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All contributions and correspondence should be addressed to:

The Editor

Australian Defence Force Journal

Russell Offices

CANBERRA ACT 2600

(02) 6265 1193

Fax (02) 6265 6972

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Email: adfj@ozemail.com.au

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Front Cover

HMAS Kanimbla is welcomed home.

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Letters to the Editor

Time Sensitive Targeting

Dear Editor,

In his article "Time Sensitive Targeting" (ADFJ, March/April 2003), Wing Commander Keir highlights much of what is wrong with the ADF's "revolutionary" approach to warfare in the 21st century. Besotted by the buzzwords of the information age, many within the military profession have apparently forgotten – or worse, disregarded – the fact that war is a contest between human beings rather than inanimate objects. While the improvements to the targeting process recommended in the article may have some merit, much of the supporting analysis is seriously flawed.

The overwhelming flaw in Keir's article is one of logic. In the introduction, he argues that the *raison d'être* for time sensitive targeting (TST) is the elimination of "asymmetric threats" including weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Paradoxically, he states that "Potential adversaries realise that they cannot compete with the West's military dominance and have therefore adopted asymmetric means, such as WMD, with which to provide a credible level of threat ... [hoping] to resist the West's aerial onslaught and maintain the political initiative through asymmetric means". Based on this logic, enhancing "the West's technological superiority" through TST will actually exacerbate the problem of asymmetric warfare by perpetuating the proliferation of WMD among rogue states and terrorist organisations. This line of argument is self-defeating.

The article is further weakened by Keir's failure to describe how TST contributes to a commander's plan to defeat an adversary. Presumably, as the term suggests, TST envisages an enemy merely as a series of inanimate "targets", to be eliminated like blips on a computer screen, rather than as a group of adaptive, intelligent human beings. This is completely at odds with "manoeuvrist approach to warfare" espoused in ADDP-D Foundations of

Australian Military Doctrine, which emphasises the defeat of "the enemy's overall cohesion and will to fight, rather than concentrating on destruction of the enemy's materiel".

Much of the analysis of Operation *Allied Force* cited by Keir, in particular the US Department of Defense Report to Congress on Kosovo/Operation Allied Force, has been widely discredited by NATO allies, academics, and even US air crews who participated in the operation. Although he acknowledges that estimates of NATO successes "varied considerably", he then argues that the "effort ... expended to make TST a reality, as well as the inherent technological and doctrinal challenges" provides a model for replicating similar capabilities in the ADF. Closer scrutiny of the operation, however, renders this argument highly questionable.

As Keir correctly points out, NATO employed two lines of operation. The first was to coerce Slobodan Milosovic to withdraw his troops from Kosovo by destroying key Serbian infrastructure, while the second was to prevent Serbian ground forces from conducting "ethnic cleansing" in Kosovo by destroying tactical targets. Although there was disagreement in NATO as to which would likely be more effective, both lines of operation illustrate the serious shortcomings of a warfighting approach that aims to defeat an adversary simply by destroying a series of inanimate targets.

The first line of operation – the so-called "strategic" bombing campaign – achieved little other than highlight, once again, the utter stupidity of the Giulio Douhet school of airpower theory. The destruction of Serbian infrastructure made for spectacular viewing on the evening news, but rather than "coercing" Milosovic to withdraw from Kosovo, the attacks of a powerful foreign enemy actually bolstered popular domestic support for the national leader. Thousands of Serbians gathered nightly around likely infrastructure targets as volunteer "human shields", wearing T-shirts emblazoned with target

symbols, thumbing their noses at NATO. Milosovic's capitulation, when it did eventually occur, resulted at least as much from the withdrawal of political support from the likes of Russia as it did from what Eliot Cohen derided as the "immaculate coercion".

The stated objective of the second line of operation was "to avert a humanitarian catastrophe" by stopping Serbian "ethnic cleansing" of Albanian Kosovars. However in the first month of the campaign Serb troop strength in Kosovo actually grew – from approximately 30,000 to approximately 47,000. When the Serbian forces were finally ordered to withdraw, NATO peacekeepers observing the withdrawal reported that their units and equipment appeared largely unscathed. Conservative analyses estimate Serbian military equipment losses at less than one quarter of those claimed in the Report to Congress. The reason for this is that the Serbians both adapted to the threat and deceived the technology-centric NATO air forces. Decoy armoured vehicles and SAM sites were placed in open fields to attract NATO bombing missions while the real platforms were hidden inside farm buildings. Drums of liquid were placed in the sun by day to deceive infra-red guided missiles by night. Damaged pieces of equipment were placed in the open to attract repeated bombing attacks. And in the final analysis, the ethnic cleansing campaign continued unimpeded until the arrival of the Kosovo Liberation Army.

The UK House of Commons Defence Committee Report of October 2000 concluded that "the strikes against fielded forces in Kosovo unarguably failed in their declared primary objective of averting a humanitarian disaster. The limitations of airpower in pursuit of such humanitarian goals were clearly demonstrated, and this lesson must be learned. In relation to the effectiveness of these strikes as part of the coercive strategy, the evidence of the relatively poor kill rate ... can only lead us to the conclusion that the contribution of this axis of the bombing campaign to achieving the Alliance's overall objectives was, at best, marginal".

One US Air Force pilot involved in the operation explained the reason for this failure was

that "Air power can do an awful lot, but it's never going to stop the ability of a guy on the ground taking a can of gasoline and a match and lighting a house on fire, or lining a group of civilians up against a wall and shooting them".

Keir's suggestion to address these failures and counter the sorts of deception measures used by the Serbs is simply to improve targeting processes, command and control, and sensors fitted to uninhabited aerial vehicles (UAV) in order to improve the accuracy of precision munitions. However the best technology and processes will never eliminate the ability of human beings to adapt to new circumstances, exploiting the inherent characteristics of any sensor or weapon system to deceive the human operators of these technologies. To suggest otherwise is folly.

Although Keir does emphasise the requirement for correct target identification to "guard against collateral damage or fratricide" in several parts of the article, he is dismissive of the "inevitable collateral damage incidents" that occurred during Operation *Allied Force*. Precision guided munitions may well have hit "some 64 per cent of the 9,815 aim points altogether", however these "aim points" included not only the decoys described above, but several refugee convoys mistaken as Serb military units, various civilian trucks and tractors, houses, hospitals, and the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade. Adjacent to these "aim points" seven other foreign embassies were destroyed or damaged, along with innumerable other civilian buildings, and more than 10,000 unexploded cluster bomblets remained at the conclusion of the campaign. Inevitable perhaps, but today's "collateral damage" is the source of tomorrow's "asymmetric threat". So long as the prevailing attitude is that destroying inanimate targets with "precision" high explosive devices will in itself achieve operational success, collateral damage will remain a fundamental weakness in the Western way of warfare; a weakness that will continue to be exploited by any adversary.

Finally, Keir's conclusion that the ADF must acquire the technological means to conduct TST "against a range of surface targets" in order to succeed "in an era of asymmetric warfare"

demonstrates a misunderstanding of what “asymmetric warfare” really is. “Asymmetric warfare” is a tremendous buzzword, but the idea is hardly new. “Asymmetry” and “symmetry” have co-existed since the origins of war; only the vernacular has changed. Other guises for the same basic theme include Basil Liddell Hart’s “indirect approach vs direct approach”, the “Manoeuvre vs attrition” dialectic in our own doctrine, and more recently Robert Leonhard’s “subjective vs objective conflict”. The flaw in Keir’s logic here is that targeting an adversary physically, with faster, better, more precise technology epitomises the attritionist/direct/objective approach, which merely forces the adoption of alternative asymmetric means or methods, without necessarily defeating the will to fight, instead probably reinforcing it.

Time sensitive targeting may well be, as Wing Commander Keir believes, “a modern military answer to the challenges of the RMA”. What remains to be seen however, is just how decisive the technology-centric RMA envisaged by many in the ADF will actually be. History would indicate that a great deal of what is currently passed off as “revolutionary” will likely be remembered as just so much technological hubris, largely irrelevant to the outcomes of human conflict, in which asymmetry is the norm rather than the exception. Technological development is certainly important, but in the words of the late US Air Force military theorist Colonel John R. Boyd, “Machines don’t fight wars. People do, and they use their minds”.

Major Stuart McCarthy
Land Warfare Development Centre

Political and Cultural Issues that Impact on the Ability of States in South-East Asia to Respond to Regional Security Concerns

By Captain Peter Leschen, RAN, Colonel Thitinant Thanyasiri, Royal Thai Army,
Wing Commander Tony Hindmarsh, RAAF

The term “South-East Asia” was first coined in World War II with the establishment of the “Southeast Asian Command”.¹ The region was and remains geographically, politically, religiously, culturally, economically and strategically diverse. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) now comprises ten countries that vary from maritime archipelagic states to continental states on mainland Asia. The northerly states are close to or border China and Japan, the major powers of East Asia, while the southerly states are far from these centres of power. Governments range from relatively liberal democracies to military or communist autocracies. Christianity, Islam and Buddhism intersect in the region, and each part of South-East Asia has its own history and culture, including a range of colonial heritages. There is considerable economic disparity, from the relatively wealthy states of Singapore and Malaysia, to the poor countries of Laos and Myanmar.

Moreover, the region has undergone enormous changes since 1945. With the exception of Thailand, every member state of ASEAN has had to transition from colonisation to independence. Most states have dealt with serious internal security issues, and a number of interstate conflicts have occurred against the backdrop of the Cold War, notably *Konfrontasi*, the wars in Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam (CLV) and, further afield, the Korean War. More recently, the majority of the region has experienced substantial and sustained economic growth, interrupted, at least temporarily, by the Asian economic crisis of 1997/98.

The diversity within ASEAN has shaped the approach of member states to the wide range of regional security issues they face. This article contends that political and cultural diversity in particular has influenced their approach and thus the effectiveness of regional security arrangements, for both better and worse. The article will review South-East Asian security issues and the political development of ASEAN and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), then discuss strategic culture in South-East Asia, before assessing the effectiveness of ASEAN and ARF in addressing security issues.

South-East Asian Security Issues

ASEAN states face a variety of security challenges, ranging from internal ethnic, political and ideological challenges to state structures and regimes, to disputes over borders and territory, to conflicts fuelled, if not necessarily caused by, major power rivalry and/or intervention.² Since the terrorist attacks in New York in September 2001 and Bali in October 2002,³ terrorism deserves separate mention as a threat with internal, regional and international dimensions.

A number of ASEAN states still face internal security problems of various kinds, including “separatist rebellions in Indonesia (Aceh), Myanmar, Thailand, the Philippines and Cambodia”.⁴ “The resolution of religious, separatist and other challenges to the cohesion and stability of Indonesia” is,⁵ perhaps, the most serious of these security concerns. These movements are often related to religious extremism and terrorism. Since September 11 and Bali, there is concern that these organisations are targeting secular moderate Muslim and non-Islamic governments as well as Western targets, and that they have links with Al Qaida and Middle Eastern radical Islamist groups.⁶ Terrorism, therefore, has internal, regional and global ramifications that must be taken into

account in the security policy of the ASEAN states. Similarly, piracy, which remains common in parts of South-East Asia, has internal and regional dimensions, and attracts global interest because of its impact on the safe flow of world trade through the key sea lanes of the region.

Regionally, most ASEAN states have territorial and border disputes, including disputes over a number of islands.⁷ There are also disputes over maritime boundaries and exclusive economic zones, which have significant economic implications for fishing and resource exploitation.⁸ Of most concern are the conflicting claims over the Spratley and Paracel Islands, which involve China and several ASEAN members, and where armed forces have been employed in support of claims.

A further source of regional uncertainty is the military modernisation proceeding in a number of ASEAN countries, including the procurement of high technology fighter aircraft and frigates, an aircraft carrier in Thailand and submarines in Singapore. These procurements in large part reflect a change in focus from internal security to the external security requirements of maritime trading nations. Nevertheless, before the Asian economic crisis slowed modernisation, there was considerable debate about whether this modernisation represented a destabilising arms race.⁹

Lastly, the interactions of USA, Japan and China, amongst themselves and with the ASEAN states, are of fundamental importance.¹⁰ The political, economic and military might of these major powers dominate the security architecture of the wider region, and ASEAN states must seek to constantly balance their relations with all three in an attempt to wield influence to further their own interests, while avoiding domination by any one power.

These three major powers are also associated with three of the wider region's potential flash points: the Korean peninsular, Chinese reunification with Taiwan, and the disputed islands of the South China Sea, especially the Spratley and Paracel Islands. Conflict in any of these places would, directly or indirectly, involve at least one if not all the three major powers and ASEAN states. Such conflicts could result in

pressure on ASEAN states to support one or other of the major powers, which would make it very difficult for ASEAN to formulate a common strategic response, given the diverse circumstances of the member states.

The Political Development of ASEAN and ARF

ASEAN was established on 8 August 1967 with Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand as founding members.¹¹ Brunei subsequently joined in 1984. Although one of the aims in the Bangkok Declaration of 1967 was to promote regional peace and stability, ASEAN did not embark on any security-related role. Rather, it sought to promote rapprochement among the founding members and other countries in the region, and to focus on domestic economic and social development.¹² The years 1967 to 1975 can be described as a survival period where former rivals minimised their intra-regional disputes and laid foundations for economic and social cooperation. With enunciation of President Nixon's Guam Doctrine and the British withdrawal from East of Suez, ASEAN sought to reduce extra-regional influence, issuing the Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality Declaration (ZOPFAN) in 1971.¹³ Although the existence of alliances between external powers and ASEAN members compromised this goal, ZOPFAN remained an aspiration of ASEAN.

The North Vietnamese victory over its southern counterpart in 1975 marked a turning point in South-East Asia's political development, marking the start of a period of greater political and diplomatic cooperation among ASEAN members. In 1976, ASEAN leaders met in Bali, signing the *Declaration of ASEAN Concord* and the *Treaty of Amity and Cooperation* (TAC). When the Vietnamese invaded Cambodia in 1978, ASEAN gathered behind Thailand, the frontline state, and pursued a political and diplomatic campaign to block UN recognition of the Vietnamese puppet regime in Phnom Penh and to rally support from China and the United States.¹⁴ The Cambodian conflict ended with the 1991 Paris Peace Agreement followed by the UN Peacekeeping mission.

Resolution of the Cambodian conflict, at about the same time as the end of the Cold War,

was another turning point for ASEAN. Although resolution of the conflict through the Paris Agreement compromised the norm of “regional solutions to regional problems”,¹⁵ the door was opened to broader engagement between ASEAN and CLV. The objective then changed from seeking a balance with Vietnam to implementing a vision of “One South-East Asia”.¹⁶ ASEAN membership was enlarged to ten countries: Vietnam joined in 1995; Laos and Myanmar in 1997; and, Cambodia in 1999.¹⁷

ASEAN also embraced security cooperation with the wider region. The Singapore Summit in 1992 enabled further development by strengthening the ASEAN Secretariat.¹⁸ Establishment of ARF in 1993 was probably the most important step taken by ASEAN. The aim was to extend the ASEAN model of regional security, aiming to foster constructive dialogue and consultation on political and security issues of common interest and concern through a unique alternative security arrangement premised on multilateralism.¹⁹ It met for the first time in 1994 in Bangkok, focussing on confidence-building and preventive diplomacy in the Asia Pacific region.²⁰ The ASEAN states formed the core of ARF, taking the lead role in the forum, which also includes dialogue partners (loosely grouped as non-South-East Asian regional powers of Australia, Canada, China, European Union, India, Japan, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation and US) and observers.²¹ ARF can be viewed as part of an overlapping, complementary and mutually reinforcing set of regional institutions in the Asia Pacific including ASEAN, ASEAN+3 (China, Japan and South Korea) and APEC.²²

Since 1997, two important regional political developments have tested the effectiveness of ASEAN and ARF. Firstly, the financial crisis, starting in Thailand in 1997 and spreading throughout Asia and other parts of the world, had significant political repercussions in South-East Asia.²³ It has been suggested that the ASEAN states viewed the financial crisis as a new form of Western colonialism, and that it created a new sense of nationalism and collective identity among ASEAN and Asian countries at large.²⁴ This may have given impetus to a strengthening

of the ASEAN and ASEAN+3 Secretariats and convening of the 7th ASEAN Summit and the 5th ASEAN+3 Summit in Brunei in 2001.²⁵

Secondly, the terrorist attacks in Bali on 12 October 2002 can be interpreted as a reinvigoration of regional Islamic extremist groups such as the *Jemaah Islamiya* and *Kumpulan Militan Malaysia* (KMM). Such groups may be reclaiming their aspirations for an Islamic state encompassing Southern Thailand, Malaysia, Mindanao, Singapore, and the Indonesian archipelago.²⁶ Connections between these groups and Al Qaida and other Middle Eastern radical Islamist groups have also been claimed.²⁷ Given that the South-East Asian countries have not recovered fully from the financial crisis, and the current political and security environment, terrorists are likely to remain active in the region unless there are strong actions from the ASEAN governments.²⁸ The ASEAN states have responded by creating several bilateral and multilateral counter terrorism frameworks involving both member states and external powers. Examples of initiatives sponsored by ASEAN and ARF include:

- 2001 ASEAN Declaration on Joint Action to Counter Terrorism,
- 2002 ASEAN-United States of America Joint Declaration for Cooperation to Combat International Terrorism,
- 2002 ARF Statement on Measures Against Terrorist Financing,
- 2002 Statement by the Chairman of ARF on the Tragic Terrorist Bombing Attacks in Bali, and,
- 2003 Joint Declaration on Cooperation to Combat Terrorism during the 14th ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meeting.²⁹

Strategic Culture in South-East Asia

The diversity of the ASEAN states makes any attempt to describe or build a regional strategic culture difficult. Nevertheless, ASEAN has built a strategic culture relating the individual cultures to the institution and norms of ASEAN. Amitav Acharya suggests that development of this culture can be analysed within a framework, “whereby cooperation among states is understood as a social process that can have a positive, and even transforming effect on their relations through

internalising regulatory norms”.³⁰ The ASEAN norms and the “ASEAN Way” help portray South-East Asia’s strategic culture, although this may offer a “lowest common denominator” description that is inadequate to describe the cultures of individual member states.

The ASEAN norms have two distinct parts, the legal/rational and social/cultural norms.³¹ The former evolved from ASEAN’s adherence to international norms enshrined in international laws and the principles of the UN Charter, while the latter stemmed from local political, social and cultural environment. ASEAN norms include the non-use of force and pacific settlement of disputes, regional autonomy or “regional solutions to regional problems”, the doctrine of non-interference, no military pacts and a preference for bilateral defence cooperation.³² The non-use of force and pacific settlement of disputes were introduced in the founding Bangkok Declaration and subsequently reinforced in both ZOPFAN and TAC. The TAC provided an official dispute-settlement mechanism, called a “High Council”, composed of ministerial-level representatives of the signatory states who would recommend appropriate settlement through good offices, mediation, inquiry or conciliation to the parties in dispute.³³ The High Council has never been invoked, but this may be interpreted as an indicator of ASEAN success in intra-mural conflict prevention.

Regionalism, described as “regional solutions to regional problems”, is an ASEAN response to the involvement of external powers in the region during the Cold War. ASEAN leaders were deeply concerned with the changing roles and competition among external powers in the region, particularly the US, the former USSR and China. Regionalism has benefited the smaller and weaker states by increasing their bargaining power, so that their interests are at least taken “into consideration when the great powers make their compromises”.³⁴ As shown in the recent war in Iraq, the preparedness of the US to act unilaterally is a complicating factor. A key challenge for ARF is to court active engagement of the US, without offending the other major powers in the region.

The doctrine of non-interference in the internal affairs of member states is, perhaps, the most important norm of ASEAN regionalism.³⁵ This is not unique to ASEAN, originating in the Westphalian state system and being firmly established in the UN Charter. Both ZOPFAN and TAC clearly espoused this norm. The norm not only applies to intra-mural interference within ASEAN but also to the actions of external powers in the region. It was, however, probably more relevant to domestic security concerns of ASEAN states as they addressed issues resulting from decolonisation, where “weak” state structures were most vulnerable to internal, rather than external, threats. Nevertheless, foreign interference in internal disputes could severely undermine regional order.³⁶

The last ASEAN norm is no military pacts and a preference for bilateral defence cooperation. This norm originated from Vietnamese perceptions that ASEAN was founded as a “new SEATO”.³⁷ Consequently, ASEAN leaders have generally rejected multilateral defence arrangements, while bilateral defence cooperation between members has been acceptable. This bilateral preference may have helped the ASEAN states manage intra-mural conflicts, whereas they could not have been dealt with in a more public multilateral setting.³⁸

The development of the “ASEAN Way” has been heavily influenced by regional political and social cultures. While there are several suggested definitions,³⁹ Amitav Acharya has described it as:

*a decision-making process that features a high degree of consultation and consensus. It is a claim about the process of regional interactions and cooperation based on discreteness, informality, consensus building and non-confrontational bargaining styles which are often contrasted with the adversarial posturing, majority vote and other legalistic decision-making procedures in Western multilateral negotiations.*⁴⁰

There are two important characteristics of the ASEAN Way.⁴¹ The first is the preference for informality and the avoidance of institutionalised cooperation, in some cases through dialogue and consultation in unofficial and academic settings. The second characteristic is the process of

consensus building. Consultation prior to more formal negotiations enables “intensive informal and discreet discussion that in the end bring out the general consensus of the community”.⁴² Consensus does not mean unanimity but indicates that the broad support for an agenda has been established.

ASEAN norms and the “ASEAN Way” are also central to ARF, in which the ASEAN states take the lead. Indeed, these non-threatening norms and leadership were crucial in China’s agreement to participate in ARF.⁴³ ARF was not created as a collective defensive organisation but as a cooperative security community, bringing together states with divergent views to foster constructive and frank dialogues and exchanges.⁴⁴ The aim was to build relations by facilitating a habit of bilateral or regional dialogue among states that were otherwise unable or ill-prepared to make arrangements directly with one another.⁴⁵ Thus ASEAN could work with its ARF partners to bring about a more predictable and constructive pattern of relations in the Asia Pacific.⁴⁶

ASEAN and ARF Responses to Security Issues

The ARF concept paper of 1995 outlined three stages of multilateral security cooperation, phased over time:

- Promotion of confidence building measures (CBMs),
- Development of preventive diplomacy, and
- Establish mechanisms for conflict resolution (subsequently amended to elaboration of approaches to conflict).⁴⁷

These three stages provide a basis for assessing the effectiveness of ASEAN and ARF responses to security issues. As described earlier, South-East Asia still faces a range of internal and external security issues, and the diversity of the ASEAN states, which increased markedly when CLV and Myanmar joined, means that dealing with these issues will always be a challenge. Nevertheless, ASEAN has generally succeeded when measured against its objectives and norms, bringing together ten diverse countries in a regional cooperation forum where issues can be discussed and conflict avoided. The original

creation of ASEAN, rapprochement of the member states, response to the war in Cambodia, and subsequent incorporation of CLV and Myanmar, can all be considered as significant success stories for ASEAN. Perhaps the most compelling evidence of success is that none of the member states has gone to war with each other since joining ASEAN. It appears that ASEAN has moderated intra-regional conflicts and reduced the likelihood of war.⁴⁸ On the other hand, ASEAN has attracted criticism for an inability to respond to “real, current problems and challenges”.⁴⁹ For example, it has not been able to resolve the territorial and border disputes that exist between the member states. Instead, these disputes have been placed off the agenda in a kind of suspended animation, where they are not a great threat, but cannot actually be resolved.

To date, ARF successes primarily relate to building comfort levels, fostering predictable and stable relationships, and reducing tensions through a focus on CBMs.⁵⁰ Although more than ten years have elapsed since formation, ARF has yet to meaningfully progress beyond Stage 1 CBMs. It has not resolved any of the significant security issues facing the South-East Asian or wider region; as with ASEAN these issues have remained on the backburner. As a result, ARF is untested in its capability to prevent the outbreak of conflicts or resolve disputes. Measured against its own concept, therefore, ARF cannot yet be considered more than a partial success.

There is an inherent contradiction between a broad inclusive membership and a consensus based decision-making process that is likely to prevent conflict resolution and collective action by ARF. A ready example is the ability of “consensus censorship” to veto inclusion of contentious but important security issues on the ARF agenda.⁵¹ ARF’s lack of participation in bilateral disputes also indicates an unwillingness or inability to address serious problems between member states.⁵²

A comparison of ARF outcomes with the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is useful as each has existed for similar reasons and for about the same period.^{53,54} The OSCE is seen as best practice for security organisations,⁵⁵ although caution is required given

the marked differences in strategic environments between ARF and OSCE.⁵⁶ Despite the differences between the OCSE and ARF contexts – real or imagined – Tan See Seng et al. have identified a series of OSCE “lessons” for ARF.⁵⁷ The key difference between ARF and OSCE is institutionalisation. The stated role of ARF is to facilitate a security process whereas OSCE institutionalised a security architecture which has had acknowledged successes in areas extending beyond pure military issues.⁵⁸ The OSCE also seeks to address emergency situations through ad hoc crisis meetings. These OSCE meetings also feature alternative decision-making processes such as “consensus minus” to ensure conflicts involving member-states can be addressed.⁵⁹

There appear to be two key lessons for ARF. Firstly, the avoidance of institutionalisation, which is enshrined in the “ASEAN Way” and ASEAN norms, has limited the outcomes from ARF. Secondly, developing a more robust decision-making process, such as “consensus minus”, may be a prerequisite for ARF to move beyond CBMs to preventive diplomacy and conflict resolution. Again, ASEAN norms and the “ASEAN Way” seem to impede progress towards these goals.

Conclusions

ASEAN has now existed for nearly 40 years, successfully containing, if not necessarily resolving, a wide range of internal and external security issues. Perhaps the greatest testament to success is the bringing together of ten diverse states, some of which have long histories of conflict. None of these states has gone to war since joining ASEAN, even though a variety of disputed issues remain to be resolved. ASEAN norms and the “ASEAN Way”, involving consensus and avoidance of confrontation, non-intervention in domestic affairs, gradual and incremental low profile exchanges and negotiations and the fostering of the appearance of unity, seem fundamental to this success.

Nevertheless, there has been criticism of ASEAN for talking too much while doing too little to actually resolve the security issues facing the region. ARF, with its expanded “stages of multilateral security cooperation” represents an attempt to move forward on some of these issues.

To date, however, it has made little progress beyond CBMs. This suggests that, while the ASEAN norms and the “ASEAN Way” have been crucial to the initial success of ASEAN, they may now be hindering the ability to move forward and actually resolve some of the security issues that have been contained for many years.

Steady progress across a range of political, economic and security issues is important if ASEAN and ARF are not to drift towards irrelevance. Should this occur, the politics and interests of the major regional powers will predominate, and the relatively small states of ASEAN will have lost an important lever with which to influence regional security developments. For progress to occur, it appears that ASEAN may need to overcome its reluctance and become a more formalised institution. Just as importantly, its decision-making processes need to become more robust so that decisions can be made when consensus cannot be achieved.

This is not to underestimate the success that ASEAN and ARF have achieved to date. The ability of ASEAN/ARF to isolate a number of difficult security issues and prevent them escalating into conflict is a major success in its own right. While some reforms may be required, they need to be approached with a degree of caution to ensure that what has already been achieved is not jeopardised.

NOTES

1. Michael Yahuda, 1996, *The International Politics of the Asia-Pacific, 1945-1995*, Routledge, London, p. 3.
2. Amitav Acharya, 1996, “A Security Community in Southeast Asia” in *The Transformation of Security in the Asia-Pacific Region*, edited by Ball, D. Frank Cass, London, p. 183.
3. *Australia's National Security – A Defence Update 2003*, Commonwealth of Australia, Defence Publishing Service, Canberra, p. 5.
4. Amitav Acharya, 1996, op. cit., p. 181.
5. *Defence 2000 – Our Future Defence Force*, Commonwealth of Australia, Defence Publishing Service OCT010/2000, Canberra, p. 20.
6. *Australia's National Security – A Defence Update 2003*, op. cit., p. 12.
7. A list of these disputes is contained in Amitav Acharya, 1996, op. cit., pp. 181-183.
8. *ibid.*

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Colonel Thanyasiri's current position is Attached to the Office of Policy and Planning, Ministry of Defence, Thailand. Some of his former positions are Director, Plan and Organisation Division; Director, Foreign Affairs Division; and Instructor, Command and General Staff College, Royal Thai Army.

Wing Commander Hindmarsh was commissioned into the Air Force in July 1980. He has served in a range of administrative and personnel-related postings throughout his career, including an exchange tour as a personnel analyst with the USAF in the Pentagon. Wing Commander Hindmarsh is a Distinguished Graduate of USAF Air Command and Staff College.

Captain Peter Leschen joined the RAN in 1974. He is a seaman and warfare officer who has served in a variety of ships, culminating in command of HMAS Brisbane. He has also held a number of staff positions, most recently including Director Maritime Combat Development, Director RAN Sea Power Centre, and Chief Staff Officer to Chief of Navy.

All three officers are currently attending the Defence and Strategic Studies Course at the Australian Defence College.

The Effects of the Bush Doctrine on Commitments and Alliances in South-East Asia

By Commander Franz-Josef Birkel, Mr Warren Karle and Colonel David Welch

The response of the United States (US) to perceived threats and challenges to its security has a significant impact on the foreign and security policies of all states. The security strategy of the current Bush Administration, commonly referred to as the “Bush Doctrine”, has been given its most comprehensive expression in the National Security Strategy of the United States of America (NSS), a policy paper issued by the White House in September 2002.¹ The NSS signals an increased willingness by the US to resort to military action as a primary means of addressing the threats of terrorism and the use of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) by rogue states. It also reveals US preparedness to act pre-emptively and unilaterally in the use of force if required, but expresses an expectation that friends and allies will cooperate with the US to implement its chosen strategies. The impact of the Bush Doctrine on US relations with European allies and countries of the Middle East has attracted considerable attention but few commentators have sought to examine how this strategy has influenced alliances and commitments in South-East Asia. An analysis of selected countries in the region indicates that responses to the Bush Doctrine have been varied. Most countries see benefit in maintaining US engagement in the region and in cooperating at various levels to remove the threat of terrorism. Analysis also reveals, however, that while the leadership of each country is mindful of US impatience with perceived inaction, leaders remain focussed on the imperatives of domestic and regional politics and the implications of being seen to embrace too enthusiastically the world’s only superpower.

The Bush Doctrine – its evolution and major components

The NSS provides the most thorough and contemporary explanation of the Bush Administration’s foreign and security policy agenda. It represents, however, the latest instalment of an evolving policy development process that pre-dates the Bush Administration itself. A clear outline of the likely direction of US foreign and security policy under George W. Bush was given by Condoleezza Rice prior to the 2000 US presidential election when she observed that a future Republican Administration would use military power in pursuit of national interests.² Rice’s comments reflected even earlier thinking by so-called “neo-conservatives” within the Republican Party who in the early 1990s actively promoted the development of robust foreign policy, including the strengthening of US military posture and the notion of pre-emptive action.³

Notwithstanding the large number of neo-conservatives within the Bush Administration, the active adoption of the neo-conservative agenda as official White House policy is in large measure attributable to the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington on 11 September 2001. In an atmosphere in which the Bush Administration needed to act swiftly and forcefully against international terrorism, policies which favoured pre-emptive military action against threats to national security fitted neatly with the state of mind of the American people. It was in the context of US perceptions of its own vulnerability to what Rice describes as threats from “shadowy bands of terrorists” and “weak or failed states” that the NSS was developed.⁴

The NSS reflects an understanding by the Bush Administration that it must respond to changes brought about by the end of the Cold War, including the opportunities provided by the unrivalled predominance of US military power and the increased threat from non-state actors and

rogue states. The *NSS* therefore presents plans for domestic and global security that draw on a combination of additional military, political and economic means. It declares, for example, that the US “will actively work to bring the hope of democratic development, free markets, and free trade to every corner of the world”.⁵ It also pledges that the US will work with multilateral institutions such as the United Nations and World Trade Organisation to develop and maintain a more stable world order and to champion liberal values such as human dignity, freedom of speech, and religious and ethnic tolerance.⁶ These commitments are in keeping with the Bush Administration’s deeply held conviction that “American values are universal” and that their wider promulgation will result in a more stable security environment.⁷

While the *NSS* outlines US commitment to the spread of liberal values, the Bush Administration nevertheless seeks to capitalise on its military predominance as a primary tool of statecraft. The *NSS* confirms military power as a defining factor in world affairs, stating that: “Our forces will be strong enough to dissuade potential adversaries from pursuing a military build-up in hopes of surpassing, or equalling, the power of the United States”.⁸ While the Bush Administration claims that deterrence and containment will continue to play a role in US security strategy,⁹ the *NSS* also signals a willingness to use military power without multilateral support, declaring that the US “will not hesitate to act alone, if necessary, to exercise our right of self-defense by acting pre-emptively”.¹⁰

International Reactions and Reservations

The Bush Doctrine has attracted criticism from a number of quarters. US preparedness to resort to military action as a primary means of addressing security threats and to act pre-emptively if required, has been viewed with concern by many countries. According to Evelyn Goh, these policies have deepened “pre-existing resentments against American power and hegemony in more ambivalent states in the less developed countries, such as those in Latin America”.¹¹ Shireen Mazari, writing from a Pakistan perspective, highlights the way in which

the Muslim states are identified in the *NSS*. In committing to support “modern and moderate government, especially in the Muslim world”,¹² Mazari believes that the *NSS* insinuates that “Muslim states are fertile breeding grounds for terrorism and therefore the US will intervene to shape the political structures of these states”.¹³ These concerns are shared by the Chinese commentator Gu Guoliang who argues that pre-emption threatens international order by breaking the established rules of the international system,¹⁴ and that “no country is entitled to deprive the UN of its right to judge whether or not a war is justified.”¹⁵

Litwak has noted that the Bush Doctrine has “generated controversy and apprehension, particularly among America’s European allies” who have questioned the legality of pre-emptive action in international law and have pointed to the danger of setting a precedent for the behaviour of other states.^{16,17} France and Germany in particular, view the Bush Doctrine’s emerging unilateralism as a challenge to the existing rules for the use of force between states and have sought to defend the future role of multilateral institutions such as the UN.¹⁸ Commentators such as Kagan maintain that this reaction owes more to an admission by European leaders that their waning military power requires them to pursue non-military security options, than it does to any firmly held commitment to the UN.¹⁹ Whereas Daalder has observed that the belief that “the consistent application of agreed-upon rules and norms are essential to maintaining international order”²⁰ distinguishes many European nations from the US.

The most unsettling aspect of the Bush Doctrine for many is the pressure it places on all countries to align with US strategies. Bush’s covering message to the *NSS*, for example, clarifies the US expectation that all countries will play an active role in the fight against terrorism and the spread of WMD and that countries will be held accountable for the way they govern themselves.²¹ The invasion of Iraq has reinforced the fears of many states that they may be the targets of pre-emptive US military action if they are perceived not to comply with US values. Others have learnt that they cross the US at the

risk of financial loss. Chile, for example, has been reprimanded by the US for its lack of public support for the conflict in Iraq by the latter's decision to defer finalisation of a free trade agreement between the two countries.²² The promise of aid has also been viewed as dependent on compliance with US values. The US, for example, has targeted those Arab states deeply suspicious of its post-Iraq war goals by offering a regional free trade accord. The trade offer is tied to the Middle Eastern countries making such governmental reforms as fighting corruption and terrorism, protecting property rights and developing good business practices.²³ As Rice has stressed, "new money means new terms".²⁴

The Bush Doctrine and South-East Asian Security Structures

The impact of the Bush Doctrine on alliances and commitments in South-East Asia has attracted limited attention despite the fact that the US has noted the importance of addressing terrorist activity in the region and the need to work with alliance partners and other countries to remove threats to security. The *NSS*, for example, refers to the Philippines, Thailand and Singapore as "alliance partners" with whom cooperation on counter terrorism has been deepened.²⁵ It also adds that Singapore is a nation with a key role to play in building global economic growth through free markets and free trade.²⁶ Indonesia is mentioned in a very different context in the *NSS* under the section dealing with defusing regional conflicts. Indonesia is congratulated for taking the initiative to create a working democracy, respect for the rule of law and accepting open markets and it is suggested that with its own initiative, and US help, it may be able to lift its people out of poverty and desperation.²⁷ This implies that the US regards Indonesia as a "work in progress", with a considerable amount of work remaining to be done.

The security and cooperative structures of South-East Asia that have the potential to be affected by the Bush Doctrine take several forms, ranging from bilateral arrangements between South-East Asian and non-regional nations, to multilateral arrangements involving only South-East Asian nations. In the former category are bilateral links between the United States and the

nations of the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.²⁸ These relationships, with the exception of Singapore, were developed during the Cold War in response to the imperative to contain regional communism. Notwithstanding their initial purpose, these relationships have expanded to embrace a much wider range of security issues.²⁹ In the latter category is the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) which, although long regarded as only a "talk shop",³⁰ is now emerging as a security community in which member nations share expectations that conflict will not come from aggression by fellow member states.^{31,32}

South-East Asian Reactions to the NSS

The reaction of South-East Asian countries to the current US Administration's efforts to combat terrorism in the region and to the Bush Doctrine more generally, have been considered to range "from enthusiastic endorsement to quiet backing"³³ and have implications for the security structures outlined above. Such variances derive from the different relationships that each country shares with the US and from their individual assessments of the immediate and longer-term benefits of engaging with US strategies. The impact on regional relationships and domestic constituencies of engaging with the US has also been seen as an important calculation for the leadership of South-East Asian countries.³⁴ Notwithstanding their underlying motivation, individual and collective decisions by countries on the scope and scale of engagement adopted will have important implications, not only for their own bilateral relationships, but for the relationship of regional associations such as ASEAN with the US. As Christoffersen has noted, "the test of US-ASEAN relations will be how ASEAN countries respond to the US war on terrorism".³⁵

The importance of engaging the US in South-East Asia and enlisting its assistance to address regional terrorist threats has been quietly acknowledged by most regional countries which had been concerned that the relationship between ASEAN and the US had been waning before the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington.³⁶ These thoughts have recently been given more open expression by Singapore's leader Goh Chok

Tong, who declared that “Not every country will say so publicly, but we all know that America has been indispensable to East Asian peace, stability and prosperity. This consciousness tempered East Asian attitudes towards the war in Iraq.”³⁷ The longer-term benefits of engaging with the US as it attempts to address terrorism in the region have not gone unnoticed.

The more immediate benefits of working with the US against terrorist groups have also been recognised. In return for its active cooperation in addressing domestic sources of terrorism such as the Abu Sayaf terrorist group, the Philippines has received substantial US aid and military assistance, valued by some observers at over \$US4.6bn.³⁸ This assistance includes the deployment of US troops to the southern Philippines to help develop the country’s counter-terrorist capabilities.³⁹ US assistance to Indonesia has not been as significant to date, but has included a \$US50m package to develop the counter-terrorist capabilities of the Indonesian police.⁴⁰ Singapore’s close working relationship with the Bush Administration has resulted in it being granted a Free Trade Agreement with the US.⁴¹

Notwithstanding the prospect of rewards for cooperation with the US, support from South-East Asian states for US activities in the region remains subdued and far from unconditional. This reluctance is in part based on an assessment by South-East Asian leaders that elements of the Bush Doctrine, particularly pre-emption and tendency to more unilateral action, may impact unfavourably on states in the region. Prime Minister Mahathir of Malaysia, for example, has reflected the views of many of his counterparts in ASEAN by speaking strongly against the pre-emptive attacks on Iraq by the US and its allies. Prior to the war, he told a peace rally in Kuala Lumpur that “I am confident that if they succeed in Iraq, they will shift their focus to Iran and after Iran, to North Korea. After North Korea, who will be their next victim? It is clear that the Western powers want to once again conquer the world.”⁴² Later, reflecting on the significance of the war and the wider implications of the US’s willingness to use pre-emption, he commented that “The US-led war on Iraq has “great

implications” for small countries such as Malaysia. Many countries can be accused of not having good government or not practicing democracy or abusing human rights. Such an accusation may lead to an invasion of our country or other countries. So, this is a very frightening prospect.”⁴³ These views are shared by the Indonesia government of Megawati Soekarnoputri which also objects to the US’s selective definition in the *NSS* of what constitutes terrorism. Anthony Smith contends that the Indonesian Government would like to see the separatist Free Aceh Movement join the US State Department’s list of international terrorist groups.⁴⁴ The view from Jakarta is that the US “will only classify a group as “terrorist” if it directly threatens US interests”.⁴⁵

In addition to these misgivings, ASEAN leaders are mindful of the gap between the need to engage with the US and popular anti-American sentiments expressed by many of their domestic constituents.⁴⁶ This gap exists in parts of Thailand and the Philippines but is particularly apparent in the predominantly Muslim nations of Indonesia and Malaysia where resentment of US actions in Afghanistan and Iraq is considered to be high. It has been noted, for example, that many Muslims in Indonesia believe that the US may use the global war on terrorism “as a pretext to flex its muscles in the Muslim world”.⁴⁷ Comments by US Under-Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz that the US would be “going after al-Qaeda in Indonesia”⁴⁸ have done little to dispel these fears. The response of leaders in South-East Asian countries to requests for further engagement with US strategies are therefore likely to be tempered by the need to manage perceptions of being too closely linked to the Bush Administration.

Impact of the Bush Doctrine on South-East Asian Security Arrangements

The implications of these reactions to the Bush Doctrine for US alliances and other bilateral relationships in the region are not insignificant. US requirements for friends and allies to support its strategies for addressing the threats of terrorism and the use of WMD by rogue states would appear to have the potential to place new pressures on old relationships. The US’s formal alliances with Thailand and the Philippines and

de facto alliance with Singapore,⁴⁹ for example, were developed to meet the threat of international communism and were based on policies of deterrence and containment. As Lankowski has noted, they were not designed to support activities such as counter-terrorist operations and pre-emptive military action.⁵⁰

Responses by alliance partners and other countries in the region to US requests for action and assistance would appear, however, to indicate that such relationships are being adapted successfully to meet new requirements. The US, for example, has praised the efforts of the Philippines in countering terrorist groups in its south and has given Singapore similar accolades for developing a national security secretariat to manage counter-terrorism activities and for its swift detection and apprehension of terrorist groups seeking to target diplomatic missions within the country.^{51,52}

Malaysia has been congratulated for its tough stance on domestic Islamic militants and for signing of the joint *Malaysia-United States Declaration on Co-operation to Combat International Terrorism* in May 2002.⁵³ Thailand has in turn received credit for its support of US-led operations in Afghanistan through the offer of a battalion of construction engineers and medical teams.⁵⁴ This assistance is being built on through the decision to focus the joint US/Thai exercise *Cobra Gold* on anti-terrorist scenarios.⁵⁵ Unequivocal support for the US, however, has been rare and has been tempered largely by suspicion of key elements of the Bush Doctrine. These concerns have probably resulted in less cooperative arrangements than may have been anticipated in the immediate aftermath of the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington when the states of South-East Asia were quick to express sympathy and solidarity with the US.⁵⁶

The Bush Doctrine, conversely, has appeared to give further impetus to the strengthening of ASEAN as a security community. In response largely to fears of increased US involvement in the affairs of South-East Asian states, a number of South-East Asian leaders have openly expressed the view that they are capable of dealing with the region's problems either individually or as a group, without US support.

Christoffersen has noted, for example, Malaysia's support for ASEAN "taking a more active role against terrorists and avoiding a US-led war in the region".⁵⁷ In referring to the ability of ASEAN states to handle terrorist threats, Thailand's Prime Minister Thaksin expressed the view that "we have no problems, we can look after ourselves".⁵⁸ Even the more cooperative Macapagal-Arroyo government of the Philippines has maintained that ASEAN can handle the war on terror independently.⁵⁹ These assertions have been backed up by joint efforts by countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines to deal with the movement of Islamic extremists in the region independently of the US-led campaign.⁶⁰ It is questionable, however, whether reaction to the Bush Doctrine alone could create a common political culture or undermine the pre-eminence of the US in the region. There are also presently no alternative external sources of influence to challenge the US's support for open markets and democracy.

The most significant change in US engagement in South-East Asia attributable to the Bush Doctrine is expected to be the US's relationship with Indonesia. As noted specifically in the *NSS*, the US recognises that Indonesia is critical to engaging the Muslim world and ensuring that Indonesian domestic troubles do not ferment to become the source of new terrorist threats is an important priority.⁶¹ Indonesia should not, however, be overly alarmed by this approach or anticipate US attempts at internal intervention. Indonesia's internal conflicts in Aceh and Irian Jaya could, depending on the perspective of the observer, be regarded as either a regional conflict, or the actions of terrorist groups. As neither of these conflicts is threatening US interests, it is likely that the US will ignore these and concentrate on other conflicts more demanding of its attention.

Conclusion

The Bush Doctrine has influenced the relationship of the US with alliance partners and other countries in South-East Asia. The reactions of regional countries to key elements of US policy, including an increased propensity to use military force and to act unilaterally and pre-emptively, will continue to impact on the way

they engage with US efforts to address the threats of terrorism and the use of WMD by rogue states. The immediate and longer-term benefits of engaging with the US in South-East Asia will mean that countries will continue to take measures to align policies and actions with those of the US wherever possible. South-East Asian leaders, however, remain concerned about the implications of US policies for states in the region and are mindful of growing feelings of animosity and distrust towards the US amongst domestic constituencies. This will result in South-East Asian countries continuing to seek a more independent and collective approach to security problems in the region rather than being seen to follow a US-led security agenda for South-East Asia.

NOTES

1. *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, Washington: The White House, 2002.
2. Condoleezza Rice, "Promoting the National Interest" *Foreign Affairs* 79, no. 1 (Jan / Feb 2000). Rice made these comments as foreign policy adviser to George W. Bush during the campaign and now holds the position of National Security Adviser in the current Bush Administration.
3. In 1992, Paul Wolfowitz drafted the "Defence Planning Guidance" containing major elements of today's strategy. The paper was discarded by then Secretary of State Cheney. See *The shadow men* (Economist.com, 2003 [viewed 30 April 2003]); available from www.economist.com/world/na/PrinterFriendly.cfm?Story_ID=1731327, p. 4.
4. *Dr. Condoleezza Rice discusses President's National Security Strategy*, The White House, 2002 [viewed 29 April 2003]; available from www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/10/print/20021001-6.html
5. *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, Washington: The White House, 2002, p. 2.
6. *ibid.* pp., 2, 4-5.
7. Rice, "Promoting the National Interest", p. 49.
8. *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, Washington: The White House, 2002, p. 21.
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Commander (German Navy) Franz-Josef Birkel is currently a course member at the Centre for Defence and Strategic Studies and will take over the post of the German Defence Attache in Australia in early 2004. He holds a Master of Arts in Defence Studies from King's College, University of London.

Mr Warren Karle is a civilian in the Department of Defence who has held positions in capability analysis, resource management and international relations areas. He holds a Bachelor of Arts (Hons) from the University of New England and a Master of Arts in History from the University of York. He is currently a course member at the Centre for Defence and Strategic Studies.

Colonel David Welch is a logistician and engineer who has served in capability, acquisition and logistic appointments. He holds a Master of Science and Bachelor of Engineering from the University of New South Wales and a Graduate Diploma of Logistics Management from Monash University. He is currently a course member at the Centre for Defence and Strategic Studies.

Are the USA's National Interests in the Asia Pacific Region Sufficient to Keep America Engaged in the Region as the 21st Century Progresses?

By Captain Shane Peachey

The USA's national interests in the Asia Pacific region are numerous and varied in light of the end of the Cold War. In particular, America's national interests include the value of the vitally important economic potential of the region. According to Winston Lord, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, "Asia is the key to the economic health of the United States and to the everyday lives of Americans.¹ Furthermore, the significant potential of newly opened economies, such as that of China and the former Soviet Union, cannot be overestimated. Additionally, American interests include the maintenance of bilateral security agreements currently in effect with Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Philippines, Australia and Thailand. By maintaining, and in some cases strengthening, these existing alliances through newly developed concepts of "burden sharing", America hopes to lessen its military presence in the region without creating a "power vacuum". In this way, America will demonstrate its commitment and the significant importance the Asia Pacific region has on the long-term prosperity of the USA in the 21st century. This article will elaborate on the key national interests of the USA in the Asia Pacific region, focussing primarily on US economic and military interests and their subsequent importance on American future strategic policy for the region.

The end of the Cold War in the early 1990s caused a substantial shift in American foreign policy. The end to Soviet-US tensions and the signing of several treaties, including the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), have allowed America to reconsider its strategic objectives. Domestic pressures have also had an impact on national strategic interests globally.² Forced reductions in forward deployed forces in Europe and the Asia Pacific region, as well as an overall reduction in total forces worldwide, are reflective of a shift in foreign policy. It also demonstrates the need for the USA to reduce unnecessary expenditure and stimulate economic growth. However, whilst forces in Europe have been significantly decreased, Asia has only seen marginal reductions by comparison. This is a direct reflection on the value in which America views its pre-Cold War hegemonic role in the region and the increased importance of the Asian market to future American economic well being.³

American hegemony has been a direct reflection on the value of its national interests in

the region. The Asia Pacific region is the world's largest consumer market and subsequently America's largest export market, with an additional \$65 billion in US direct investment. Five of America's top ten global trading partners are Asian states.⁴ US trade with Japan is approximately three times that of Germany, with Japan buying more from the US than Germany, France and Italy combined.⁵ In 1993, US trade with the Asia Pacific region represented \$374 billion and accounted for 2.8 million American jobs.⁶ Moreover, the increasing strength of Asian Pacific economies, compared to their European counterparts, has placed a greater emphasis on the development of US relations in the region and the need for increased stability amongst the regional powers.

Economically, Asia Pacific is at the forefront of a global revolution in information and communication technology, which may have a significant impact on American market competitiveness and military technologies.⁷ US exports to all 17 members of the Asia Pacific

Economic Cooperation (APEC) increased by 50 *per cent* between 1987 to 1992, whilst US exports within APEC states now account for approximately 60 *per cent* of all US merchandise exports.⁸ In addition, the Asia Pacific region has significant export potential for US military technologies and arms sales. This is evident from statistics gathered in 1993 that indicated that the US recorded \$10 billion of export arms sales to the region.⁹

The increasing openness of the once-closed China market is reflective of the potential economic interaction the US has by actively engaging with states in the region. China's voyage into the global market has had a significant impact on America's economic direction. China's huge population reflects an enormous market potential for all Western states looking for new markets in which to develop. As a result, China is now America's 13th largest trading partner. Such a change in Chinese policy reflects their similar recognition of the importance of the Asia Pacific market. The US has endeavoured to cultivate China's transition into the international market economy, recognising in doing so that they mutually increase one another's economic interdependence.

Through increasing their economic activity with Asian Pacific states, the US is in fact increasing its national interests in the region and ultimately creating a more stable, interactive region. By engaging in such an interactive economic policy, the US sends a positive message to the Asia Pacific region. Such a message is clearly indicative of America's strategic importance within the region. Increased economic interdependence acts as a deterrent to the use of force as an option to conflict resolution. As Asian Pacific states become increasingly interdependent, they in fact decrease the likelihood of conflict between themselves and the region. Furthermore, the US is able to cultivate new bilateral alliances amongst economically interdependent states whilst strengthening existing alliances.

Bilateral security agreements have been the cornerstone of America's Asia Pacific security policy for almost a century.¹⁰ The US has long-

standing bilateral security agreements with five major players in the region; Japan, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Australia and Thailand. Such agreements have enabled a relative stability and confidence to evolve in the region.

This relative stability has been a direct result of US hegemony in the region throughout the 20th century. US forward-deployed troops have allowed Asia Pacific states to pursue alternatives to conflict resolution. In this way, US forward-deployed naval forces have effectively reduced any likelihood of conflict amongst states in the region. Through their continuing presence and high profile, the US ensures that regional states contemplating acts of aggression must factor into the equation the presence of significant US forces.¹¹ Therefore, the US has been able to foster a climate of dialogue amongst the regional states. Additionally, by preventing the rise of a regional Asian hegemony through the continued presence of American military forces, the US has instilled confidence in the region and prevented the possibility of a "power vacuum" resulting from the withdrawal or reduction of US forces in the Asia Pacific region. Asia Pacific states have long feared that the withdrawal of US troops in the region may create a power vacuum, which in turn may cause a regional state to attempt to assume a hegemonic role and, subsequently, destabilise the existing relationships in the region.¹²

Paramount to continuing towards regional stability, the US has expended considerable effort into strengthening the importance of regional forums such as the ten-nation Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). It was in such a forum that a US sponsored anti-terrorism agreement was ratified at the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) annual meeting held in Brunei.¹³ Such an agreement is reflective of the region's cooperative nature and the willingness of its states to engage one another in open and meaningful dialogue.

ASEAN's support of the US sponsored anti-terrorism agreement has meant that members will be required to increase their intelligence presence and police cooperation in an attempt to combat the spread of terrorism in the region. Such an agreement has also committed the US to provide

aid and assistance to all members in the “war against terror.”¹⁴ Furthermore, the agreement has provided another avenue of penetration for the US into the Asia Pacific region. The US Secretary of State Colin Powell termed the agreement as “a political declaration that brings ASEAN and the United States together in a more intimate relationship”. Agreements such as the anti-terrorism agreement highlight the high regard America has for the region and the significance it places on its continued stability and economic growth.

Whilst Powell’s statement does not necessitate the increased deployment of US troops to the region, it does send a clear message of cooperation and continued US commitment to play a greater role in the security of the Asia Pacific. This is seen to be an increased commitment that is welcomed by ASEAN members. Additionally, the US presence acts as a counterbalance to China’s rising economic and military projectionist policies.

Moreover, the US administration is notably ready to restore military ties with Indonesia, suspended as a result of human rights abuses in East Timor in 1999. Powell has announced the US contribution of \$50 million to Indonesia to help it combat terrorism.¹⁵

In this way, the shift in US foreign policy towards the Asia Pacific region can be fully appreciated. Through increased interaction with regional forums such as ASEAN, the US is increasing Asia Pacific state’s reliance on US presence. Such a strategic reliance is definitely a two-way affair. The underlying US policy is to link regional state economies to its own economic security. By strengthening its relations with regional forums, the US is in fact positioning its future economic security within the Asia Pacific regional marketplace.¹⁶ This also provides an effective balance to any regional state that may attempt to assume a hegemonic position.

A part of the increased interdependence of the US in the Asia Pacific region is the expectation of regional states to increase their share of the economic and military burden for regional security issues. The increased onus on regional states to assume a greater degree of responsibility

(for their “own back yard”) is consistent with the US administration’s policy on “burden sharing”.¹⁷ The East Asian Strategic Initiative (EASI) emphasised the importance of regional involvement in the security and shared economic responsibility for the region by stating:

*In the area of cost sharing, we expect increasing assistance from our allies. Increased cost sharing is attainable if we proceed on a steady upward slope with phased goals. The best chance of success in obtaining sizable increases is a proposal made with a definite rationale that can be argued logically in the capitals of those allies . . .*¹⁸

For example, the bilateral security relationship with Japan provides an assurance of interoperability between the two states because of their economic and military ties. The EASI has also proven fundamental between the two states in confirming their commitment to the region. Japan, under a Host Nation Support (HNS) scheme, has agreed to fund all appropriate yen-based costs of US forces (totaling approximately 46,000 military personnel). This agreement includes labor and utilities and represents approximately 70 per cent of total stationing costs, or approximately \$4 billion per year.¹⁹

Consistent with the concept of “burden sharing” is the proposal by the US Pacific Commander (PACOM) of “cooperative engagement”. Cooperative engagement is in fact a reiteration of the US administration’s commitment to the Asia Pacific region both as a trader as well as regional balancer. In effect, it proposes a limited forward deployment of US forces as a means of deterrence and invites stakeholders to make a contribution to the security of their region.²⁰ In this way, regional states are expected to participate in a collective security alliance, as emphasised by the PACOM Commander:

Cognizant of the enormous costs and waste associated with mounting a contingency response, Cooperative Engagement operates under the premise that if strategy is properly resourced and executed, deterrence will be the natural by-product.

The end of the Cold War and the effects of an increased globalised economy have increased the interdependence of Western market economy states. Such a change will force the US to remain intimately involved in the Asia Pacific region well into the 21st century and beyond. Furthermore, while America's national interests have been identified (as access to the large rapidly developing Asian market; the prevention of any preponderant regional power from assuming a hegemonic role; supporting current regional infrastructure and existing bilateral agreements and the prevention of a "power vacuum" that a reduction in regional military forces may create) America's focus will shift from a hegemonic pre-eminent military super power to a regional major power. This plan has a view that seeks to develop and engage heavily with Asian Pacific states. The endstate being to maximise economic growth and security; consequently, it can be noted that economics and security are inextricably linked here, if not indivisible. Through the adoption of concepts such as cooperative engagement, America seeks to create a greater interoperability and interdependence both economically and militarily with the Asia Pacific regional stakeholders. Therefore, despite the end of the Cold War, the United States will continue to be an active participant in the stability of the Asia Pacific region.

NOTES

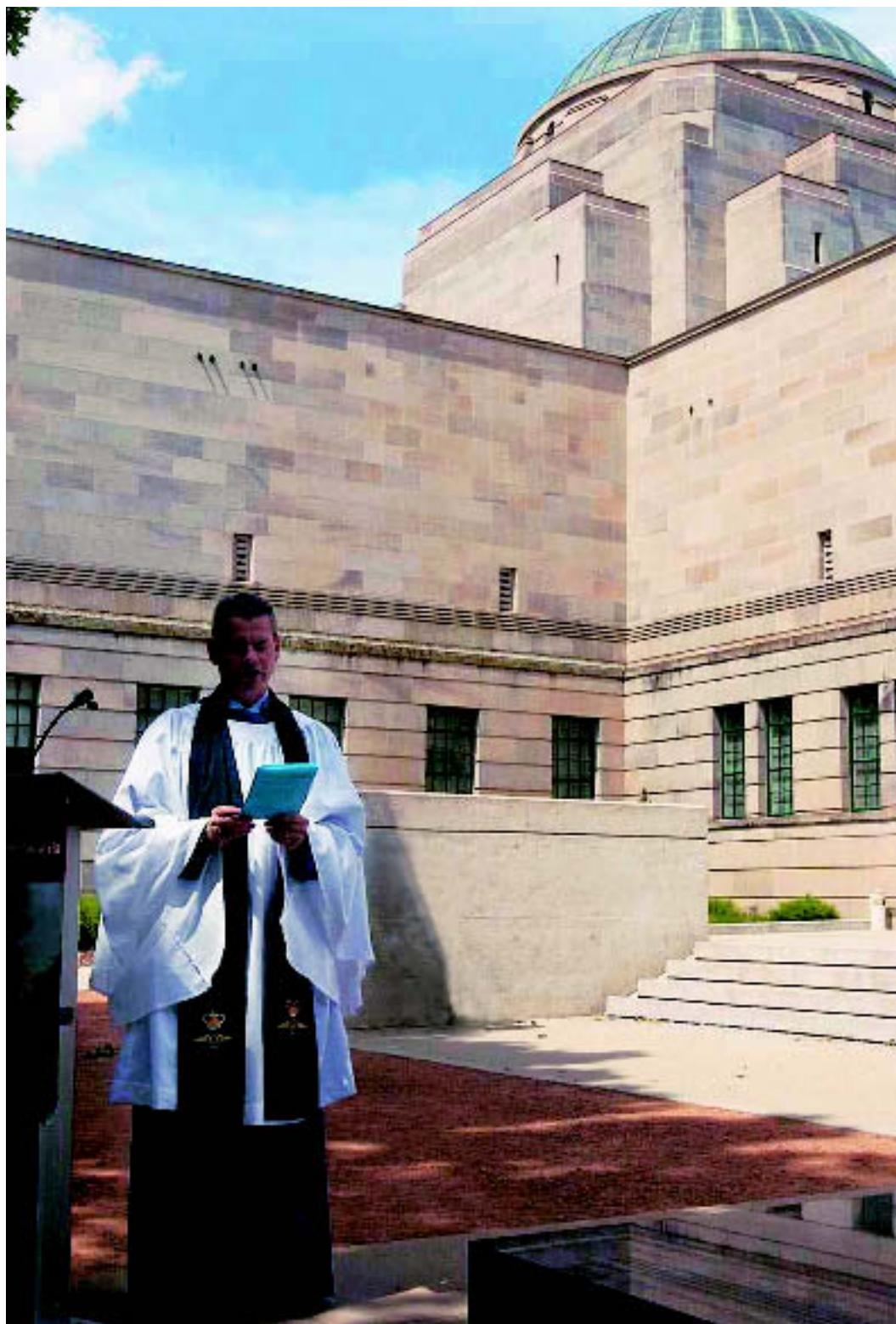
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RAAF Chaplain at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra.

A New Way of Equipping Pastors and Priests for ADF Chaplaincy

By Chaplain Peter Hayes (ARA) and Chaplain (GPCAPT) Kevin Russell

“The military chaplain is meant to bring humanity to an inhuman situation”. So said Fr Mulcahy in one episode of MASH.¹ The role of the military chaplain has been described in various ways, but this pithy quote from Fr Mulcahy seems to capture its essence. How do Service personnel cope in times of conflict, when the normal rules of civilised society are discarded and death and destruction become the norm? There is no simple answer. However the ministry of chaplains, who are grounded in religious faith and who have a profound regard for their fellow human beings, is a source of great strength and comfort to many in such a situation. In his book Padre, Michael McKernan expresses the need for chaplains in this way: “. . . but, if men are to die or suffer, tradition decrees that their ministers should be with them to help as best they can”.²

The military chaplain provides religious ministry and pastoral care to Service personnel and their dependants, and is therefore required to utilise a unique set of skills. It hardly needs to be said that the military environment is very different to anything a minister is likely to encounter in civilian life. To be employed as a chaplain in the ADF, one is required to be suitably qualified and ordained (or commissioned as the case may be) as a minister of religion. Chaplains also need to have a minimum of two years ministry experience. There is also a need to maintain a balance of Anglican, Catholic and Protestant padres in the three Chaplaincy Branches, as well as having the Jewish faith represented. At present, the Chaplains Branches of the three Services represent the Christian and Jewish religions. ADF members who belong to other faith traditions such as Islam, Hindu and Buddhist, are given the same pastoral care by the padres as their colleagues. If a serving member of one of these faith groups requires more specific religious ministry, then the chaplain will make every effort to locate the nearest leader of that particular religion. The basic principle is that all ADF personnel are entitled to practise their chosen religions.

Most clergy entering chaplaincy are well qualified with at least one Degree and several years of experience in ordained ministry. They come from diverse backgrounds such as parish priests and ministers, or chaplains of schools, hospitals or prisons. The new padre comes into

the military as a Chaplain Division 1. There are five Divisions within the Chaplaincy Branches, culminating in the rank of Principal Chaplain. As a chaplain advances through the divisions, he or she is required to employ a broader range of skills with a corresponding acceptance of extra responsibility. In December 2002, the Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal endorsed the Specialist Officer Career and Salary Structure for ADF Chaplains. This captured the dedicated work by chaplains of the three Services and others in Defence who have contributed to the preparation of this case over a period of many years. This represented a significant shift from a rank based career structure to one that recognises chaplains for their unique skill sets and the roles they perform in the military. Under this new structure, the skills and qualifications which chaplains bring to the job are acknowledged by the assigning of an appropriate competency level to the chaplain. With further training, the gaining of chaplaincy experience and attainment of higher qualifications, chaplains can advance to competency level 3 within their divisions. The new structure is more equitable in recognising that chaplains can be very well qualified whether they are the newest members of the team or the most experienced. They are all called upon to exercise their ministries within the military at highly professional levels.

The tribunal decision requires that all ADF chaplains achieve a common basic competency

standard at level 1. The effect of this ruling has been to accelerate progress towards ADF Chaplaincy Training. On 20 May 2003, the decision was made to appoint Army as the manager of joint chaplaincy training. This is to begin at the initial entry level and it is proposed that the pilot ADF Chaplain Basic Course be conducted at the Army Logistic Training Centre, Bonegilla in Victoria from 5 – 14 Nov 2003. The ADF School of Chaplaincy is to be established for the express purpose of conducting this training. It is envisaged that more training at intermediate and advanced levels will follow.

Until now, each Chaplains' Branch has been responsible for its own training, with padres undergoing officer, specialist and some vocational courses. This is an area where there have been significant differences between Navy, Army and Air Force, so the introduction of joint training becomes all the more important in this context. Initial chaplaincy training is not in theological disciplines, but rather in educating new chaplains into the ways of the military and, more specifically, their own Services. To be effective, the chaplain needs to have an understanding of the culture in which he/she serves. Exercising effective ministry within the particular Service culture requires the chaplain to "walk the walk and talk the talk" of those to whom he/she ministers. To put this another way, "... the chaplain serves as God's flesh and blood representative within the unit"³.

Under the Specialist Officer Career and Salary Structure, new chaplains will undergo initial officer training followed by the ADF Chaplain Basic Course, which will also incorporate Character Training Instructor modules. Successful completion of these will enable chaplains to be accredited with the Diploma of Public Safety (Defence Chaplaincy). Seven core and five elective units will cover the chaplaincy skills required by ADF chaplains. The core units are:

- Work with equity and diversity,
- Ensure a safe workplace,
- Provide pastoral care,
- Provide pastoral advice,
- Deliver chaplaincy services,

- Conduct and facilitate religious observances and activities, and
- Perform as an effective member of the chaplains' branch.

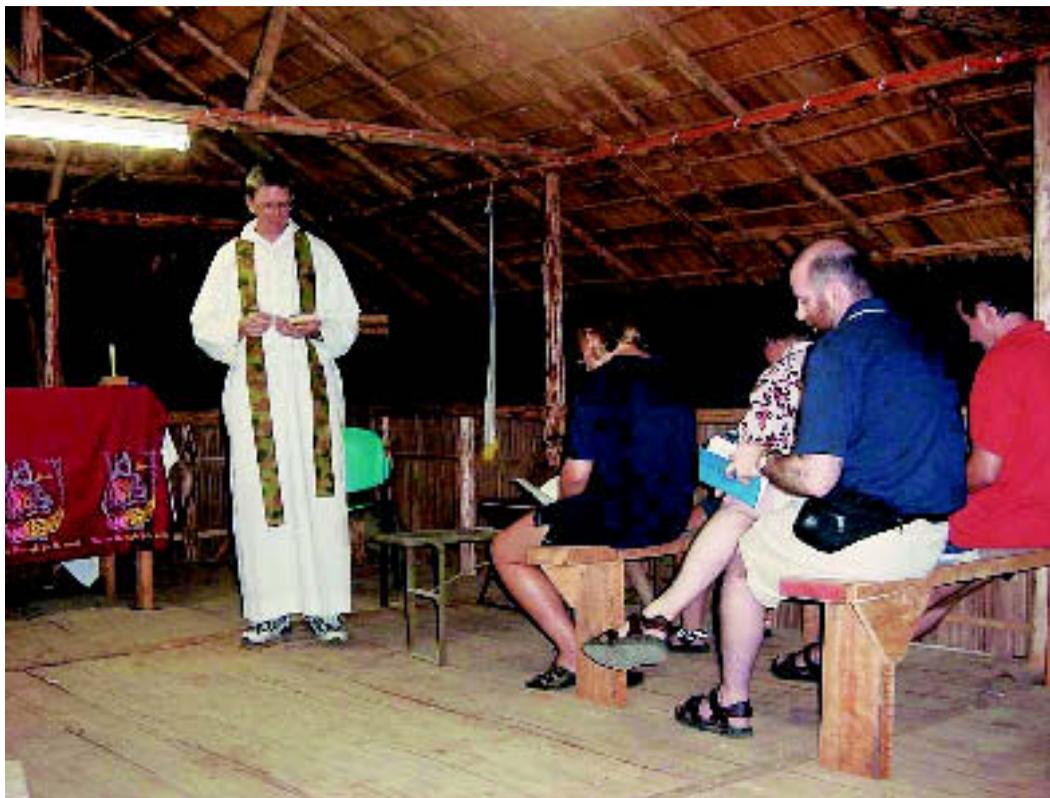
The elective units that are the most appropriate for enhancing the skills required of the chaplain are:

- Lead, manage and develop teams,
- Manage meetings,
- Provide leadership in the workplace,
- Establish effective workplace relationships, and
- Manage equity and diversity.

Development Group at the Army Logistic Training Centre will develop the Training Management Packages enabling the instruction to take place for the attainment of these competencies. After completing the Diploma of Public Safety (Defence Chaplaincy), padres will be encouraged to complete a Master of Ministry. Not only will this enhance the professional development of chaplains, but it also carries the bonus of remuneration according to the competency level achieved. All Defence chaplains will now be trained to a basic common standard. ADF training has the advantage of reducing duplication of training in single Service establishments and thus saving significant costs. Another benefit will be the networking of chaplains across the Services. As padres attend various joint courses throughout their careers they will get to know each other and develop solid friendships. Those chaplains who have met their colleagues from another branch while on operational service will testify as to the value of mutual support and encouragement.

Training in the joint environment can only help padres to develop a far better understanding of each other's culture. With the high operational tempo of the ADF in recent years, chaplains, like all other Service personnel, are required to be ready to deploy at short notice. They need to be well prepared for this and the increasing likelihood of being called upon to minister to the religious and pastoral needs of personnel of other Services.

Recent examples of this have been the former chaplain's position at the Australian National Command Element in Dili, East Timor and chaplaincy involvement in Operation *Bali Assist*.



Service at Bougainville, 2001.

The ASNCE position was filled on a rotational basis, with the chaplain ministering spiritually and pastorally to all ADF personnel in his area of responsibility, regardless of Service. After the Bali bombing, five chaplains from the three arms of the ADF deployed to minister to victims and family members who had lost loved ones. Navy chaplains can find themselves in the situation where they are the closest padres to deployed Army or RAAF elements. Conversely, if a ship pulls alongside in an operational area, the land-based chaplains need to know protocols concerning contacting the crew and visiting the ship. An Army chaplain has previously deployed on HMAS *Manoora*, and tells of such experiences while on a steep learning curve. Over the years, many RAAF chaplains posted to Butterworth have been called upon to minister to Army personnel in the Rifle Company in Malaysia. A Combined Health Element presents another opportunity for a chaplain to provide support in a tri-Service environment. The

examples are many and varied, but such scenarios will be played out more and more if prevailing joint operational tempo continues. Providing the ADF with the option of interoperability between the three Chaplaincy Branches can only enhance the effectiveness with which chaplaincy services are delivered. In an emergency, efficiencies are to be gained from utilising the nearest or most readily available chaplain, irrespective of the uniform worn. Interchanging chaplains across the Services to fill vacancies in the short term and to gain broader experience may also be a viable option once joint training is in place.

On the home front, chaplains increasingly need more cultural awareness and versatility to minister to personnel of the three Services in ADF units such as ADFA and at RAAF Williams. Single Service training establishments such as ALTC and RAAF Wagga also have significant numbers of other Service personnel. The sailors, soldiers and airmen and women who

seek the counsel of padres will be comforted to know that they are trained to common standards and have a good working knowledge of how things are done by those wearing a different uniform. The training of military chaplains on an ADF basis “provides a bigger forum and pool for our commonalities to be expressed and explored” and it “enables us to build ‘cohorts’ of chaplains who know each other, thus enhancing cooperation in all matters of chaplaincy”.⁴

Although chaplains are small in number within Defence, most would agree that their presence is vital, and their influence significant. In the most extreme of situations, padres are people of God who bring calm and reason to situations of horror and devastation which war visits upon humanity. Speaking of the involvement of British chaplains in the recent war in Iraq, the Reverend Alan McDonald said:

Providing pastoral care for those who are in Iraq on our behalf is necessary. These chaplains are at the point of Crucifixion in the world today. They are in the sorest and

*most difficult place, and if they are able to listen to soldiers going through crises of conscience, they are performing a valuable role and ministry*⁵.

To do this effectively, chaplains need to be highly professional, faithful, adaptable and well trained. ADF Chaplaincy Training will be a great leap forward in achieving this and thus enhancing the operational effectiveness of the ADF.

NOTES

1. S. Wares, “Armed Forces” in Giles Legood (Ed), *Chaplaincy – The churches’ sector ministries*, Cassell, London 1999, p. 62.
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3. Donald W. Hadley and Gerald T. Richards, *Ministry with the Military. A guide for churches and chaplains*, Baker Book House, Michigan, 1992, p. 26.
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Employment of Australian Helicopters in Vietnam: Strategic Failure, Operational Pragmatism, and Tactical Success

By Lieutenant Colonel Chris Field

There is little doubt that joint consultation and planning at all levels with the RAAF was one of the ingredients of our success in Vietnam.¹

Australian Army Training Information Bulletin No. 69 (1972)
Infantry Battalion Lessons from Vietnam 1965-71

This article examines what the initial expectations of the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) and Australian Army strategic leadership were with regards to the potential employment of Australian Defence Force (ADF) UH-1 battlefield helicopters in Vietnam, and how the subsequent operational and tactical employment of ADF UH-1 battlefield helicopters differed from original expectations. Prior to and during the Vietnam conflict, strategic level leaders in the RAAF saw the UH-1 Iroquois battlefield helicopters as a search and rescue and limited ground support platform, whereas the Australian Army leadership envisioned airmobile roles for the aircraft; as the conflict progressed, and despite strategic disagreement, operational and tactical level leaders used personal relationships and mission focus to enable the effective joint employment of the UH-1 platform.

At the strategic levels – represented primarily by the Australian Government and heads of Service (Chief of the General Staff and Chief of the Air Staff) – expectations for the employment of ADF UH-1 Iroquois battlefield helicopters in Vietnam held by the RAAF and the Australian Army were wildly divergent for the entire conflict. The RAAF leadership saw ADF UH-1 platforms as primarily designed for search and rescue tasks, with a limited role in supporting Army ground operations. In contrast, leaders in the Australian Government and the Army envisioned the RAAF UH-1 battlefield helicopters as being capable of performing in a sophisticated airmobile role. The disparate views of RAAF and Army strategic leadership on the employment of the UH-1 platforms presented a serious challenge with regards to fighting the Vietnam conflict at the operational and tactical levels.

Operational planning was conducted at Commander Australian Forces in Vietnam and Commander Australian Task Force levels; tactical planning was conducted at the Australian Task Force and all remaining unit/sub-unit levels.

At these levels, leaders and key personnel were able to overcome the limited RAAF strategic view of UH-1 battlefield helicopter employment while simultaneously tempering the expansionist Australian Army view in order to develop a pragmatic and robust version of Australian airmobile doctrine. Ultimately the operational and tactical employment of the UH-1 battlefield helicopter by relatively junior Australian leaders, forged on the battlefields of Vietnam, overcame Australian strategic friction and allowed operational and tactical airmobile innovation in accordance with the Australian way of war.

UH-1 Employment in Vietnam: RAAF Strategic Expectations

Australia's *Strategic Basis of Defence Policy* review conducted in 1959 had emphasized the need for the ADF to be compatible with forces of Australia's allies, and included a recommendation to purchase 24 battlefield helicopters: the UH-1 Iroquois.² This helicopter began service with the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) in 1962 when 16 aircraft were bought for support of ground force operations and eight were bought for search-and-rescue

tasks; but, the RAAF showed little interest in the former task, which from the Army's perspective was the helicopter's primary function.

As Chris Coulthard-Clark explains:

*[In 1966] the [RAAF] helicopter arm was a relatively new accretion to Air Force capabilities. No. 9 Squadron had come into being just five years earlier, **primarily as a search and rescue outfit** [emphasis added]. Although [by 1966] the role of the unit had been amended to reflect the fact that cooperation with Army represented an additional important function, the full import of this change was still being worked through. The value of the helicopter was, after all, not immediately apparent in a service dominated by the view that it was bombers and above all fighters which made an air force.³*

Therefore, from the outset, the RAAF did not consider that UH-1 battlefield helicopters would be used for airmobile warfare but rather a more restricted role of search and rescue and limited support to Army ground operations. In 1965, when Lieutenant General Sir John Wilton, Chief of the General Staff (CGS),⁴ suggested that a detachment of two RAAF UH-1 Iroquois be deployed to Vietnam to acquire experience of operations there before a larger Australian ground force commitment, the CAS – Air Marshal Sir Alister Murdoch – refused the request.⁵

Wilton, basing his observations on the evolution of airmobile operations in Vietnam, explained to Murdoch that the tactical and logistic support provided by utility helicopters was now considered essential for an army's maneuvering elements. Wilton appreciated that a UH-1 deployment to Vietnam would place some strain on the RAAF's limited rotary-wing assets, and therefore offered to accept a reduced level of helicopter support in Australia. Murdoch was not interested in Wilton's proposal, which he "casually dismissed" in what has been described as "an extraordinary and ill-considered response".⁶

RAAF intransigence alienated many Australian Army officers who were convinced that the only means by which Army aviation needs could be met were for those assets to be controlled by the Army:⁷

*Wilton had every right to tell Murdoch, as he did, that he found the RAAF's attitude difficult to accept, just as he had every right to tell him that because the UH-1 Iroquois had been purchased primarily to support the Army, the sooner that happened **in an operational situation** the better.⁸*

Murdoch's ill-advised attitude was to be overruled by the Cabinet of the Australian Federal Government when in late 1965 it was decided to increase Australia's involvement in Vietnam to a task-force (brigade) size, making the deployment of RAAF helicopters inevitable.⁹

Clearly RAAF and Australian Army leaders at the strategic level had little understanding of each other's position. Murdoch appears to have been thinking in accordance with the aforementioned RAAF intention that the UH-1 battlefield helicopters be employed in the search and rescue and ground support roles. In contrast Army leaders, such as Wilton, appeared to be in danger of becoming enamoured with thoughts of massive United States (US) style air assaults. It seems remarkable that senior Australian leadership, such as ministers in the Australian Government or the Chief of the Defence Force Staff, failed to identify and then reconcile the fundamentally different perceptions of UH-1 battlefield helicopter employment held by the RAAF and the Army. This failure in strategic leadership is an example of how poorly prepared Australian leaders were for the intellectual challenge of joint operations during the Vietnam conflict. This failure left a vacuum in which operational and tactical leaders ultimately provided joint leadership and joint solutions on the battlefields of Vietnam.

UH-1 Employment in Vietnam: Australian Army Strategic Expectations

The Australian Army had previously made use of helicopters in operations during the Korean War, when the aircraft were mainly used for casualty evacuation, and during operations in Malaya and Borneo where helicopters provided a resupply capability in rugged or otherwise inaccessible terrain.¹⁰ Hence, based on historical experience and deductive reasoning, the RAAF considered that future helicopter operations would reflect operations that occurred in the past.

Therefore when the Australian Government of Sir Robert Menzies deployed the 1st Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment (1 RAR), to join the US 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) at Bien Hoa Air Base, in June 1965, as its third manoeuvre battalion,¹¹ Australian Army and RAAF leadership were suddenly exposed to unfamiliar and unpracticed warfare that was experimental by even US standards.¹²

Here lay the essential dilemma of the ADF's employment of battlefield helicopters in Vietnam: while leaders at government and Army strategic level saw great utility in the employment of battlefield helicopters in the Vietnam conflict; the Army's experience with airmobile warfare was limited to 1 RAR's deployment with the US 173rd Airborne Brigade in 1965-66; the RAAF were uncommitted to airmobile warfare; and, Australian airmobile doctrine was only to be developed based on experiences during the Vietnam conflict. Therefore a *Catch-22* situation existed: the Army wanted to conduct airmobile operations with little experience and less available doctrine, but could not gain airmobile skills or write doctrine without the full support of a reticent RAAF who were focused on limited roles for the helicopters. Overarching this dilemma was Service rivalry at the highest levels within the RAAF and Army, all of which presented enormous challenges to the commanders, staff, aircrews, and soldiers who eventually were expected to operate the helicopters in an operational environment.

Significantly, 1 RAR had little opportunity to train with battlefield helicopters before it was sent to Vietnam, and the 173rd Airborne Brigade's employment of airmobile warfare, with its lavish use of helicopters and artillery fire support, was unfamiliar to the Australians, who traditionally operated in peacetime in a climate of "privation rather than plenty".¹³ Ultimately Australia's first exposure to airmobile operations, while necessary to bolster the strategic relationship between Australia and the US, was of little practical value with regards to preparing the Australians for operations using RAAF airframes which offered a rudimentary and less complete form of air mobility.¹⁴ This lesson was not lost on the RAAF who, in 1966, were to place significant

restrictions on the employment of the UH-1 battlefield helicopters in support of Army operations.

In June 1966, 1 RAR returned to Australia, having been exposed to a high-end version of US-style airmobile operations. The challenge now, as Australia commenced independent operations in the Phuoc Tuy Province, was for the ADF to lay aside strategic inter-Service myopia and capitalise on this experience, especially with regards to the joint use of RAAF rotary wing assets, while adapting to the less resource intensive Australian way of war.

UH-1 Employment in Vietnam: Operational Pragmatism Leads to Tactical Success

Arriving in Vietnam on 6 June 1966, the early operational service of No. 9 Squadron (UH-1) convinced many members of the Australian Army that the RAAF were unprepared for the nature of operations in Vietnam by allegedly failing to support Army units in the manner needed.¹⁵ Alan Stephens, in his volume *The Royal Australian Air Force*, has described the experience of No. 9 Squadron during its first three months in Vietnam as an "inter-Service disaster".¹⁶ Immediately creating friction between the Army and the RAAF was that No. 9 Squadron arrived in Vietnam unprepared to support airmobile warfare: only two aircraft were fitted with armoured seats; none with door gun mounts; and the aircrew did not have upper-body protection (flak jackets).¹⁷

Compounding the unpreparedness of No. 9 Squadron was the appointment of the two senior RAAF officers in Vietnam, Air Commodore J. Dowling and Group Captain P.F. Raw, neither of whom had adequate experience in air-land warfare.¹⁸ Dowling was appointed as deputy commander of Australian Forces in Vietnam, although as described by the commander of Australian Forces in Vietnam, Major General K. Mackay: Dowling "knew little of airmobile operations, let alone land warfare".¹⁹ Similarly, Group Captain Raw's background as a RAAF bomber pilot was of little relevance to the job of Australian Task Force (ATF) Air Commander, where he struggled to make the decisions demanded by tactical air-land operations.²⁰ Admittedly the RAAF lacked helicopter-qualified

senior officers, but prudence may have suggested that the RAAF Air Board appoint an officer qualified on fixed-wing tactical transport aircraft, who was also thoroughly familiar with air-land warfare.²¹

Aircraft unpreparedness and senior officer appointments indicate that the RAAF had not properly thought through potential responsibilities in Vietnam. The Department of Air Organisation Directive issued to No. 9 Squadron before it left Australia confirms this point. The Directive placed constraints on helicopter operations, which were later to become “a source of intense dissatisfaction within the [Australian] Army”.²² No. 9 Squadron was authorised to conduct “the lift of troops from a secure staging area to a landing zone that is relatively secure and [where] enemy resistance is not expected,” and “from an operation area to a secure staging area when enemy resistance is anticipated only on the last lift from the landing zone”.²³

The vulnerability of the helicopters and the constraints of the Organisational Directives – which ironically Wing Commander Scott, the commanding officer (CO) of No. 9 Squadron, had helped to draft – forced Wing Commander Scott to review individual tasks very carefully so that crews with inadequate protection were not exposed to a high risk of ground fire. In turn, this placed Group Captain Raw in conflict with the ATF Commander, Brigadier O.D. Jackson who had “operational control of major [Australian] Army and RAAF combat elements [in Vietnam]”, and therefore was in a position to demand robust operational support for his ground combat elements.²⁴

When Air Marshal Murdoch visited Vietnam in August 1966, Brigadier Jackson told him that No. 9 Squadron was not providing the support the Army wanted.²⁵ Jackson’s comment must have struck a chord with the CAS who had rebutted Wilton’s proposal in 1965 to: “send two UH-1 Iroquois to Vietnam in order to gain experience”.

Ian McNeill and Alan Stephens claim that the tactical turning-point in relations between the RAAF and the Australian Army with regards to battlefield helicopter operations occurred during the same month as Murdoch’s visit. Ironically, it

was not Murdoch who caused the change, but rather the battle of Long Tan near the ATF base at Nui Dat, during which two No. 9 Squadron crews provided brave and skilful support in resupplying the ground combat elements which helped 120 Australians hold out against 2000 enemy troops until reinforcements arrived.²⁶ Therefore RAAF and Army leaders at the operational level, combined with aircrew and soldiers at the tactical level had achieved a level of cooperation and interoperability in just over two months, which RAAF and Army leaders at the strategic level had been unable to emulate in four years of bickering and inter-Service rivalry.

Tactical Cooperation between the RAAF and Australian Army

The United States, with its concept of close suppressive fire by aerial gunships and fighter bombers escorting waves of assault helicopters, using a combined arms organisation designed and structured to rely on the shock and fury of vertical helicopter attack to deliver its frontline troops, was only in the nascence of developing airmobile doctrine during 1965-66.²⁷ Australia did not have the resources to match the US air assault methods being developed and employed in Vietnam. Indeed, it was rare for the ATF to “prepare” landing zones (LZ) by air strike and artillery fire. Instead it was preferred to use “surprise gained by aircraft suddenly landing on an LZ, [which] outweighed the value of heavy preparation, particularly as the enemy threat diminished within the [Phuoc Tuy] province”.²⁸

While the ATF system, which existed from 1966, provided for unity of command over ATF assets in Vietnam, and Australia possessed some elements required to conduct airmobile operations, there was no formal integration of all combat elements using true air mobile concepts. Instead the Australians worked as distinct parts with: infantry battalions normally deploying on airmobile operations with integrated artillery, engineer, communications, and logistics capabilities; Australian Army Aviation elements providing aerial reconnaissance, command and control, and liaison; and, the RAAF providing troop lift, logistics resupply, medical support, and fire support from light fire teams.²⁹ In addition, US medium and heavy lift helicopters to move

artillery and heavier supplies and close air support from jets and attack helicopters were required in all but the most rudimentary Australian airmobile operations. Therefore the Australian *modus operandi* was based on attempting to synchronise ground combat elements, Army air, RAAF air, as well as the support of US assets. This challenge, not fully understood by either the Australian Army or RAAF in 1966 whose leaders were focusing on inter-Service rivalries, only served to unnecessarily cause friction between Australian strategic and operational leaders during the conflict in Vietnam.

Stephens suggests that in 1966 some Australian Army commanders had little understanding of the doctrinal differences which would inevitably arise between air support provided by the Americans with their hundreds of helicopters, and by Australians with their eight aircraft. As a result CO No. 9 Squadron Wing Commander Scott's attempts to explain to senior Army officers that tactics such as mass airborne assaults simply were not feasible as Australia lacked the airframes and large numbers of soldiers "fell on deaf ears" as Scott explained: "anyone who expected me to overwhelm anyone with six helicopters beats the hell out of me".³⁰

Stephens further claims that the Australian Army's attitude towards RAAF doctrine represented a "considerable double standard".³¹ Following 1 RAR's service with the US 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) in 1965, it was decided to increase Australia's commitment from a battalion to task-force (brigade) size primarily because the CGS General Wilton and his senior advisers "believed United States [ground operations] doctrine was flawed".³² By deploying an independent task force, including RAAF battlefield helicopters, Australian troops would be able to "employ their own operational concepts and procedures, which were regarded by Australian strategists as superior to United States doctrine in Vietnam".³³ Paradoxically, the Australian strategic leadership simultaneously rejected US Army doctrine for ground operations, yet endorsed nascent US doctrine for air operations: an area in which Australia's senior Army leadership had very little experience.³⁴

Therefore, despite Australian intentions of deploying a task force in order to conduct independent operations, and as a corollary the Australian Army's insistence that the RAAF provide robust airmobile support, the simple facts were that Australia did not have the resources to conduct true independent operations. The leadership of the Australian Army appears to have had difficulty in comprehending that the RAAF battlefield helicopters were a fragile and very limited resource. This lack of inter-Service empathy and understanding, especially at the strategic level, was to present great and largely unnecessary challenges to Australian operational and tactical commanders and planners.

Air Mission Planning

In Australia after 1965, infantry battalions received sufficient notice in order to allow them to conduct rigorous training in preparation for Vietnam. With the bulk of Australia's UH-1 Iroquois deployed on operations, the battalions trained for airmobile operations using wooden mock-ups of helicopters, and often troops deployed on exercises in Land Rovers to simulate helicopter insertions.³⁵ The aim was to train soldiers and staff in the key planning aspects of airmobile warfare, albeit on a stringent budget. However, reflecting the inexperience and uncertainty apparent in the senior ranks of the Army, at the tactical level "there had been a tendency within the infantry to regard the employment of air support as a rather difficult task shrouded in mystery". This trepidation was overcome by the Army's approach that "as with any other support, all that is required to make effective use of air support is a good knowledge of its characteristics and limitations, and common sense on behalf of the user".³⁶

This statement overly simplifies the approach taken by infantry battalions in the employment and control of air resources. Ultimately the ATF established Standard Operating Procedures, in lieu of formal doctrine, which covered major aspects of operations in Vietnam, including airmobile operations. Centralised control of air assets was critical for the efficient operation of aircraft, and the ATF Joint Air Cell at Task Force Headquarters, Nui Dat, affected this control. The Joint Air Cell allocated priorities to request and

task aircraft to provide, most effectively and economically, the type of air support needed.³⁷

ATF air mission planning became increasingly sophisticated and “time spent in planning varied from days, in the case of a deliberate planned operation, to minutes in the case of troops in a contact situation”. A “joint planning/briefing conference” was normally conducted where the ground commander; air mission commander; light-fire team commander; Forward Air Controller; battalion operations officer; battery commander; and the ATF air operations officer would attend.³⁸ In normal circumstances the joint conference was held 24 hours prior to the operation, where the battalion plan would be presented in outline and the air contribution detailed to participants. The battery commander would also brief fire plan timings and safe areas for aircraft to hold in, or approach from, prior to being employed. The result of the joint conference was agreement between the ground commander and the air mission commander, with any adjustments made for technical or safety reasons.³⁹

The evolution of this joint planning process achieved three key outcomes. Primarily, the friction that had initially existed between the ATF Commander and the ATF Air Commander was minimised because commanders and staff at the tactical level were jointly planning operations. The next outcome was the steady increase in task effectiveness of ATF airmobile operations once joint operational planning teams were established, and finally, air mission planning in Vietnam established a long term impact on the ADF’s ability to conduct joint missions. The “joint planning/briefing conference” as developed in Vietnam is the direct antecedent of present day similar joint planning teams and permanent deployable joint force headquarters (DJFHQ) that exist in the ADF’s Land and Maritime component commands.⁴⁰ Validation of this joint concept was that the Land focused DJFHQ led and commanded the 22-nation mission to establish order in East Timor in September 1999.⁴¹

ATF Operations with No. 9 Squadron

As the ATF consolidated its control over Phuoc Tuy province the Army’s dependence on,

and cooperation with, No. 9 Squadron grew. In July 1968, with the arrival of a third battalion for the task-force, the RAAF doubled the squadron’s size to 16 airframes in order to provide a simultaneous airlift for one infantry company. As troop numbers increased, RAAF tasks continued in the same vein through: transporting troops; resupplying troops in the field; inserting and extracting Special Air Service (SAS) patrols; and conducting medical evacuations.⁴²

The Australian Government’s summary of RAAF helicopter support to Army operations in 1969 was:

[S]orties flown by No. 9 Squadron in troop lift, logistic support, aeromedical evacuation and other transport support tasks reached the 178,000 mark. The armed helicopters of No. 9 Squadron continued very successfully to provide suppressive fire support to a variety of Army operations. “Gunship” crews have reached a high degree of accuracy and skill in such roles as cover for troop insertions and extractions, escort for medevac missions, support for troops in contact and other tasks.⁴³

By the latter stages of the Vietnam conflict, the Australian Army had also adapted procedures, communications, and organisation designed to embrace a more integrated approach to airmobile operations. The 2nd Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment (2 RAR) when preparing for a tour of Vietnam in 1970-71, concentrated on changing communications and administrative procedures in order to recognise that battlefield helicopters were heavily used for logistic support in Vietnam. Changes included the provision of a dedicated administration/air radio net; and, the development of a base area logistics cell in order to coordinate requests for supply and dispatch of items to troops in the field. In addition teams were established in each company for the control of sub-unit LZs, the use of ground-to-air radio communication, and the control of aircraft by visual signal.⁴⁴ Clearly Australian Army units had learnt the value of correctly integrating airmobile and helicopter capabilities into tactical plans, and techniques in training had improved in order to ensure better joint and combined interaction with the pilots and

aircraft. It is apparent that personnel at the tactical level realized the crucial nexus that needed to exist between the Army and the RAAF and allowed operational expertise to flourish, thus overcoming Service rivalries at the strategic level.

One summary of the joint integration of Army and RAAF elements during the Vietnam conflict indicated that:

RAAF and Army cooperation in Vietnam reached a very high standard, with members of each Service fully aware of the characteristics and problems of the other. It was acknowledged that success in Counter-Revolutionary Warfare is often dependent to a great degree on the ability of relatively junior army commanders to plan and execute operations with air support . . . and that if success is to be achieved without heavy casualties to troops and aircraft, the fundamentals of joint operations must be clearly understood [emphasis added].⁴⁵

UH-1 Employment: The Failure to Reconcile Strategic Friction

Despite operational and tactical cooperation and the emergence of effective joint doctrine for the employment of battlefield helicopters, Service rivalry continued to prevent the convergence of strategic views within the ADF. The RAAF gave the Army no reason to believe that it was cognisant of Army needs when in the first half of 1969 the CAS, Air Marshal Murdoch, rejected the requests of the CGS, Lieutenant General Sir Thomas Daly, that the RAAF acquire helicopter gunships.⁴⁶ Indeed, Murdoch stated privately that such aircraft had the lowest priority. As with the deployment of UH-1 Iroquois to Vietnam in 1966, the Army got its way in early 1970 when funds were authorised for the purchase of gunships, although withdrawal from Vietnam meant the acquisition was cancelled.⁴⁷ However, there was a long and lasting impression that the Army's interests could not be entrusted to the RAAF, which possibly lay behind the 1986 decision to transfer responsibility for battlefield helicopters from the RAAF to Army aviation.⁴⁸

Ultimately, the joint operational and tactical relationships that had developed from 1966 between the Australian Army and the RAAF with regards to airmobile operations, and then

nurtured and expanded in the 1970s and early 1980s, were broken in November 1986 when it was announced: that the transfer of the ADF's fleet of "battlefield" helicopters from the RAAF to the Army would occur.⁴⁹ Speculation on this decision remains outside the scope of this article, although Stephens has suggested that:

It seems probable that the seeds of the decision were sown in Vietnam in 1966 when, as a consequence of the RAAF's perceived reluctance to give the Army the support it wanted, [it was] resolved eventually [for the Army] to gain control of the helicopters.⁵⁰

Conclusion

This article has proved the thesis that: Prior to and during the Vietnam conflict, strategic level leaders in the RAAF saw the UH-1 Iroquois battlefield helicopters as a search and rescue and limited ground support platform, whereas the Australian Army leadership envisioned airmobile roles for the aircraft; as the conflict progressed, and despite strategic disagreement, operational and tactical level leaders used personal relationships and mission focus to enable the effective joint employment of the UH-1 platform.

At the strategic level, expectations for the employment of UH-1 Iroquois battlefield helicopters in Vietnam by the RAAF and the Australian Army were wildly divergent and were not fully reconciled during the entire conflict. This created an intellectual vacuum into which Australian Army and RAAF operational and tactical commanders, staff, soldiers, and aircrew were able to move in order to develop excellent working relationships as the Vietnam conflict progressed. In turn the operational and tactical leaders and personnel were able to develop a sophisticated set of SOPs which form the basis of ADF airmobile doctrine today. This article has argued that Australian servicemen at the operational and tactical levels showed far greater acumen with regards to joint helicopter operations in Vietnam, than did the myopic and tribally focused Service leaders at the strategic level who as late as 1969 were still arguing over the direction of rotary wing development in the ADF.

The ADF's lessons with regards to strategic expectations for the use, introduction, and

operational employment of the UH-1 battlefield helicopter in Vietnam are instructive for current doctrinal development. Operational and tactical commanders, staff, and Service personnel, when they focus on their mission and end state, are able to ensure operational and tactical success despite friction which may exist at the strategic level. Operational and tactical level operators can make a difference, and can ultimately be the difference between winning or losing the next war.

NOTES

1. Australian Army, Training Information Bulletin No. 69 (1972), *Infantry Battalion Lessons from Vietnam 1965-71*, Headquarters Training Command, (Revised 1988), p. 4-1.
2. J. Grey, *The Australian Army*, The Australian Centenary History of Defence, Volume I, Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 205. Bennett, J., A2 – Bell UH-1 Iroquois, Australian Aviation, October 1992, pp. 30. Given various aircraft upgrades and replacements, this article will use the generic Iroquois designator – UH-1 – to describe the battlefield helicopter used in Vietnam. The RAAF initially received UH-1B Iroquois from the US in October 1962, which were to be replaced by the enlarged version of the Iroquois, the UH-1D from 1966-67. The larger cabin of the “Delta” enabled carriage of an additional four passengers. However the UH-1D was soon superseded in production by the UH-1H which had the same enlarged cabin powered by an improved engine. RAAF “Deltas” were later retrofitted to this “Hotel” standard. During 1968, 16 UH-1H entered service with the RAAF in Vietnam.
3. J. Grey, op. cit., p. 216, and A. Stephens, *The Royal Australian Air Force*, The Australian Centenary History of Defence, Volume II, Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 264. J. Grey, & P. Dennis, (Ed), *From Past to Future – The Australian Experience of Land/Air Operations*, Australian Defence Force Academy, 1995, p. 136.
4. Chief of the General Staff equated to Chief of Army.
5. J. Grey, op. cit., p. 216, and A. Stephens, op. cit., p. 264.
6. A. Stephens, op. cit., p. 264. Chris Coulthard-Clark describes Murdoch’s attitude as “tactless at best” in J. Grey, & P. Dennis, (Ed), op. cit., p. 135.
7. J. Grey, op. cit., p. 216, and A. Stephens, op. cit., p. 264.
8. A. Stephens, op. cit., p. 264.
9. *ibid.*, p. 264.
10. J. Grey, *The Australian Army*, The Australian Centenary History of Defence, Volume I, Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 216.
11. D. Horner, (Ed), *Duty First – The Royal Australian Regiment in War and Peace*, Allen & Unwin, 1990, p. 207.
12. R. Breen, *First to Fight: Australian Diggers, NZ Kiwis, and US Paratroopers in Vietnam, 1965-66*, Allen & Unwin, 1988, p. 21. “As a parachute brigade the 173rd [US 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate)] had not trained extensively with helicopters before [deploying to Vietnam] and had not developed and practiced tactics to incorporate them into their operations. The first manoeuvres with using helicopters were chaotic. Throughout May [1965] the Paratroopers practiced the tactics of airborne warfare for the first time.”
13. J. Grey, op. cit., p. 215. R. Breen, op. cit., p. 16: Prior to deploying to Vietnam in April 1965 on exercise *Sky High II* in the Gospers area north of Sydney “Only four UH1B helicopters were available to familiarise [1 RAR] soldiers in heliborne transport . . . Two months after the exercise, 1 RAR was conducting sophisticated airborne operations involving hundreds of helicopters and the employment of the firepower of artillery, helicopter gunships, and fighter ground attack aircraft. Imagination and initiative can overcome some shortages of training resources but the fact remains that 1 RAR was not given the opportunity nor the resources to prepare for war. However the men of 1 RAR persevered; they did not dwell on the situation and accepted the deficiencies as being the norm.”
14. For example the RAAF did not, in 1965, possess ground attack helicopters; and, did not possess medium lift helicopters during the entire Vietnam conflict.
15. Initially No. 9 Squadron deployed to Vietnam with eight UH-1 Iroquois aircraft, and were located in Vung Tau the ADF logistics base, not at Nui Dat with the Australian Task Force ground combat elements. However the UH-1 Iroquois used Nui Dat’s *Kangaroo Pad* as their forward field on a daily basis. Commonwealth of Australia, *Defence Report 1966*, Canberra, 1966, p. 9 and J. Grey, J., & P. Dennis, (Ed), op. cit., p. 130. Deployment of No. 9 Squadron “forward in the operational base [Nui Dat], with no lights permitted at night for their maintenance, and wholly vulnerable to destruction by mortar fire, to say nothing of the large fuel storage dumps, would have been wholly impracticable from the point of view of the squadron.” I.McNeill, *To*

Long Tan: the Australian Army and the Vietnam War 1950-1966, from *The Official History of Australia's involvement in Southeast Asian Conflicts, 1948-1975*, Allen & Unwin, 1993, p. 300.

16. A. Stephens, op. cit., p. 263.
17. *ibid.*, p. 265.
18. *ibid.*
19. *ibid.* Air Commodore Dowling was also the "Commander of the RAAF component" in Vietnam. Commonwealth of Australia, *Defence Report 1966*, Canberra, 1966, p. 8.
20. "Group Captain Raw, the Task Force Air Commander, suggested that his title within the ATF be: Task Force Air Support Officer, in clearer recognition of what that position entailed, but his stance of moderation and reason was not shared by his RAAF seniors back in Canberra." J. Grey, & P. Dennis, (Ed), op. cit., p. 138.
21. A. Stephens, op. cit., p. 266.
22. *ibid.*
23. *ibid.*, p. 266 and p. 330. Cited from RAAF Department of Air Organisation Directives 9/66, 18 April 1966, and 11/66, 6 May 1966.
24. *ibid.*, p. 266 and Commonwealth of Australia, *Defence Report 1966*, Canberra, 1966, p. 8.
25. A. Stephens, op. cit., p. 267.
26. I. McNeill, op. cit., p. 322, states that with regards to ammunition resupply to the beleaguered D Company 6 RAR at Long Tan, RAAF support was initially blocked by Group Captain Raw, the Australian Task Force Air Commander, who was "not prepared to risk the [Iroquois helicopters] hovering at tree-top height in such poor flying conditions [a monsoonal shower at dusk] and exposed to heavy ground fire. They would be sitting ducks".
To which Brigadier Jackson responded "Well, I'm about to lose a company; what the hell's a few more choppers and a few more pilots". Jackson sent for the US Army Aviation liaison officer. "Well, Brigadier," said the American, "I daresay my guys can help out." He thought he could have helicopters at Nui Dat in twenty minutes."
"[I]n the face of the US response [Raw] saw no real alternative but to [ignore The Department of Air Organisation Directives previously issued to No. 9 Squadron regarding restrictions on flight operations] offer the RAAF aircraft. He did this and the mission was eminently successful."
A. Stephens, op. cit., p. 268. "RAAF helicopters played an important part in the battle of Long Tan in Phuoc Tuy Province in August 1966 when they dropped urgently needed ammunition and flew wounded soldiers back to hospital. In many tasks in support of Australian troops they [RAAF helicopters] have frequently been under fire." [Italics added], Commonwealth of Australia, *Defence Report 1967*, Canberra, 1967, p. 37. An example of the importance of helicopters to Australian ground combat elements in Vietnam was: "The Battalion [6 RAR] used choppers extensively in every operation." I. Williams, B. Wickens & D. Sabben, *Vietnam – A Pictorial History of the Sixth Battalion The Royal Australian Regiment 1966-1967*, Printcraft Press, Brookvale, Sydney, 1967, p. 100.
27. S.L. Stanton, *The 1st Cav in Vietnam – Anatomy of a Division*, Presidio, California, 1999, p. 1.
D.F. Aumuller, MAJ, USMC, *A Bridge Too Far: A Study of the testing of the airmobile concept and the subsequent deployment of the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) to Vietnam*, School of Advanced Warfighting, 1999, pp. 6. The US Army decided in January 1963 to activate and test the Air Assault Division concept. The tool used was the 11th Air Assault Division (test) and developed tactics, techniques, and procedures for executing traditional conventional missions, including economy of force, link-up, exploitation, mobile defense, and retrograde operations. Ultimately, "Army staffers were inundated with information on air mobility, but little of it was logically connected." After testing was complete, the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) was activated at Fort Benning, Georgia, on 15 June 1965, and on 19 June, it was ordered to deploy to Vietnam no later than 01 September 1965.
28. Australian Army, Training Information Bulletin No. 69, op. cit., p. 4-9. As a precaution, however, an on-call fire program was always prepared and a Light Fire Team accompanied the first sortie into the LZ, and stood by while succeeding sorties flew in.
29. J. Grey, op. cit., p. 216. In 1960 approval was given for the Army to acquire aircraft weighing up to 1820 kilograms for command and control, liaison, and reconnaissance purposes, and in 1964 responsibility for No. 16 Army Light Aircraft Squadron was transferred from the RAAF. This was followed in April 1966 by the formation of the 1st Aviation Regiment, and in July 1968 by the establishment of the Australian Army Aviation Corps. The light observation helicopter operated was the Bell Sioux.
Australian Army, Training Information Bulletin No. 69, op. cit., p. 3-42. "The Sioux helicopter was used for radio relay, liaison, map spotting companies, indicating targets for air strikes to FACs (Forward Air Controllers), and controlling

- artillery fire on enemy camps.” (1 RAR, Sept 1968).
30. A. Stephens, op. cit., p. 267 and McNeill, I., op. cit., p. 432.
 31. A. Stephens, op. cit., p. 267.
 32. *ibid.*
 33. *ibid.*
 34. J.M. Church, DSO, *Second to None – 2 RAR as the ANZAC Battalion in Vietnam, 1970-71*, Army Doctrine Centre, 1995, p. 5. Australian tactical commanders did, however, have criticisms of the US method of conducting airmobile operations. Church, on his reconnaissance to Vietnam before deploying with 2 RAR in 1970, observed an airmobile operation conducted by the US 9th Infantry Division. He was impressed with the “sight of two companies setting down simultaneously at two adjourning landing zones . . . [the] preliminary artillery fire and fighter ground attack (FGA) aircraft strafing the landing zones and immediate surrounds . . . [and] AH-1G Huey Cobra armed helicopters [providing] close fire support for the landings.” He was less impressed by the American command and control arrangement, which involved the battalion commander and brigade commander airborne in separate helicopters and both speaking on the battalion radio command net. On one occasion he heard the brigade commander give directions to a rifle company commander, and hence circumventing the battalion commander, as the assault progressed.
 35. D. Horner, (ed), op. cit., p. 193.
 36. Australian Army, Training Information Bulletin No. 69, op. cit., p.4-1.
 37. *ibid.*
 38. *ibid.*, p. 4-2.
 39. *ibid.*, p. 4-3.
 40. Deployable Joint Force Headquarters exist in Brisbane for land centric missions, and in Sydney for maritime centric missions.
 41. Despite apparent joint success, the operation in East Timor re-opened the issue of poor joint coordination between the RAAF and the Australian Army in the employment of battlefield helicopter assets. In East Timor the S70A Blackhawks were an asset owned by the Army, but controlled by the RAAF at INTERFET HQ level through the Joint Force Air Component Commander, a RAAF one-star. Unfortunately, RAAF inexperience in the employment of rotary wing assets was articulated in the 2 RAR post operational report from OPERATION STABILISE in East Timor:

Issue: The [Australian Army 3rd] Brigade Air Mobile Operations SOP was not followed during OP STABILISE;

Solution: The Brigade Air Liaison Officer [BALO] – [an RAAF fixed wing pilot who was intended fulfilled a similar role in East Timor as conducted by the Australian Task Force Air Commander in Vietnam] should attend Battalion Air Mobile Operations Training in 2000 so that he understands the difference between an Air Schedule [Air Tasking Order in US doctrine] and an Air Mobile Operation; and, 2 RAR should continue to follow Brigade SOPs, and continue to train with 5 Aviation Regiment [the Australian Army S70-A Blackhawk and CH-47 Chinook battalion] in the conduct of Air Mission Planning and Pilot Mission Briefs at all levels **including PI level.**

Action: BALO and Brigade S3 RAAF interference, at INTERFET and Brigade levels, in Army Operational procedures made planning Air Mobile Operations uncertain and dangerous because Brigade SOPs were ignored and ad hoc procedures based on the use of an Air Schedule were championed.

2 RAR Post Operational Report Deployment to East Timor – Sep 99 – Jan 00, Annex A, *Lessons Identified 2 RAR OP STABILISE – External Issues* – as at March 2000 [unsigned], p. A-4.
 42. A. Stephens, op. cit., p. 270. The UH-1 Iroquois were also used in support of psychological warfare objectives through seeding enemy dominated areas with propaganda leaflets, and in aerial spraying for passive and offensive purposes – especially with regards to the ATF’s anti-malarial program and in controlling vegetation growth at Nui Dat. Defoliation missions were also put to use in attacking crops and food gardens in enemy-held territory. Finally the aircraft were active in olfactory reconnaissance – that is, using an American device called the “people-sniffer” to detect enemy base camps under the jungle canopy and enable these to be attacked. J. Grey, P. & Dennis, (Ed), op. cit., p. 131.
 43. Commonwealth of Australia, *Defence Report 1970*, Canberra, 1970, p. 37.
 44. J.M. Church, DSO, op. cit., p. 31.
 45. Australian Army, Training Information Bulletin No. 69, op. cit., pp. 4-10.
 46. A. Stephens, op. cit., pp. 270. Initially No. 9 Squadron was supported, when flying into “hot” landing zones by US Army gunships; however the relationship was never entirely satisfactory. The necessary close cooperation was not always achieved, as the Americans were often unfamiliar with No. 9 Squadron’s techniques. Nor were the Americans always available. Consequently, four RAAF UH-1 Iroquois were modified to carry

twin fixed forward-firing 7.62 mm mini-guns and two seven-tube 2.75-inch rocket launchers, in addition to two twin door-mounted M60 free-firing machine-guns. The *Bushranger* gunships (named after their radio call-sign) could be returned to their troop-carrying configuration in about one hour.

47. Commonwealth of Australia, *Defence Report 1970*, Canberra, 1970, p. 6.

“Our tactical mobility and surveillance capability of our land forces will be improved by the decision to procure twelve CH47C Medium Lift Helicopters and *eleven Armed Helicopters* [italics added]. In addition, we will buy forty-two utility helicopters and eighty-four light helicopters to add to our strength and to provide for replacement of existing equipment over its period of service.”

Commonwealth of Australia, *Defence 2000 – Our Future Defence Force*, Defence Publishing Service, December 2000, p. 82. The issue of helicopter gunships for the ADF remained unresolved after Australia’s withdrawal from Vietnam. Armed UH-1H helicopters were retained but weapons and sighting systems varied little from those used in Vietnam. However, the Government White Paper, *Defence 2000 – Our Future Defence Force*, states that: “two squadrons (around 20-24 aircraft) of Armed Reconnaissance Helicopters are planned to enter service from 2004-05. These will constitute a major new capability for Army, providing deployable, flexible, high-precision, and highly mobile firepower and reconnaissance.”

48. J. Grey, op. cit., pp. 216.
49. A. Stephens, op. cit., p. 298.
50. *ibid.*

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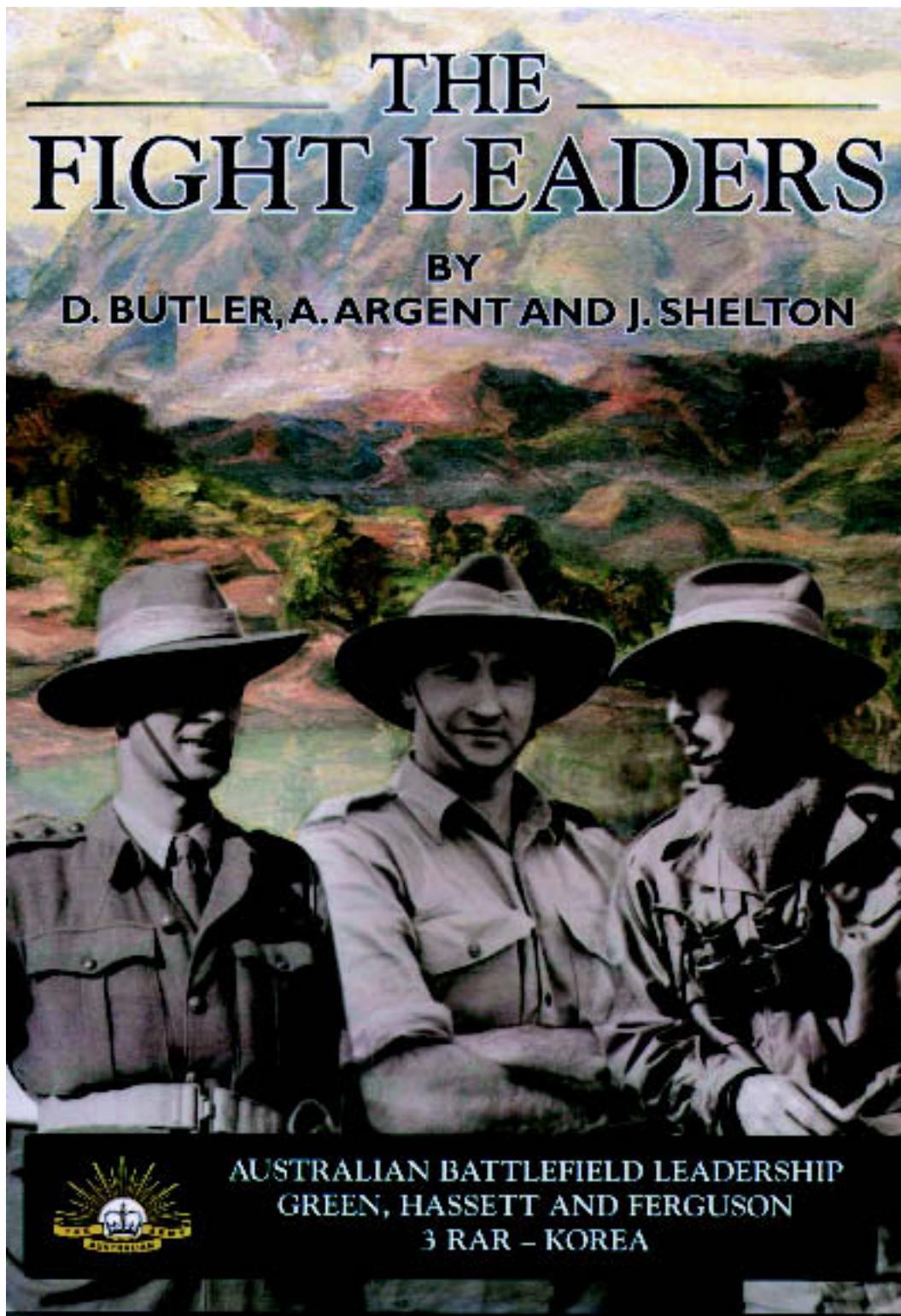
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THE FIGHT LEADERS

BY
D. BUTLER, A. ARGENT AND J. SHELTON



AUSTRALIAN BATTLEFIELD LEADERSHIP
GREEN, HASSETT AND FERGUSON
3 RAR – KOREA

Reviews

THE FIGHT LEADERS, Australian Battlefield Leadership – Green, Hassett and Ferguson 3 RAR – Korea by D. Butler, A. Argent and J. Sheldon, Australian Army History Collection, Army History Unit, September 2002.

Reviewed by Major Jamie Cotton

The Fight Leaders is an excellent book which I thoroughly enjoyed reading. It is a story by three authors of three commanding officers. The commanding officers led the Third Battalion the Royal Australia Regiment (3 RAR) during service in the Korean conflict and the authors served under their command.

A book such as this runs the danger of being a collection of three divergent biographies written in different styles that jar and distract the reader. This work avoids this not just because it is well written but by the threads that pull it together. Of these, the weft of the value of leadership and the warp of the profound unity in an infantry battalion, weave consistently through the whole book; the reader is left in no doubt as to their importance to achieving success in combat operations.

The book starts with an introduction by David Butler (who served in 3 RAR and was awarded the Silver Star while serving as a platoon commander) that develops an understanding of the factors and history that go into shaping the character of an Australian infantry battalion. Butler develops this section by providing quite detailed observations of the history of the First and Second AIF and by drawing on the personal experience of his service in 3 RAR. Butler identifies to the reader what it is that makes the unique nature of an Australian infantry battalion. I found this section an excellent and enlightening read. It takes the Australian military history that many of us already know and then develops this history to explain what most of us do not; what it is that makes the character of an Australian infantry battalion.

Butler then tells us his story of Lieutenant Colonel Charles Green who commanded 2/11 Bn during World War II and took command of 3 RAR during the occupation of Japan in August 1950. He led 3 RAR during the long advances in the early stages of the Korean conflict until his death on 1 November 1950 from injuries sustained from a shell attack on the battalion. Butler tells us of the values and actions of Green that mean he is revered by 3 RAR veterans to this day.

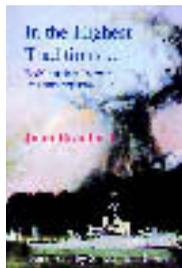
Alf Argent was a platoon commander in 3 RAR, and then became the Battalion Intelligence Officer. He tells us the story of Bruce Ferguson who was promoted from second in command of the battalion to command it after the short tenure of Lieutenant Colonel F.S. Walsh, who had been appointed command for a brief period after the death of Green. Argent explains the difficult start Ferguson had assuming command from Walsh, whose actions during the battle at Pakchon on 5 November 1950 had lost him the confidence of his brigade commander resulting in the dismissal of Walsh. Argent tells us how the firm and effective leadership from Ferguson had an immediate and positive effect on 3 RAR at a critical and difficult time. Ferguson managed to keep 3 RAR as a highly effective fighting force during a long and difficult withdrawal and achieve amazing success against overwhelming difficulties at the Battle of Kapyong. Argent tells us of the removal from command of Ferguson in June 1951 because of an apparent reluctance in Ferguson to replace officers and men in 3 RAR with reinforcements from Japan. That it would have been highly difficult to do so given the operational circumstances of the battalion at the time seems to have had little consideration. Also one of the conditions of service was that anyone who had been in 3 RAR in Japan for two years prior to September 1950 were eligible for re-posting after eight months in Korea. Ferguson was not offered his choice to stay with the battalion.

J.J. Shelton served in 3 RAR and served with A company until May 1952. He tells us of the command by Lieutenant Colonel Frank Hassett, concentrating on the first three months of his command of 3 RAR from his taking command after Ferguson in June 1951 up to the battle of Maryang San from 3-8 October 1951 which earned him a Distinguished Service Order. Ferguson had not been allowed the opportunity to conduct a hand-over with Hassett and had to overcome the challenge of quickly winning the trust of the battalion who had admired and trusted Ferguson and whose soldiers were wary of another change in commanding officers. Argent tells us of the professionalism, inspiring leadership and skills of Hassett that allowed him to do this at the same time as the difficult re-organisation resulting from the formation of the Commonwealth Division. At the same time Hassett had a number of key personnel changes in the battalion caused by the re-posting policy. Hassett overcame all these obstacles and went on to demonstrate his tactical skill with the highly successful attack at Maryang San which saw 3 RAR defeat one enemy regiment, and hold off against the counter attacks of another. Argent explains how the enthusiasm shown by Hassett and his quiet confidence infected 3 RAR, contributing greatly to the success of a highly audacious plan.

This book provides a fascinating insight into all that which contributes to make a fine infantry battalion in the best traditions of the Australian Army and of the specific men who shaped the history of 3 RAR during the Korean War. This book is a tribute to them, and those who served under their command. Although the book is of a history over half a century old, the message conveyed is very contemporary. This book is far more than a history and is highly recommended to all those who wish to understand, or serve in an infantry battalion and should be compulsory reading for all posted to the 3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment.

IN THE HIGHEST TRADITIONS . . . RAN HEROISM DARWIN 19 FEBRUARY 1942 by John Bradford, published by Seaview Press of Adelaide, South Australia (PO Box 234 Henley Beach SA 5022). A5 paperback of 224 pages, reasonably well illustrated, approx. \$35.00 (GST dependent).

Reviewed by Lieutenant Commander Greg Swinden, RAN



In the view of this Government, it's never too late to acknowledge that sort of heroism.

The bombing of Darwin on 19 February 1942 has often been described as a national day of shame. The heavy losses incurred, the minor losses suffered by the Japanese, the poor performance of their duty by many of the military personnel in Darwin, and the mass exodus south of most of the civilian population, has always been portrayed as the true story of the first Darwin raid.

While the actions of some ashore in the wake of the bombing have rightly been called into question this has unfortunately overshadowed the bravery and outstanding devotion to duty shown by the Naval personal (RAN, USN and Merchant Navy) both afloat and ashore in Darwin. Several other military personnel, civilian medical staff and public servants also carried out their duties in an exemplary manner. It is a pity that the actions of some military personnel in Darwin resulted in tarnishing the record of a good many "who got on with the job" and did it well.

John Bradford has produced a very good account of the raid, but more importantly has examined in detail the valour of the RAN personnel involved on that fateful day. Several received awards for bravery while others became victims of ineptitude and apathy at higher levels of the "paper trail". The silence of the Silent Service failed its personnel in this case.

He is quite scathing of the requirement for RAN nominations for honours and awards, during World War II requiring endorsement by the Admiralty and within a given time frame.

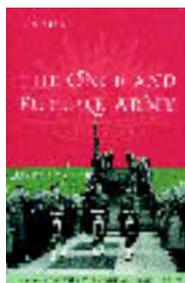
This he states has led to some acts of bravery going virtually unrecognised in the Darwin raid and the later sinkings of HMAS *Yarra* and HMAS *Armidale*. John also raises the now frequently asked question of retrospective awards for these men up to, and including, the award of the Victoria Cross for some.

John also looks at the affect of the raid on higher naval thinking at the time and the role it played in later operations in northern Australian waters. A new slant on the reasons for the loss of the corvette *Armidale* in December 1942, is put forward and makes interesting reading.

In the Highest Traditions includes a foreword by Sir Zelman Cowen (who was serving as a Naval officer in Darwin during 1942). This book is another very welcome addition to the history of the RAN and one that the higher levels of the Navy could learn from in how to recognise and, more importantly, reward skill and valour when it occurs.

THE ONCE AND FUTURE ARMY. A history of the Citizen Military Forces, 1947 – 74 by Dayton McCarthy, published by Oxford University Press, 2003. 303 pages, hard cover, illustrated. RRP A\$55.00/NZ\$69.95

Reviewed by Dr. Noel Sproles.



The Once and Future Army is a history of the Citizen Military Force, or CMF, from its inception in 1947 until it was replaced by the Army Reserve in 1974. Despite its title, this is not a book concerned exclusively with the CMF. Indeed it would not be possible for a

history such as this to isolate itself from what was happening in the Defence Force in general, and the Army in particular, over the same period. Nor is the story limited to the 27 years between 1947 and 1974 as it has been extended up until approximately the end of 2001 with a discussion, albeit in lesser detail, of the Army Reserve.

The author has divided his work into five parts, covering the periods 1947-59; 1960-64; 1965-72; an analysis of the Mellor Report; and an

examination of both the CMF officer corps and CMF membership in general. In this manner, he traces the CMF from its heyday in the early 1950s to its lowest point during the Vietnam War when it was, no doubt unjustly, considered by some as a haven for those seeking to avoid the risk of active service. In the process he discusses in detail the 1950s National Service scheme used to complement the CMF and the subsequent 1960s scheme to bolster the strength of the Regular Army. The effects of the Pentropic organisation in the early 1960s, the progressive development of the *Defence Act 1903*, and the refusal to send CMF units to Vietnam are also covered in some depth.

Each one of these five parts is written in such detail that they could stand by themselves as separate articles. Occasional, but annoying, repetition of arguments from one to another raises the suspicion that once they may have been separate works, but this does not detract from their value. The author has managed to present the CMF's history in a readable manner, and not as a dull list of one dry fact following another. Complementing all this is an extensive set of end notes, glossary, bibliography, and index.

The Once and Future Army advances the proposition that Australia's citizen soldiers have gone from being the mainstay of the Army, while being supplemented by regular soldiers, to the reverse situation where they are now supplementary to the Regular Army. Throughout the book there are several recurring themes used to support this contention such as the financial constraints affecting provision of equipment, facilities, and remuneration for the CMF. This is presented as an attempt by successive governments to get defence on the cheap at a time of full employment and a burgeoning economy. It is significant that it was finance, and not strategic need, that is seen as the driving force behind the manner in which the CMF was set up. As well, there were the statutory restrictions on the use of the CMF imposed by the *Defence Act*. While the CMF was presented as an expeditionary force, even at one stage as a 3rd AIF in being, the *Defence Act* severely curtailed its being used in such a role. The reluctance of the Government to recognise this seems a

paradox, especially as the restriction in the *Defence Act* on overseas service limited the availability of the militia during WWII. It is hard to believe that this, and the consequent difficulties that it caused, could have been forgotten by the policy makers of the day. Dayton McCarthy often expresses the view that the weakening of the connection between local units and their community, adversely affected not only the CMF's morale but undermined their traditional community support base. In his view, the CMF was the primary repository of the traditions and history of the Army and a source of community involvement and pride in the Army. Traditionally, the citizen forces have been drawn from a community based upon battalions readily identified with the locality, as opposed to the regular forces that do not have this intimate regional relationship. He feels that the Pentropic organisation experiment in particular, as well as centralised officer and recruit training, has served to weaken this connection to the detriment of the CMF. Finally, there is the theme of a political and strategic level failure to establish an exact role for the CMF. Without such a determination, it was not possible to establish the resources needed by the CMF and to institute a suitable training regime. The author posits that these all combined to bring about the downturn in the fortunes of the CMF.

Throughout the book, the reader will find items of particular interest. For instance, there is the little remembered episode in the early 1960s of a move to have a CMF officer appointed as the

Army's Chief of the General Staff. Events such as this are used to illustrate the antipathy believed by some to have existed between citizen and regular soldiers, particularly senior regular officers remembering past slights from their Service alongside the militia or AIF. Nor is the author uncritical of the citizen forces. When discussing the CMF officer corps, an interesting question is raised concerning the popular idea of citizen soldiers being, by nature, "brilliant amateurs". McCarthy queries, when considering the great Australian Army leaders in both World Wars who had previous citizen force experience, whether they should really be judged as professional rather than as citizen soldiers. He argues that their rise to prominence was the result of several years of full-time operational service, with the concomitant high levels of training and experience negating any claim to amateur or part-time status. An interesting point indeed!

The Once and Future Army will present much food for thought for those involved with the employment and development of citizen forces. As well, anyone interested in the history of the Army and how force structure was developed in the post-WWII era will also find this a valuable resource. Finally, those of us who lived through this era will find that *The Once and Future Army* provides interesting insights to events we lived through but whose significance we were probably not aware of at the time. This is a well researched and written book and one that would easily justify its place on the bookshelf of anyone interested in Australian military history.

