.

The greatest English poet of World War I, Wilfrid Owen, burned for the truth to be known about war's reality, its best and worst. He was killed weeks before the Armistice.

As well as these deservedly known poets Jill Hamilton has collected a variety of lost verse. Little of it is distinguished poetry. I found nothing of the quality of Slessor's 'Beach Burial', one of the best Australian poems of World War II. But there are names like Gellert and Deamer who were widely acclaimed in their day. In the case of Gellert he is undergoing somewhat of a renaissance as a result of the book. At the dedication of the new Australian War Memorial on Hyde Park Corner in London on Remembrance Day this year Gellert's poem, 'The Last to Leave', about the evacuation of Gallipoli, was recited by a representative of the 27 Australian veterans and war widows present. Its inclusion in the ceremony was recommended by staff from the Australian High Commission who had read it in Jill Hamilton's book.

Even the uninhibited jog-trot doggerel is contemporary documentation of how soldiers spoke and thought in the midst of campaigning and battle. Humour and Aussie irreverence are common, with care and spontaneous compassion for friends and even foes—and little cynicism.

Light Horseman Ross Smith, later founder of QANTAS, wrote to his mother of men who were 'happy as kings because they are going to face bullets, and I bet half of them couldn't tell you what started this war'. The book includes a little-known comic verse by Rupert Brooke about being 'on the run' with dysentery, and a Kiplingesque tribute by Paterson to the toiling unsung 'Army Mules'.

Jill Hamilton has done real service in assembling this lively collection. The book would be improved by the addition of a systematic assessment of the post-Gallipoli campaigns. It would also be much improved by better maps that clearly indicated names and places covered in the text.

A percentage of the royalties from the book will flow to an 'Animals in War' statue being commissioned for the Australian War Memorial.♦

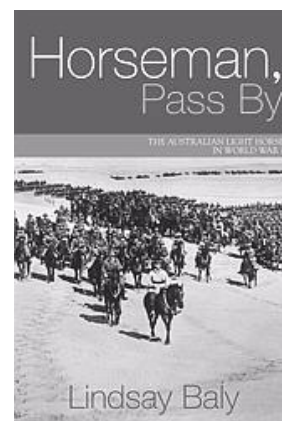
Michael Thwaites' poem, 'The Anzac Graves on Gallipoli', is read each year at the service at 'Lone Pine'.

Jill Hamilton, 'From Gallipoli to Gaza: The Desert Poets of World War I', Simon & Schuster, Sydney, 2003, pb, 277pp, RRP \$29.95.

Horseman, Pass By: The Australian Light Horse in World War I

Lindsay Baly

Reviewed by Neil James



Lindsay Baly's book of the Middle East campaigns fought by the Australian Light Horse in World War I is a delightful read. It is even more enjoyable when read in conjunction with Jill Hamilton's recent book on the desert poets of the same theatre and war (also reviewed in this *Defender*). The title of Baly's book comes not from a light horse drill command but from the inscription on the grave of William Butler Yeats:

Cast a cold eye

On life, on death.

Horseman, pass by.

Baly begins his account by noting that the last light horseman, Trooper Albert Whitmore, died in July 2002 just short of his 102nd birthday. In his preface Baly gives a succinct but sensitive and illustrative summary of why the Australia that produced the light horsemen is a different country to the Australia of today. He quotes his mother, '... they were prototypes that stopped with that one breed and were no more. ... it had something to do with confidence and a capacity to engage the grand, princely gesture when others might dither'. The book as a whole provides some interesting insights into why the post-war psychology and culture of World War I veterans from the European and Middle Eastern theatres were often so different.

The author adopts a workmanlike approach from the beginning and includes an outline of what constitutes Army units and formations, and what are the metric equivalents of imperial weights, measures and currency. Having taught military history to the often uncomprehending secondary school students of today, I can swear to the value of this commonsense approach. The maps used throughout are basic but cover most of the accounts described and are clear and easy to follow. The black and white photographs used illustrate the text and are not just 'fillers'. The only major improvement that could have been included was an outline order-of-battle of the Light Horse divisions, brigades and regiments, and their commanders, throughout the war.

The book is a well-paced and easily understood chronological account of the static campaign at Gallipoli and the later mobile campaign in Egypt, Sinai, Palestine, Lebanon and Syria. It is told primarily from the perspective of the Light Horse formations and units employed. Each

chapter summarises an important phase of campaigning in the Middle East theatre. These are well interspersed and illustrated by accounts drawn from the letters of individual participants, especially the author's father, Sergeant Byron (Jack) Baly, MM; Major Nathaniel Barton, MiD, CBE; and Major Jack Davies, MC. The author has also drawn deeply at the well of the personal and unit records held by the Australian War Memorial in Canberra, and much early and more recent scholarship and memoirs concerning the campaigns and battles discussed. This book could probably have only been written so well in recent times when there was so much to draw on when setting the letters (and his father's stories) in context.

Interestingly, Jack Baly served in Nat Barton's squadron for some time but neither mentions the other by name in their letters, perhaps because of censorship. Their complementary accounts of the same actions, notably the battle of Amman in 1918 (where Baly won his Military Medal), present a fascinating view of several actions from different tactical and personal perspectives

The book starts with Jack Baly sailing from Sydney in June 1915 as a reinforcement for the 7th Light Horse Regiment. Gallipoli is disposed of by Chapter 2. The next 21 short chapters cover the key events of 1916–18. The book culminates with six chapters, broken up on a day-by-day basis, covering the 'sleepless fortnight' in late September and early October 1918, when the British Commonwealth forces fought their way through northern Palestine and across Syria in a series of hard-fought, mobile manoeuvres. This fortnight broke Ottoman military and political power outside its Anatolian heartland for ever. The book ends with the surrender of Aleppo in northern Syria, when the armistice with the Turks came into force on 31 October 1918, the post-war consolidation operations and the return to Australia.

Lindsay Baly's *Horseman, Pass By* is a story told with great feeling and understanding, but it is not just one man's tribute to his father and his father's comrades. It is a thoroughly researched, well written and very readable account of the exploits of the Australian Light Horse in the Middle Eastern campaigns of World War I. ♦

Lindsay Baly, *Horseman, Pass By: The Australian Light Horse in World War I*, Kangaroo Press (Simon & Schuster), Sydney, 2003, pb, 337pp, RRP \$29.95.

The Spirit of the Digger: Then & Now

Patrick Lindsay

Reviewed by Dr Malcolm Kennedy

In my teenage years, I began a life-long interest in military history. In doing so I was, at first, alarmed and concerned that in the big fat books about the Boer War, World War I and World War II there seemed to be very little evidence of any significant role played by Australia. General Ludendorff, Commander of the Germany forces in World War I, devoted only one brief comment to the ANZAC forces. This was something of a shock, given that his work was made up of two fat volumes.

In contrast to the neglect of Australia in the big histories produced by British and European historians, it was reassuring to dive into the massive detail of the official histories of Australia's involvement in the two major wars. Bean's efforts to celebrate the incomparable qualities of the digger caught me up and was, in part, a motive for me to join the Australian Army. Being a 'digger' and an officer tempered these idealistic views. It is important to bring, to any major attempt to define and describe the phenomena of Australian military service, the tests of empirical realism and unsentimental evaluation. It is with this approach that I review this book.

The central thesis of Lindsay's study is that regardless of the circumstances the Australian soldier, or 'digger', has remained the same. He argues that there is an unbroken continuation of fundamental characteristics and qualities that were first made manifest at Gallipoli, the Somme and Ypres, which have been exhibited by all the Australian troops who served in North Africa, New Guinea, Korea, Vietnam, East Timor, Afghanistan and Iraq.

Lindsay has collected an impressive range of vignettes and quotations drawn from interviews of officers and men. He claims that this material supports, or perhaps, proves his assertion that there is a unique nature to the Australian digger. He argues that the particular 'spirit of the digger' is acquired in the raw material of the recruit, and then developed through the additions of thorough training, good leadership and the dynamics of operational experience. Moreover, he seeks to demonstrate, through the selective review of various campaigns, battles and operations, that the unique 'spirit of the digger' has been unchangingly exhibited on all occasions.

In historic, sociological and military terms, this is a brave, if not foolhardy exercise. It is not this reviewer's intent to diminish the long-term reputation and achievements of the members of the various Australian armies and forces that have served the nation so well for over a century. It is, however, important to make scholarly appraisals of what we have achieved and to be honest about our weaknesses and failures.

The primary weakness in the many attempts to demonstrate the unique qualities of an Australian 'universal soldier' or 'amateur warrior', so assiduously crafted by Bean in his history of the First AIF, is that the claim ignores the members of the navy and the air force. The extension of the digger qualities and martial experiences to these arms does not provide a satisfactory fit. Lindsay makes no convincing attempt to deal

with this major issue. He notes that large numbers of Australians volunteered and served in the RAAF and RAF but fails to show how their behaviour in the various air campaigns exhibits the qualities of the 'digger'.

Equally, the nature of Australian naval service is very different to that of the various armies Australia has raised. It is fair to say that there has always been the common basis of the contemporary Australian experience and social ethos in the three armed services. It is important, however, to note that each has always had its special nature, its own battle honours, its own forms, rituals and modes of conduct. Over the last hundred years our armed forces, have been recognised by others as being distinctly Australian, but the RAN and the RAAF have also been seen to be more technocratic and more like the RN and the RAF.

The central difficulty with Lindsay's thesis is that he attempts to make an absolutist case, for a very long-run phenomenon, which involves sustained and continuous change. The book is far too dependent upon selective use of evidence and reporting, and fails to deal with the long-run evidence that does not fit the author's conclusion.

The book covers a vast sweep of Australian military history and too often uses statements that require qualification, ranging from the minor detail through to almost total revision. There are too many occasions where the author accepts 'received public knowledge' as if it were proven evidence. There are numerous sloppy assertions, such as 60,000 Timorese killed by the Japanese, two-thirds of 100,000 volunteers wanting to join the RAAF, the use of Russia when discussing the Soviet Union; and exaggerated claims such as an Australian success in North Africa was the key to turning the war around. These all undermine his case.

The book is full of examples where the author seeks to make his case by using comparisons, which are, in fact, cases of comparing unlike events. The context, nature and magnitude of the events compared are too often different. One of the most alarming aspects, of a commendable attempt to identify a very elusive aspect of our history, is the repeated misleading interpretations given to events. This ranges from the too ready acceptance of the comment given in an interview, to the lack of discussion of counter evidence.

The treatment in many places is ahistorical. Lindsay provides no adequate evaluation of unlawful behaviour by Australian troops, the murder of officers and NCOs in Vietnam, or the combat failure of units in various campaigns.

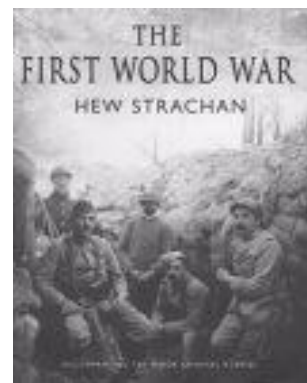
The members of the RAN, RAAF, and the men and women 'diggers' of today are part of a long-run tradition, which explicitly seeks to have them internalise key values and national myths. It is the blend of tradition, myth, training and experience, which forms the 'unit spirit' of the various branches of our armed forces at any time and in any particular circumstance. There is nothing absolute or unchanging about our military ethos. It is composed of differing forms, which, in different situations, may bring our nation shame or glory. Australia has been well served by the men and women of our armed forces, and we might be wise, to pray and work hard to ensure that each generation produces those who will put mate and duty first. ♦

Patrick Lindsay, The Spirit of the Digger: Then & Now, Macmillan, Sydney, 2003, paperback, 314pp, \$30.00.

The First World War: A New Illustrated History

Hew Strachan

Reviewed by Neil James



This book is one that any student of strategy or military history will have trouble putting down once taken up. Even most general readers from secondary students up in age and interest will find it absorbing reading.

The author, Hew Strachan, is the Chichele Professor of the History of War at Oxford University. This one-volume work of summary is based on some twenty years of research for his three-volume history of World War I, the first volume of which, *To Arms*, was published in 2001. The ten chapters of this book provide the narrative framework for an accompanying ten-part television series produced by Channel 4 in Britain but yet to be shown in Australia.

His central theme is that World War I shaped the world for the rest of the 20th century and 'was emphatically not a war without meaning or purpose'. A key supporting theme of the work is that it was truly a world war, both in geographical extent and in why it was fought between global and would-be global powers.

He is particularly impatient with those historians who believe World War I was just a European civil war, and with those who dwell on the extent of death and alleged futility of this and any conflict. Professor Strachan argues that the belief of the time that the war was a struggle for the survival of liberalism has stood the test of time. He argues that the 'Great War', as it was originally called, was 'a great war because it was a war fought over big ideas'.

Much of his view that World War I was truly a world struggle will more readily find resonance with historians and readers from countries of the 'Old Commonwealth' than among his fellow Europeans. It is for this reason that parts of the book, both in research and argument, are so disappointing in their coverage of the contribution by, and strategic views of, the Dominions.

As can be expected in such a wide-ranging work some errors of fact creep in to the narrative. Australian readers will notice some that many overseas readers may miss, and the same will probably occur among Canadian, New Zealand and South African readers. His account of the naval balance of power in the pre-1914 Pacific includes a few faults and some arguable interpretations. He assumes, wrongly, that the battleship HMS *New Zealand* was intended for service in the Pacific whereas although she was built with money provided by New Zealand she was a fully integrated unit of the Royal Navy and always intended for service with the main battle fleet. He also wrongly gives the impression that the RNZN was created before World

War I when this was not the case.

Professor Strachan states that Dominion concerns for strategic buffers were just 'sub-imperialism' and fired by 'territorial ambitions'. He implies that racism alone underpinned Australian concern about Japanese longer-term intentions. Both are highly questionable arguments at best and reflect the over-simplification to be expected in a one-volume summary of this magnitude. He claims that the battlecruiser HMAS *Australia* was intended for the 'close defence of [Australia's] ...own territory'. Her main role was actually to provide general deterrence to Germany's Pacific cruiser squadron, a role she played so successfully that the squadron quickly withdrew from the Pacific in 1914, and consequently Australian troop convoys to Europe and the Middle East required no naval escorts after 1915.

But these are minor quibbles about a major work of scholarship and easily amended for the next edition. Not so easy to reconcile is Professor Strachan's apparent reluctance to acknowledge Dominion contributions to the allied war effort. The 1st AIF is rarely mentioned and heavily patronised when it is, with descriptions such as 'they earned a reputation for mayhem and indiscipline, mingled with combativeness and high morale', and by his allegation that (only) the Australians 'massacred' Turkish prisoners at Gallipoli. The 'mingled' particularly grates and the view of supposed 'indiscipline' is so very English. He even downgrades the importance of the successful withdrawal from Gallipoli by claiming it was '... hardly in the Turk's interests to prolong the allies' departure or to incur further losses needlessly'. This could be easily disputed on both tactical and strategic grounds and was not a view widely held, if held at all, by those involved.

Professor Strachan even tries to paint the incompetent British General, Sir Frederick Stopford, as a scapegoat for inaction at the Suvla landing and not one of its prime causes. His account of Gallipoli and his assessment that the Anzacs 'fought not for Australia or New Zealand but for the "old country", with which they still had strong ties ...' is surely too much of a simplification at best. According to this view Australian losses at Gallipoli (8709) were 'a low number by the horrific standards of the war ... New Zealand's losses were smaller still, 2721'. No account is taken of the proportionality and no mention is made of the disproportionate casualty rates of Australians and New Zealanders, compared with say Britain, in the war overall.

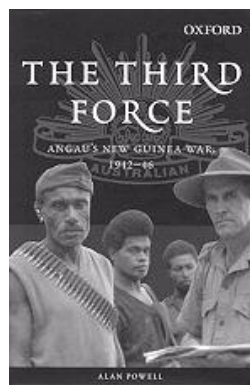
Later he recounts the 'capture of Vimy Ridge [in 1917]

was a national triumph for Canada, a more auspicious coming of age than the mismanaged landings at Gallipoli had been for Australia'. It is almost as if he is implying that the mismanagement was the Australian's fault. Later again, Canadian participation in the '100 days' in 1918 is briefly mentioned but the Australians do not figure at all. In fact from this book you would hardly know that Australians fought on the Western Front. The vital contribution of Anzac troops to the Palestine and Syrian campaigns is also ignored.

The final two chapters covering the situation from the treaty of Brest-Litovsk in March 1918 onwards reflect research and thought outside traditional Anglo-centric historical patterns. Professor Strachan's theme of a truly global struggle allows him to give full rein to examining the problems of coalition warfare, especially those faced by the Central Powers, rather than the traditional concentration on Germany's worsening weakness and eventual disintegration. His discussion of the benefits enjoyed by the allies being a coalition of relative equals, at least in contrast to their opponents, is very well done. He notes that the number of allies kept growing throughout the war in both numbers and global spread, but that after Bulgaria, in September 1915, no country sided with the Central Powers.

Although it has faults, Professor Hew Strachan's *The First World War* is a book that will be sought after by generations of history students and general readers seeking a wide-ranging, well-written and generally well-argued summary of the complex international struggle that shaped the modern world. ♦

Hew Strachan, 'The First World War: A New Illustrated History', Simon & Schuster, Sydney, 2003, casebound and jacketed, 360pp, RRP \$49.95.



The Third Force: ANGAU's New Guinea War 1942–46

Alan Powell

Reviewed by Michael O'Connor

Arguably, the most ubiquitous and perhaps the most neglected unit of the Australian Army's World War II New

Guinea campaigns was the Australian New Guinea Administrative Unit (ANGAU). The Army History Unit deserves commendation for sponsoring this latest, excellent volume in the Australian Army History Series, especially as at a time when the need for a modern civil affairs capability in the ADF is readily apparent.

Alan Powell is Emeritus Professor of History at the Northern Territory University. His other contributions to Australian military history have included the highly regarded *War by Stealth*, a study of Australians in the Allied Intelligence Bureau.

At the outbreak of the Pacific War, Australia administered two territories in New Guinea quite separately. Papua was an Australian territory, acquired from Britain in 1906 and maintained at absolutely minimal cost to the Australian taxpayer. The Territory of New Guinea had been captured from Germany in 1914 and was administered as a League of Nations Mandate. Thanks to large gold discoveries and an expatriate-controlled plantation industry, New Guinea was wealthier but was administered mainly in the interests of the expatriate community. The Papuan Administration was largely indifferent to the expatriate community and pursued a remarkably benevolent and paternalistic policy towards the Papuan community; in New Guinea, the reverse was generally the case.

History tells us that Australia and the Army in particular were quite unprepared for the Japanese challenge in Papua New Guinea. This was certainly true of the two civil administrations. In New Guinea—as with the small Rabaul garrison—a *sauf qui peut* mentality prevailed. An excessively legalistic policy promptly disarmed the civil police and, in many cases, simply abandoned them.

In Papua, a clash between the civil administration and the Army led to the dismissal of the former and the establishment of martial law. Some of the field personnel of the Administration were told that they were out of a job; others were simply ignored.

For its part, the Army with no experience of military government had made no preparations for administering a population assumed to number some hundreds of thousands, many of them in enemy-controlled territory. Its most urgent task was to stem the Japanese advance in country largely beyond vehicular transport. For this, they needed labourers (carriers) to logistically support the trained troops and supplies that were slowly beginning to trickle in to Port Moresby.

The 8th Military District Commander was Major General Basil Morris, a regular gunner not very highly regarded by his peers. Morris did, however, try to make a silk purse from a very tatty sow's ear. Part of the manufacturing process was to establish ANGAU.

ANGAU's priority task was to recruit labourers to carry for the Army. Somewhat to its surprise, the Army found that the transport infrastructure of the New Guinea of 1942 was almost totally unfamiliar with the internal combustion or steam engine. Supply from, and evacuation to, bridgeheads, airheads and roadheads for the forces in contact with the enemy depended upon the

broad backs and stamina of thousands of ill-nourished, poorly clothed, usually unpaid and overworked Papuans and New Guineans. These were normally conscripted in a fairly ruthless process that ANGAU was only slowly able to ameliorate as the emergency diminished.

Powell suggests that this labour conscription was unfair if only because the people of Papua New Guinea owed little or no loyalty to Australia. That may be but it can also be said that Australia owed an obligation of just treatment to the people of Papua New Guinea and that defeating the Japanese was the best way to achieve that objective. Indeed, this is the strongest argument for the late war operations in the northwest, New Britain and Bougainville, criticised by many as unnecessary and wasteful. Powell's discussion of the loyalty question is substantial and well balanced.

After the Japanese defeats in Papua, ANGAU steadily developed as a broad-based military government. Powell notes that the labour administration section always accounted for around half of ANGAU's total strength of 366 officers and 1660 other ranks, not including the 2700 strong police or the still larger indigenous labour force.

ANGAU was also responsible for such tasks as civil law enforcement, district administration, health services and coastal shipping. Many of the key personnel, especially in the District Services Branch, were former administration officials but, equally, many were drawn from volunteers sought from Army units.

The District Services personnel - the 'kiaps' - and their colleagues of the Royal Papuan Constabulary who best knew the country and its peoples were increasingly drawn into active military operations against the Japanese as advisers, scouts and guides. ANGAU was partly responsible for the administration of the alphabet soup of irregular units that operated in enemy-occupied territory. Indeed, many of the personnel were so interchangeable that some of my own superiors in post-war PNG freely admitted that they were never quite sure whom they worked for at any given time.

Powell describes a wide range of ANGAU operations as well as devoting two excellent chapters to ANGAU's people, one on the Australians and the other on the Papua New Guineans. He touches only briefly on the role of Colonel Alf Conlon's Directorate of Research and Civil Affairs, an organisation that played the principal role in establishing the comparatively radical post-war national policy for Papua New Guinea as a single entity. This is a pity but it may well have been considered outside the scope of his study. Nonetheless, the job was done largely by the Army under the benevolent direction of the Commander-in-Chief, General Blamey, often in spite of the traditional political indifference to Papua New Guinea. From the Army's perspective, this study of ANGAU reinforces the not well-understood view that ending the fighting does not guarantee the peace.

Professor Powell has given us an excellent and balanced study of a unit that was as well known as any to those who served in New Guinea but the scope of whose operations

was seriously under-estimated, both at the time and since. ♦

Alan Powell, 'The Third Force: ANGAU's New Guinea War 1942-46', Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 2003, casebound and jacketed, 292pp, \$55.00.

D-Day: The Greatest Invasion— A People's History

Dan Van Der Vat

Reviewed by Dr Malcolm Kennedy

In the early hours of 6 June 1944, the gunfire from 700 warships signalled the arrival of a force of 5,000 ships, 8,000 aircraft, 130,000 men and 20,000 vehicles off the coast of France. The invasion of Nazi occupied Europe had begun. Operation Overlord, which took years in the planning and creating, was at last launched across the beaches of Normandy. Even with the massive military force brought to bear the lodgement hung in the balance. At the end of the first twenty-four hours—the 'longest day'—the fate of Western Europe had been tipped towards freedom.

Only the application of massive military, economic and logistical force was able to wage war sufficiently powerful to destroy the vile Nazi regime and bring peace to Europe once more. The stakes were enormous. This was a key turning point in world history.

If the invasion failed an unacceptable consequence would have been a long and increasingly bloody campaign through Italy into Germany; and if the German eastern armies collapsed, there was the highly probable advance of Stalin's dictatorial regime into Western Europe. This would have meant the replacement of one murderous tyranny with another. A failure on D-Day would have probably added another year to the war. Dan Van Der Vat has produced a magnificent tribute to the men and women who filled the widest imaginable roles in the preparation and execution of the invasion of Europe. This book revitalises our knowledge and understanding of D-Day and prepares us for the sixtieth anniversary of the day that changed the fate of millions of people.

The author has produced a well-written text, a superb collection of black and white and colour photographs, clear maps, paintings, interviews, an index, bibliography, and web sites, which make this book a fitting tribute to those who died and those who survived D-Day. For our part, we can respect and celebrate their sacrifice by reading and learning from this account.

It was a drama in which the elements of nature, sea, wind and sky, almost conspired to harm the passage of the great armada as much as the fierce resistance of the well-prepared and skilled German troops, who crouched behind their heavy defences protected by numerous ingenious devices prepared to kill or wound the invaders. Van Der Vat has provided the reader with a feast of new material, maps, diagrams, small and novel stories, accounts of ideas and equipment, deceptions, tricks and training, all of which were brought to bear to make

the landing, and holding of the beachheads, more likely. He notes the massive level of force and firepower, which was necessary to begin, establish and sustain the landings.

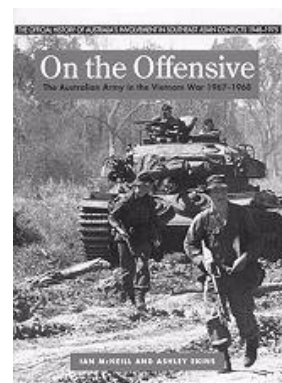
The account of the development of the Overlord gives us vital lesson of the difficulty and risk involved in opposed amphibious landings. These are lessons that ought not to be ignored as the ADF moves to develop a greater maritime operational capacity.

The disaster of the Dieppe Raid, a 'reconnaissance in force' in August 1942, was an object lesson on how an inadequately prepared invading force would be destroyed. Some 252 ships carried 6100 troops and 30 tanks across the channel to attack and hold the port of Dieppe. The engagement was a disaster. In a single day 4100 were killed, wounded, missing or captured compared to German losses of 314 killed, 294 wounded and 37 captured. The allies lost all the tanks, one destroyer, three landing craft and 99 aircraft compared to the German loss of 48 aircraft. This brutal lesson tempered the thinking of Lieutenant General Morgan, who took four months to prepare the first draft of Overlord. This plan was refined and fleshed out from July 1943 to its execution on D-Day in 1944. The essentials remained the same. A massive assault in Normandy followed by the rapid capture of major ports to facilitate the huge supply train needed to support the allied forces liberating France and advancing into Germany.

The apparent simplicity of Overlord was, as Van Der Vat, notes contrasted by the final details. Even though Admiral Ramsay, who carried out the Dunkirk operation, was put in charge of the naval planning, his demands for more and more shipping delayed D-Day. The naval operational orders eventually took up a thousand pages, detailing the deployment and operations of 1212 warships, over 4000 landing craft, and over 1500 ancillary support ships. The planning involved a curious range of lateral thinking activities. Concrete caissons some 255 foot long and weighing 6000 tonnes, called 'Mulberries' and scuttled block ships, called 'Gooseberries' were used to create artificial harbours. The Pipe Line Under The Ocean, or PLUTO, provided the tens of thousands of gallons of fuel consumed each day and removed the need for vulnerable tankers. Van Der Vat covers the important airborne landings, and refutes the nonsense, left in the minds of many people, by various films on D-Day. He shows that while there was occasional confusion, the operational control and application of the airborne forces was particularly effective in securing their objectives. The naval and air force attacks show that support of the landing was an especially complex operation, which demanded the very best of the skills of the crews and their commanders.

About a quarter of the text is devoted to the actual day of the landing, and this is a heart-stopping section of the narrative. It is a must read. The course of the invasion is followed to the breakout stage and the author ends his account with the Canadian Army liberating his home town in Holland. He notes that—'For my family and me, and for millions of Western Europeans, it was freedom — the gift of life itself.' ♦

Dan Van Der Vat, *'D-Day: The Greatest Invasion - A People's History'*, Allen&Unwin, Sydney, 2003, casebound and jacketed, 176pp, \$49.95.



On the offensive: The Australian Army in the Vietnam War January 1967–June 1968

Ian McNeill and Ashley Ekins

Reviewed by John Essex-Clark

This clearly written and impressive book, the eighth volume in the *Official History of Australia's Involvement in Southeast Asian Conflicts 1948–1975*, follows on from *To Long Tan*, the account of the Army's involvement in Vietnam from 1950 to 1966.

This volume is well presented with quality paper, good maps and a balance of good colour and black and white photographs. Its writing has involved vast research by the authors and their teams. Unfortunately Ian McNeill, one of the two authors and a Vietnam veteran himself, died during the book's production. This obviously caused a heavy burden on the other, Ashley Ekins, especially as he did not have the advantage of McNeill's comprehensive and intimate knowledge of the personalities and operations involved, or of the ethos of the Army of that era.

As in any history based on coupling the memories of men with written records it contains areas of contention. It is, however, a masterpiece of writing about a war that had so many critics and numerous political twists and turns. The book describes well a war that appeared to have no easily identifiable strategic objective in Australia's national interest and whose rationale and prosecution was subject to much vilification in Australia. This account helps to clarify the quandary faced by politicians attempting to balance their perceptions of strategic interest against political reality, and also the military operational needs of the campaign concerned against the economic and political costs.

The volume accurately describes the differences between US and Australian methods of fighting the war and their differing political objectives; for example was the overall mission to defeat the communist forces or restore democracy and South Vietnamese government control? It also explains the dichotomy between those two missions and the cultural canyon between East and West. Rudyard Kipling was right when he said 'never the twain shall meet'. The discussions with former Viet Cong opponents and research into communist Vietnamese histories add much

to knowledge of how the war was fought by both sides.

The influence of Australia's participation in Vietnam on social and political activities 'back home' where our involvement created much harsh debate, politically and socially, is shown. The authors cover the effect of the war on Australia's domestic scene, and the influence that it had on the Australians fighting in Vietnam. Perhaps the neat transfer of the consequences of the war onto the shoulders of the military, rather than to the politicians who sent our forces there, could have been described more forcefully.

Central to the book is the theme of the development of the 1st Australian Task Force based in, and operating primarily throughout, Phuoc Tuy Province with occasional forays elsewhere. During the period covered the task force had three different commanders with each having a different method of achieving the objectives set for 1 ATF. The term 'task force' was a legacy from the then recently and happily discarded 'Pentropic' organisation, but often confused US and other allied forces. What we had in Vietnam was, in fact, a 'brigade group' and the term 'task force' too often diminished impressions of the scale of our effort—even though we were very small when related to the total allied forces 'in Theatre'.

The ill-fated minefield south of Nui Dat and the post-Tet 1968 battles at Coral and Balmoral are covered comprehensively. The political pressure that plagued Army Headquarters to adopt the cheaper 'individual replacement system' instead of the tried and tested 'unit replacement' are too lightly covered. Fortunately, the unit system prevailed and our example has been subsequently adopted by the US Army since Vietnam.

The title *On the Offensive* is possibly somewhat offensive to some because it intimates that previous operations such as Crimp, Rolling Stone, Bribe, Long Tan and many other tough operations may not be considered 'officially' as offensive operations. This said; all worthwhile operational and logistic activities concerning Australia in Vietnam during the period are well covered. The book also deals with the success of our national servicemen as soldiers. Our diggers, whether national servicemen or regulars, come out magnificently and again display the traditional high value military characteristics that one expects from them. The authors show that they match the quality and attitude described in many other accounts over the last century and make us all, once again, proud of them and our nation.

In a wide-ranging volume such as this it is also difficult to give due attention to the myriad activities undertaken by the Australian Army Training Team—Vietnam (AATTV) and the SASR. While the separate semi-official histories of AATTV and SASR, written by Ian McNeill and David Horner respectively, do cover this aspect very well there should perhaps have also been an official history.

Some mild criticism had been directed at the long time it took to finish and publish this volume. Considering that Ekins had to take over McNeil's research papers and delve back into that research it seems understandable

that this entailed some delay. Unfortunately the time taken has allowed other books to be produced about major events of the period, such as Lex McAulay's excellent *The Battle for Coral*, and this has stolen some of the 'thunder' and uniqueness that is due to *On the Offensive*.

Since publication there has also been criticism about the portrayal of some incidents, most notably the controversial episode of 106 Field Battery, 4th Field Regiment, Royal Australian Artillery at Fire Support Base Bravo. Many feel that Ekins was, perhaps, not critical enough in his historical portrayal of the event, which is largely confined to what was recorded at the Court Martial involved. Unfortunately the challenges to Ekins' account have only highlighted the poor discipline at that Fire Support Base during that period. Complaining about the truth cannot bring back to life Lieutenant Robert Birse, nor ameliorate the tragic circumstances that led to his death.

In the media, and in the official magazine of the Australian War memorial, *Wartime*, Ekins has subsequently responded convincingly to criticism of his account; as has the memorial's director, Major General Steve Gower (an artillery officer in Vietnam). Gower wrote: 'An official historian's role is to record his views free of political or institutional interference. It is difficult to comprehend how the incident at the Fire Support Base could be ignored, irrespective of the battery's performance, which is well covered in the volume, before and after.' Gower added, 'there was undeniable evidence of uncontrolled drinking on the operation before the officer died. This, by any standard, is totally unacceptable—alcohol and artillery fire support don't mix'. Gower's comments would be applauded by all professional soldiers and are applicable for any type of combat operation.

Finally, it is a pity that the Australian 'End of War' awards, gazetted in May 1998, were not added to the list of awards in Appendix D to the volume. None know the reason why these awards were so late and how they were adjusted to match the nearest contemporary Australian equivalents. Ashley Ekins has advised these will be included in his final volume on the war, *Combat Operations*, that is near to completion.

Ashley Ekins and his team have done a daunting and complex task well. Also daunting is the price of the book but unfortunately that is the cost of producing a book of this quality and magnitude these days. This volume is, however, a comprehensive and valuable portrayal of an important episode in Australian history that is worth far more than the price. The descriptions are forthright, and the writing is clear and concise. This is a book for both warriors and students of military history. ♦

Ian McNeill and Ashley Ekins, 'On the Offensive: The Australian Army in the Vietnam War, January 1967–June 1968', Allen&Unwin in association with the Australian War Memorial, Sydney, 2003, casebound and jacketed, 650pp, RRP \$80.00.



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