Australian Army Journal

FOR THE PROFESSION OF ARMS

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THE PAST IS PROLOGUE

This edition of the *Australian Army Journal* maintains our focus on the diverse operations in which our soldiers are currently engaged. Although we have eschewed the practice of publishing editions of this Journal with a unifying thematic approach, there is an inevitable pattern emerging as more of our officers and soldiers write about their recent operational experience. In particular in this edition Colonels Marcus Fielding and John Hutcheson and Lieutenant Colonel Mick Ryan cover the gamut of operations from Iraq and Afghanistan to the Solomon Islands and East Timor, with an emphasis on the complexities of operations on the 'Third Block' of the so-called 'Three Block War.' These articles are especially salient as most of our readers have served or will serve in these environments in the near future.

Stabilisation and post-conflict operations warrant considerable attention, though these terms themselves are inadequate—if not misleading—in describing the hazards and complexities involved in providing security both to forces engaged in reconstruction tasks and supporting civilian populations. Army can draw some comfort from the fact that its leadership and planners predicted the emergence of this type of environment in time to align our doctrine and training to the threat. Moreover, it is clear that the nature of the threat environment that Army has predicted reflects the latest official guidance form the Government of Australia in Defence Update 2007 – *Australia's National Security*. The Update emphasises the intersection of security threats such as terrorism, fragile states and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) both within our immediate region and further afield. It has endorsed a larger, better-protected and more rapidly deployable Army as part of the whole-of-government response to these challenges.

Through concepts such as *Complex Warfighting* and *Adaptive Campaigning* the Army Futures community has provided the intellectual framework to permit our officers and soldiers to train to meet novel threats. Nonetheless we cannot afford to

be smug or complacent. Our enemies in Iraq and Afghanistan are highly adaptive and motivated. Our troops are unambiguously engaged in warfare regardless of the terminology that is applied to the nature of their operations.

We hope that other officers with recent experience of operations will reflect on their service and write about it for the benefit of their mates. One of the most obvious advantages of the more frequent publication of this Journal on a predictable scheduled basis is that it permits the timely dissemination of such valuable operational experience to our readers.

We expect that the article by Dr. Peter Stanley, titled 'What is the Battle for Australia', will spark considerable debate. The so-called 'history wars' have thus far largely neglected our military history. However, there has been recent controversy over the relative significance of the ANZAC legend and the Battles in New Guinea in World War Two. While the Army will never engage in partisan political debate we can never forget that the 'Past is Prologue.' None of the strategic debates that generate controversy today are novel. Since Federation contending schools have advanced their theories as to whether military commitments distant from the Australian mainland serve our national interests. We welcome responses to Dr Stanley's article and request merely that they adhere to the guidelines suggested by the redoubtable E.G. Keogh, whose reflections on the value of applying a critical mind to military history are published in our Retrospect section in this edition.

POINT BLANK

IRAQ AND THE CONSEQUENCES OF FAILURE*

MAX BOOT

ABSTRACT

The author contends that significant gains are being made against the insurgency in Iraq, especially in the political realm and in light of the recent 'surge strategy', and yet these advances are poorly reported in Western media. At the same time, domestic pressures are growing within the United States and Coalition partners for withdrawal timetables regardless of Iraqi stability and self-sufficiency. Consequently, the author argues, a precipitous withdrawal would create greater chaos and loss of life at a time when progress is building toward critical mass.

I n April this year I spent a few weeks with General David Petraeus [Commander Multi-National Force – Iraq] in Iraq, meeting with some of his senior commanders and joining US troops on patrol. Almost immediately, I was struck by the change in mood in Anbar Province, once known as the most problematic region in the country and the obvious centre of Sunni resistance to the new order in Iraq. Anbar was also

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*   This article is based on an address by Max Boot, Senior Fellow for National Security Studies at the US Council on Foreign Relations, to the Lowy Institute in Sydney on 17 May 2007.

the centre of the deadly fight in which US soldiers and marines have been embroiled over the past four years and the scene of devastating casualties, most notoriously in Fallujah. Yet Anbar has become the success story of the last six months.

Anbar's defining moment came in September last year when many of its tribal elders switched their allegiance from al-Qaeda to the Coalition forces and the fledgling Iraqi Government. The switch was partly due to the actions of al-Qaeda itself, which engaged once too often in a spate of indiscriminate killing and then ventured to interfere in the smuggling networks traditionally run by the Sheikhs. Only a year ago such a defection would have been unthinkable. A stunning visual symbol of this new cooperation is the massive influx of young men persuaded by the Sheikhs to sign up with the army and police force, effectively swamping the training depots. This is a major coup, given that, prior to the Sheikhs' change of allegiance, no-one from the local region was willing to participate in military operations against al-Qaeda.

Such unprecedented cooperation has allowed the United States to conduct an offensive that has produced dramatic results in cities such as Al Qa'im, Hit and Ramadi. Over the course of the last six months Ramadi, formerly one of the most dangerous cities in Iraq, has become

> … Ramadi, formerly one of the most dangerous cities in Iraq, has become among the safest.

among the safest. Ramadi was targeted by US forces, which ran a classic counter-insurgency campaign between September 2006 and February/March this year. US soldiers moved through the city, clearing it block by block, despite heavy resistance. This was one of many clearing operations conducted by US forces in Iraq. In the past, however, once a city was cleared, the troops withdrew, allowing the insurgents to return.

US forces are learning from this bitter experience and they now commit not only to clearing an area, but to holding and to rebuilding it. The physical expression of this commitment has seen US forces moving out of their giant forward operating bases and, in cities such as Ramadi, working with the local people and the Iraqi Army and police to establish a series of joint security stations, combat outposts and police stations. They are effectively blanketing the city in an attempt to prevent the return of al-Qaeda. Despite the wonders of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) and high-technology surveillance hardware, the Coalition success is the result of old-fashioned counterinsurgency that places soldiers on street corners and combat outposts in close range of one another. Al-Qaeda has responded to this strategy in typical fashion with suicide bomb attacks on the outskirts of the city. Tellingly, they have yet to penetrate those areas where the Coalition forces and Iraqi forces are holding their own.

Ramadi looks like Berlin in 1945. The streets are awash as the water mains have been destroyed and many buildings have been reduced to rubble. This has been a war zone for the last four years and, up until six months ago, the marines were struggling just to hold the government centre. Now their control extends throughout the entire city. With the clearing phase completed, US forces are turning their attention to what will be their biggest task—rebuilding the city. Ideally, USAID or some other outside agency will be persuaded to finance the rebuild, with assistance from the Government of Iraq. Ramadi now has a future.

Anbar Province represents the acid test for the willingness of Shiite politicians in Baghdad to reconcile with the Sunnis. There is much talk on the need to pass legislation on de-Ba'athification, the oil law and various other measures; however, in reconciliation terms, the crux lies in the reconstruction of vital infrastructure. Reconstruction is not dependent upon the passing of laws, but on persuading the politicians to spend. Loosing the purse strings is essential if the Iraqi Government is to convince the people of Anbar and other provinces that it is serious about reconciliation. Failure to do so may jeopardise the progress of US and Iraqi troops in their battle for stabilisation.

> … the crux lies in the reconstruction of vital infrastructure.

Inevitably, recent US successes in Anbar and Baghdad have driven many of the extremists—both Shiite and Sunni—out of some of the contested regions and into other areas. Many al-Qaeda activists have moved into the Baghdad belt and into Diyala Province where violence has escalated. Last year, with the situation seemingly under control, US forces began handing over to the Iraqi security forces. The recent deterioration has seen this process reversed as food and fuel deliveries are interrupted and US casualties soar.

The see-sawing strategic situation is, in many ways, a result of the reality that the United States simply does not have sufficient troops to pacify the entire country. This would require a troop density only possible with a commitment of over 500 000 troops. Even the projected US troop surge in September will produce an unimpressive total of 170 000 US troops, 130 000 Iraqi troops and fewer than 20 000 allies in Iraq. This is a paltry sum in a country with a population of twenty-six million. US forces have been spread thin over the last four years and have yet to establish a critical mass of control. Any consideration of classic French counter-insurgency 'oil spot' doctrine—which holds that a force needs to pacify an area and then gradually expand its sphere of control outward—will demonstrate that the Coalition cannot hope to succeed under the circumstances. US forces have been trying to achieve critical mass in Baghdad with the addition of extra forces, accepting that there will be some losses on the periphery and that they will not be able to

establish the degree of control around Baghdad that is considered ideal. US troops in towns such as Baqubah on the outskirts of Baghdad are feeling the effects of the lack of critical mass. They are conducting an economy of force mission characterised by insufficient troops in the face of a very determined enemy. Their mission is not pacification; their task is simply to disrupt the activities of insurgent forces to prevent them from using the Baghdad belt as a staging ground for an offensive into Baghdad itself.

… the US simply does not have sufficient troops to pacify the entire country.

The surge strategy, which began in February, will see five extra Brigade Combat Teams sent into Baghdad. Even at this early stage, the influx of additional troops has seen a substantial slowing in the process of sectarian violence and ethnic cleansing that had been lurching out of control. Over the course of the last year, the sphere of Shiite control within Baghdad has been expanding gradually southward. Traditionally, Shiite neighbourhoods lay on the east side of the river, but they have now begun to spread across the west side and further down so that many of those areas that previously comprised a mixed population have become overwhelmingly Shiite. Such a movement almost guaranteed the commensurate spread of violence in acts of ethnic cleansing as the Shiites pushed south into Al Monsoor and some of the other heavily Sunni neighbourhoods in central Baghdad. Yet that ethnic cleansing has been essentially stopped and sectarian murders also dramatically reduced.

Unfortunately, however, while the number of sectarian murders is down, the number of suicide bombings remains high. US forces are trying to 'harden' soft targets such as markets, setting up concrete barriers and staffing entry control checkpoints. Al-Qaeda has responded with increased attacks to demonstrate that the city is no safer despite the attempts of the US forces. Safety on the streets is difficult to convey given the incidence of spectacular suicide bombings that mask the changing realities on the ground. It is hard to convince the outside world that progress is being made as the casualty figures continue to soar.

Iraqi forces are now shouldering more of the burden of the war …

Iraqi forces are now shouldering more of the burden of the war and their units are up to 90 per cent strength in Baghdad. Many of these units are performing well, particularly those dominated by the Kurds. Like the American forces, they have the advantage of being outsiders. They are not part of the struggle and appear as neutral arbiters of the Sunni-Shiite dispute—a role that is almost impossible for Iraqi or Sunni troops to assume.

Iraqi and American troops will continue to implement that classic counterinsurgency approach which has proven successful in those areas where the troop concentration has been sufficient and the time-frame realistic. The question remains, however, as to whether US politicians will allow the soldiers the time to fully implement their strategy. The current time line is set by politicians in Washington—both Democrats and Republicans—who are demanding results. US forces are dogged by the political threat that, if this campaign has not essentially been won by September, then they will be withdrawn. US commanders on the ground regard this as completely unrealistic, arguing that the process of pacification is necessarily lengthy. The overall campaign in Iraq will take years—indeed the initial effort simply to control Baghdad will take months. It is nonsensical to look for tangible and significant results before early next year. The unrealistic demands of the politicians also sow doubts as to whether the troops on the ground have the political support they need to see their mission through.

President Bush himself remains committed to the surge strategy. The Democrats will require significant Republican defections—which they have yet to receive—to achieve their aim of removing funding for the war. Republicans are unlikely to break with their President in a time of war; in fact, not a single major Republican presidential candidate is contesting the election on an anti-war platform.

Politics in Iraq will undoubtedly influence the American political situation as the US enters an election year. Much of the success or failure of the US Iraq strategy ultimately hinges on the actions of Iraqi political figures and whether they will attempt a national reconciliation. General Petraeus and some of his senior aides believe that Prime Minister Maliki is beginning to see himself more as a national Iraqi leader and less as a sectarian Shiite leader. Some of the specific milestones of progress that point to this include the fact that he has authorised military operations against Shiite extremists and approved oil revenue sharing legislation. However, the reality is that Maliki does not control his own cabinet, much less the Parliament. While his influence has increased since he took office, he is not one of the dominant figures of the Iraqi Parliament. Indeed it is difficult to gauge whether there is a single dominant figure because power is decentralised amongst a plethora of political and militia factions. Many questions surround whether or not the political class will be able to perform. While this is difficult to predict, the current surge strategy is certainly premised on the notion that any increase in security in Baghdad will create room for manoeuvre between the moderate sides of both the Sunni and Shiite factions. As long as there is complete disorder, violence and chaos on the streets, the extremists are

> Politics in Iraq will undoubtedly influence the American political situation …

essentially empowered and the likes of Moqtada al Sadr successfully posture as the defenders of their sectarian groups. Establishing a degree of order will create a climate of stability which will improve the prospect of some compromise involving more moderate leaders such as Ayatollah Sistani.

I am stunned by the irresponsibility of those within US domestic politics who insist that once US troops are withdrawn, the Iraqis will successfully resolve the internecine violence that continues to tear the country apart, as if the reason they have yet to do so is because US forces are preventing them. I have not met a single person who has spent time in Iraq who believes this. I do not know a single Iraqi who believes this—most Iraqis, in fact, do not want the United States to leave. While public opinion polls indicate that up to 80 per cent of Iraqis want US troops out, the polls also indicate that they do not want that withdrawal to occur soon. Once security conditions are stabilised, the Iraqis want the US troops withdrawn—but they are fully cognisant of what will happen if the United States pulls out precipi-tously. The result would be an extraordinarily ugly conflict, possibly reaching genocidal proportions, with dire consequences not only for the people of Iraq, who would suffer a humanitarian disaster, but also for Western interests in the region.

> There are many strategies currently being debated in Washington …

There is, however, a degree of recognition that a US withdrawal in the immediate future is likely to lead to greater instability, an increase in terrorism and a host of other problems. There are many strategies currently being debated in Washington, particularly the so-called 'Plan B' strategies, for managing those consequences. Such strategies include deploying US forces to the borders to try to contain this conflict; partitioning Iraq into three states; and withdrawing US combat troops while retaining a major advisory presence within the Iraqi Army. Given the magnitude of the potential conflict, these strategies have a very low probability of success. Yet, if the current counterinsurgency strategy does not show visible signs of progress by this time next year, there may be a complete collapse of political support in the United States and one of the 'Plan B' options could be implemented. The consequences of this may well be devastating.

Ken Pollack and Dan Byman of the Brookings Institution recently analysed the effects of civil wars over the past few decades and found that such conflicts are rarely contained within the borders of the original state. These conflicts inevitably spill over with catastrophic consequences for the region including outflows of refugees, the spread of extremist ideologies, and economic and political destabilisation. Neighbouring states may then try to intervene directly or indirectly to control those consequences or to expand their sphere of influence, as occurred in such places as the Congo and Lebanon.

Iraq contains all the ingredients, not only for a civil war, but for a far bigger conflict, as Iraq is a more valuable prize than countries such as Chechnya or Afghanistan that have been the scenes of such bloody conflicts. Iraq is a country with some of the world's biggest oil reserves, making it attractive to other countries in the region as well as the major groups within Iraq that would try to wrest control of these resources.

Genocide in Iraq would lead to huge refugee outflows and would constitute a major blow to American prestige on the world stage. This would embolden enemies of the United States in the way that defeat in Vietnam emboldened the Communists and the Soviets. Yet there is a view within American political circles that the United States should withdraw from Iraq so as to concentrate on the real War on Terrorism which is being waged in Afghanistan. If the United States leaves Iraq, however, it is more than likely that al-Qaeda would move its focus to Afghanistan with a concomitant rise in violence.

Another consequence of an early US withdrawal from Iraq may be the movement of millions of disaffected Sunnis from Iraq into the neighbouring states. Countries such as Jordan are already finding it difficult to absorb almost a million Iraqi refugees. What will happen when the flow increases to two million or three million? What will happen if the neighbouring states are swamped by refugees who are intent on winning back their homes and subscribe to radical ideology in the pursuit of that objective? There is a body of opinion that sees a US withdrawal as leading to a bloody civil war that the Shiites will win and which, despite the regrettable toll of casualties, will ultimately produce an acceptable outcome. Yet it is highly unlikely that the neighbouring Sunni states will watch idly as the Shiites go on a rampage against their Sunni brethren. These neighbouring states will support those Sunnis by providing arms and there may be an influx of terrorists and an increase in suicide operations. The result may be a very bloody civil war which will be potentially quite prolonged and draw in a number of the neighbouring states.

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Iraq's old enemy Iran has wielded a significance influence over the ongoing conflict. Iran is a prime example of a neighbouring state interfering in order to try to preserve its interests or to expand its sphere of influence. As a minimum, Iran is trying to keep the United States engaged in Iraq by practising proxy warfare of the kind that it also practises against Israel by supporting Hezbollah. Iran's intention is to involve the United States in a protracted engagement to prevent its attention wandering to Iraq's more recalcitrant neighbours. Iran supports both the Shiites and the Sunni groups in an attempt to prevent the emergence of a strong, unified

Iraq that might challenge Iranian power as it has in the past. In the current climate where chaos predominates, insurgent groups eagerly accept Iranian funding and munitions to fight their enemies, both internal and Coalition.

Certainly, if the United States pulls out, the Iranian sphere of influence will expand, at least in the short term when Iran would support a major push by the Shiite forces to try to consolidate and extend their control. This would be opposed by the Sunnis with the backing of the Saudis, Egyptians, and some of the other Gulf Arabs. A very difficult proxy war would result, characterised by the incursion of armed forces from some neighbouring states.

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Thus far, the United States has failed to curb interference. For more than four years President Bush has branded this interference as unacceptable. In 2001 he stated that he would make no distinction between nations that harbour terrorists and nations that practise terrorism. At a minimum the United States should have been exercising its right of hot pursuit to deny terrorists a safe haven in Syria, destroying the safe houses and route lines on the Syrian side of the border. Yet the enemy is allowed sanctuary outside the borders of Iraq to make war on the United States and its allies without consequence—for which the United States is paying the price.

Within Iraq itself, it will take a mammoth effort to separate the primary adversaries. It will take some time for the Shiites to be convinced that they have won and the Sunnis to be convinced that they have lost. Within the larger Sunni community there are many who refuse to countenance defeat, convinced that they will still prevail in a final desperate struggle for power. This delusion will continue to feed Sunni recalcitrance for the foreseeable future. This is a damaging perception which can only be changed with the increased success of Coalition and Iraqi forces on the ground. In current terms, the United States is attempting to negotiate an end to the fighting while the fighting is still going on and before either side perceives it has lost. Clearly it is difficult to negotiate a peace treaty until one side has won and the other has lost or until both sides are convinced they cannot win by force of arms.

> … both sides … are not going to achieve their objectives by military force.

both sides are convinced they cannot win by force of arms. The current imperative must be to make progress on the ground to convince both sides that they are not going to achieve their objectives by military force. Yet this message is being undermined by the political message coming from Washington threatening a possible

withdrawal in six months' time despite the enormous gains made by the soldiers at the front. The current political climate may be the all-important factor that finally swings perceptions towards an end to this conflict—one way or the other.

Support for the war remains strong among the troops on the front line who are most at risk, many of whom are volunteers. Some soldiers are on their second, third, fourth, even fifth tours and they want to continue the fight, driven by a strong belief in the mission and a clear understanding of the consequences of an early withdrawal. There is far less understanding of this in US civilian society, perhaps because so few people have served in the military and do not understand the military mindset, the ethos of combat. This may give rise to a similar sentiment to that of the post-Vietnam era where a sense of betrayal predominated in troops who were fighting and were withdrawn without the satisfaction of accomplishing their mission.

Among the marines in Anbar morale is high because they believe in the crucial nature of their mission. If there is an early withdrawal, however, and they have to accept the reality of defeat, there may be a massive exodus of experienced non-commissioned officers and junior to mid-grade officers from the military. Those who remain may be dealing with the consequences as they were in the 1970s. The United States may already be moving towards a hollow Army and this may be accelerated by defeat, should this eventuate.

The insurgency war currently raging in Iraq is likely to typify the future form of warfare because it is clearly a strategy that works. The unconventional strategy, the asymmetric strategy, is obviously the way to fight a modern Western military. Terrorists now operate globally and have greater destructive potential than ever before. Any comparison of the two major attacks on American soil in the twentieth century makes this demonstrably clear. On 11 September 2001, nineteen men armed with box cutters killed far more Americans than the Imperial Japanese Navy did on 7 December 1941. This is a microcosm of the trend that places more destructive power in the hands of fewer individuals. Dealing with guerrilla and terrorist warfare is no longer optional for Western militaries. It is becoming an existential threat that must be faced. The United States has to craft its own response to this—a difficult task for a military that is large, highly technicalised and traditionally prepared for conventional adversaries. The challenge will lie in re-orienting the force to fight the kind of low-intensity conflict confronting the United States in Iraq. It is increasingly obvious that expensive technological equipment is useless against the kind of adversaries that wage guerrilla warfare.

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The US Army and Marine Corps have to become more comfortable with these challenges because they will be the dominant challenges of the future. These are not traditional military challenges but they are roles into which the military is going to be thrust, willingly or otherwise. Clearly this demands a process of transformation so that the military and, in fact, the entire government can be better equipped to deal with what is, in reality, a new world disorder. As I patrolled with the marines in Anbar, watching as they adapted seamlessly to the demands of the current counter-insurgent strategy, my confidence grew. This is a challenge that General Petraeus and his troops are determined to meet—should their political masters provide the final assent.

THE AUTHOR

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POINT BLANK

WHAT IS THE BATTLE FOR AUSTRALIA?*

PETER STANLEY

ABSTRACT

This article, based on the 2006 Australian War Memorial Anniversary Oration, examines a recent issue in the Australian military history debate, the idea of the Battle for Australia. The author challenges the reality of the Battle for Australia and locates how and why such a grand narrative emerges into a nation's consciousness.

For Australia, 1942 was the year of greatest losses, a year of crises confronted and overcome. It was a year in which war briefly touched Australia's shores. What does this mean for the way we remember 1942? It suggests that we should at least question whether there was a 'Battle for Australia', and if there was, what did it involve?[1]

There was an 'in vogue' phrase in museum circles a few years ago, that museums are 'safe places for unsafe ideas'. My scepticism about the reality of the Battle for Australia would certainly be regarded as unsafe. When I have spoken or written in this vein—several times over the past few years—I have been abused as unpatriotic or even 'un-Australian', whatever that means. My citizenship (dating from 1971) has been called into question—one persistent critic habitually refers to me as 'English-born'—and the Memorial's Director has been urged to sack me. If criticising the Battle for Australia is an unsafe idea, I am glad that the Memorial offers an opportunity to discuss it in a rational manner. I welcome your reactions to my offerings about 1942 and the 'Battle for Australia'.

> … museums are 'safe places for unsafe ideas'.

I offer reflections on this phrase that, over the past decade, has assumed a growing significance in the ways Australians remember the Second World War. Indeed, I would argue that the new idea of the 'Battle for Australia' is the most significant single development in Australia's understanding of that war since the publication of the official histories between the 1950s and the 1970s. The idea that there was a Battle for Australia has perhaps captured the popular imagination. It is an idea that few historians have endorsed but which thousands of Australians have embraced. For that reason, I take the idea of a 'Battle for Australia' seriously as a basis for thinking about our past. I would like to use this forum to consider its validity for Australia's remembrance of the Second World War. It has a place in our thinking about this war, but not, perhaps, as an all-embracing event that can be justified historically.

> This idea of a Battle for Australia is both attractive and superficially plausible.

Those who advance this idea argue that, from the outbreak of war with Japan, Australia was the objective of the Japanese advance and that 1942 saw a series of crucial campaigns that resulted in the defeat of this thrust. In some versions of the battle it is seen as continuing up to the Japanese surrender. The point of the Pacific War, they imply, was that Australia was in danger of attack or conquest and that the significance of the campaigns in the South-West Pacific was that they prevented such a calamity.

This idea of a Battle for Australia is both attractive and superficially plausible. It is dramatic. It seems to explain a series of campaigns to Australia's north. It seems to give purpose to the bombing of Darwin, the submarine raid on Sydney and the submarine offensives off the east coast; even the Papuan campaign can be stretched to fit the rubric of the 'battle that saved Australia'. The growing awareness of the

importance of the mobilisation of Australian civilians—men, women and children—their motivation to work for the war effort and their contributions as individuals and in communities, all fits easily into a view that places Australia at the centre of events. Above all, a Battle for Australia nourishes Australians' pride in surmounting what *was* truly the greatest crisis the nation has faced.

These are all reasons to subscribe to this interpretation. I do not. First, I want to look at where this new idea has come from and suggest why it has arisen in the form it has.

The idea of organising the events of 1942 around the idea of a 'Battle for Australia' is quite a new one, though the phrase itself was used in wartime propaganda. In turn, it seems to have come from a speech delivered by Prime Minister John Curtin on 16 February 1942. In an echo of Churchill's speech of June 1940 foreseeing that the fall of France would open a 'Battle of Britain', Curtin said that '[t]he fall of Singapore opens the battle for Australia'.[2] The phrase was used in a few booklets produced by the Department of Information, but soon fell out of use. It did not appear even in the booklet *While You Were Away*, produced in 1945 to inform liberated prisoners of war what had occurred at home during their captivity.[3]

Curtin's phrase did not resonate with those first charged with documenting Australia's part in the Second World War. It appears just once in Paul Hasluck's official history *The Government and the People*, but not at all in Gavin Long's *Six Years War* or indeed in any general history of Australia published until the mid-1990s. There is no battle honour 'Battle for Australia' on any regimental colour, ship's crest or unit plaque. The phrase—even the idea—disappeared. The first time it appeared in print in a work of significance was in the late John Robertson's *Australia at War 1939–1945*, published in 1981.[4] Yet he used it as a striking opening line to his chapter on the collapse of the so-called Malay Barrier. He did not endorse the idea of such a battle having happened.

Then, in the mid-1990s, the idea was resurrected, though the exact origins of what I will call the Battle for Australia movement are, for the moment, obscure. Recently, Andrew McKay and Ryoko Adachi offered an account of its origins in their exploration of Australia and Japan's wartime memories, *Shadows of War*. They suggest that it was conceived in 1996 by the Victorian President of the Air Force Association,

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Wing Commander Reginald Yardley, and was fostered in schools by a former Chief Executive Officer of the History Teachers' Association of Victoria, Dr Jacqualine Hollingworth. Over the years Reg Yardley had laid many wreaths on Battle of Britain Day when in 1996—significantly, the year after the great year of 'Australia Remembers'—he realised that no one seemed to remember what he called a Battle for Australia. 'And there was a Battle for Australia', he emphasised in an interview, 'we damned near lost it and yet nobody knows anything about it …'[5] He thought of the 'battle' as spanning the period from the invasion of New Britain in January 1942 to the battle of the Bismarck Sea in March 1943.

> … in the mid-1990s, the idea was resurrected …

James Bowen's unofficial Battle for Australia website describes his own role in persuading the Returned and Services League to commemorate a Battle for Australia. He credits the then-national and Victorian state presidents of the RSL, 'Digger' James and Bruce Ruxton, with recognising the value of his idea in 1997.[6]

Either way, by 1998 a national Battle for Australia Council existed. Its aim was to 'enhance community knowledge and understanding of Australian and Allied actions in the war against Japan from 1941 to 1945'.[7] It is interesting to note the expansion of the date range, to encompass the entire Pacific War. The Council lobbied to establish the first Wednesday in September as Battle for Australia Day, and now ceremonies are held in several states, marking the anniversary of the Battle of Milne Bay, the symbolic first Allied victory against the Japanese in 1942.

The Council's lobbying has since been joined by several private efforts, notably James Bowen's website, which engages in energetic advocacy of the Battle of Australia Day and robustly critiques those who offer a contrary view. Mr Bowen has since parted company with the Council. The Memorial's Director and I have been singled out for criticism because we disagreed with Bowen's interpretation of this period. We have been accused of being 'revisionists', used as a term of abuse, no less than thirty-five times in the course of his website's denunciation. You can judge my views on their merits; to call Steve Gower a 'revisionist' is simply ludicrous.

Mr Bowen's website offers an aggressively positive view of the events of 1942, a simple and colourful saga of threat, crisis and salvation. The essence of his case seems to be that by offering a different version of 1942 I must be demeaning those who died, that by disagreeing with political leaders (on both sides of politics) I am disrespectful, and by differing with Mr Bowen I must be wrong.

> We have been accused of being 'revisionists', used as a term of abuse …

Though notably more moderate, the Battle for Australia Council's view of 1942 connects several episodes into a single narrative. It presents the defence of Singapore, the conquest of the Netherlands Indies, the battles of the Coral Sea and Midway, the Papuan and Solomons campaigns, and the campaigns that secured Allied victory, into a single epic story. We might regard this saga as forming a 'collective story', a story valued or heeded by an entity, such as a nation. The term 'collective story' is used by the clear-thinking and plain-speaking historian Inga Clendinnen in her recent *Quarterly Essay*, 'The history question: who owns the past?'[8]

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Clendinnen reminds us why these 'collective stories' are important to us. But as the stories become more collective—and this is a national story—they acquire 'de facto custodians' (like Mr Bowen, perhaps). These guardians, she says, 'find they have to invent crimes like blasphemy, heresy, treason or "being un-Australian" to see off any incubating counter-stories'. The 'counter-story' here, in the context of the Battle for Australia debate, is actually the older, established version, because it challenges what is becoming the new orthodoxy.

Clendinnen also sees a risk in historians feeling a 'primary responsibility to the present and the future of the nation and not to the past'. She disagrees with the proposal that 'the true purpose of "Australian history" [… should be] patriotic and integrative'. She thinks—and I agree—that 'historians need to resist participating in the concoction of large, inspiriting narratives, because any [such] narrative requires significant narrowing of vision and manipulations of the truth', or, I would rather say, of the evidence.

> 'historians need to resist participating in the concoction of large, inspiriting narratives …'

But an oration such as this, particularly one delivered on the eve of Remembrance Day, is perhaps not the occasion for astringent analysis that may alienate and offend at a time when our thoughts ought to be in accord on the value of remembering war's cost. However strong my conviction may be, I acknowledge that there is little point, and less dignity, in trying, Canute-like, to turn back the waves. Or, to switch metaphors, no amount of argument can now drive the genie of the Battle for Australia back into its bottle. Indeed, especially on an occasion such as this, we need to acknowledge that a purely intellectual argument about the evidence will not carry the day.

History is not just about the evidence of what happened in the past, important though that is. It is also about how we shape an understanding of that past to satisfy our present needs. So rather than simply laying into the idea of the Battle for Australia on the basis of chronology and evidence, we need to examine its meaning for today. That is why this lecture is called 'What is the Battle for Australia?' I suggest that the idea arises from profound emotional roots, a desire to connect with the Second World War and to incorporate it more securely into Australian remembrance. On that note, I am in complete accord with proponents of the Battle for Australia. I, like them, am determined that the sacrifices and the achievements of the Second World War, and especially those of this country, should never be forgotten. I have devoted a good part of my professional life at the Memorial to that end. I want to find ways in which we can do so without skewing the evidence of history.

> *History is not just about the evidence of what happened in the past …*

This struggle over the meaning of our history is itself part of a historical process. For ninety years Gallipoli has been a part of Australia's discovery of itself as a nation, and its exploration and assertion of its national identity. That process entailed creating an Anzac legend, one which has focussed not just on the Great War, but specifically on Gallipoli.

Yet, for at least a decade, at least since the 'Australia Remembers' anniversary, there has been a move, if not to supplant Gallipoli's centrality, at least to assert the significance of the Second World War as part of the story of an emerging Australian national identity. This process arguably began with the fiftieth anniversary of 1942, when Prime Minister Paul Keating gave his celebrated speech at Kokoda the day after Anzac Day in 1992. This was the occasion on which he revered 'the blood that was spilled on this very knoll … in defence of the liberty of Australia'.[9] Perhaps the entire Battle for Australia movement can be traced from that moment. This is at one level highly laudable: how could we not wish to remember the Second World War and recognise its significance in Australia's national story? This new emphasis stresses not the Second World War as a whole, not Australia's contribution to Allied victory against Nazism and fascism in the Mediterranean and Europe, but only Australia's defence of itself.

> *This struggle over the meaning of our history is itself part of a historical process.*

It would seem that the Battle for Australia movement is an example of historical nationalism, an interpretation, as Inga Clendinnen would say, being shaped to fit the needs of the future, not the evidence of the past. It is the product of the emergence of a school of history—and especially military history—that justifies the name 'nationalist'. It promotes relatively unimportant events close to Australia over important events far away, purely on a rather simplistic calculus of proximity. It has become the new orthodoxy in Australian military history. The polar opposite is a view that sees Australia's contribution in the context of a global war and an international coalition against intercontinental enemies, in an alliance in which Australia played its part as much as any and for longer than most. We might call this the 'internationalist' school of Second World War history. It has many proponents overseas though very few in this country.

> … the nationalist tendency is a matter of the heart, the internationalist approach a matter of the head.

In essence, the nationalist tendency is a matter of the heart, the internationalist approach a matter of the head. The Battle for Australia movement arises directly out of a desire to find meaning in the losses of 1942—let us all remember the terrible litany of Malaya, Rabaul, Singapore, Ambon, Timor, Java and all the massacres and misery that followed. There is an understandable desire to make those sacrifices directly relevant to Australia. That explains the need to find a satisfying national drama in the approach and defeat of a deadly Japanese thrust. A global war fought for abstract democratic principles, as a small part of a great Allied coalition, in which the most significant battles occurred far away, satisfies only a part of the need felt by many Australians to find meaning in this war.

> Australia's withdrawal from the broader war … deprives us … of having contributed directly or substantially to the defeat of Nazi Germany …

I suggest that this focus on 1942 is a result of the Australian concentration on a war essentially fought in and close to Australian territories in Papua New Guinea. Australia's withdrawal from the broader war, especially in Europe, deprives us of a sense of having contributed directly or substantially to the defeat of Nazi Germany—notwithstanding the decisive contribution Australia made to the war in the Mediterranean in 1941 and 1942 and its efforts in the air war over Europe. The Battle for Australia bequeaths us a partial memory of the most important war in which Australia has ever been involved, a war that truly did save the world as we know it.

Our national memory of 1942 is suffused by emotion. That 'memory', though, is not simply a matter of pitting veterans who 'remember' a battle for Australia against younger 'historians' who challenge that belief. The Battle for Australia movement has garnered a coalition of old and young, veterans and descendants, journalists and writers, and sponsors from across the political spectrum. They have been animated by the highest motives—a desire to acknowledge those who served and suffered and a need to acknowledge that deaths and sufferings mattered in a war too often marked by futile losses, defeat and disaster. Historically I think they're wrong; emotionally I share their desire to make sacrifice meaningful.

> … for about forty years it was accepted that the Battle of the Coral Sea 'saved Australia from invasion'.

It needs to be said that this is not the first epic of threat and salvation that Australia has seen. Professor Joan Beaumont of Deakin University has been comparing Australia's memories of the World Wars and promises to illuminate a phenomenon we all-too-often take for granted. She has shown, for example, how for about forty years it was accepted that the Battle of the Coral Sea 'saved Australia from invasion'.[10] The decisive Coral Sea battle (in May 1942) has now been subsumed into the Battle for Australia. Now we are told that the struggle for national survival continued into 1943, and even until the war's end. Professor Beaumont reminds us that history is malleable, not static; our feelings guide our understanding as much as does the evidence we consult.

> The new Battle for Australia movement proposes what is, in fact, a 'revisionist view' [and] is a new way of looking at this period.

The new Battle for Australia movement proposes what is, in fact, a 'revisionist view'. Of course all history is revisionist; fresh questions and new evidence will always revise accepted understanding. But the term is widely used, sadly, as a term of abuse for uncongenial ideas—unsafe ideas, perhaps. Some of its proponents, who assume that we have always believed that there was a Battle for Australia, might be surprised at that. Yet the fact remains that the Battle for Australia is a new way of looking at this period. Despite its brief appearance as a propaganda term in wartime, the idea of a Battle for Australia is of recent date. Only two books use the term as a title, both published in the past two years.[11] The National Library's catalogue lists a further eight books under the keyword term, but they are all part of the 'Battle for Australia' series written and published privately by

W.H.J. (Bill) Phillips of Coffs Harbour. Still, despite its absence from authoritative histories, it is clear that the idea has appeal, and we need to explore rather than merely dismiss it.

So the Battle for Australia movement seeks to supplant an accepted view with a more recent interpretation. In this case, I am not, as some of my critics have alleged, a 'revisionist'. I am, if anything, a reactionary—at least intellectually. I am trying to resurrect or salvage an older interpretation, the one put by official historians who did not endorse the idea of a 'Battle for Australia'.

You can see my problem. Except for a few wartime propaganda booklets, this idea fell out of use for fifty years; it simply does not figure in general histories of Australia or in specialist studies of the Pacific War. Then it becomes current again over the past decade. But why? Is there a basis in history for the revival of this concept?

… this idea fell out of use for fifty years …

Let me remind you of the context of John Curtin's 1942 speech in which the phrase 'Battle for Australia' first appeared. He gave this speech the day after the fall of Singapore and three days before the bombing of Darwin. It was not a judgment upon what had occurred, it anticipated what he thought would occur. It was almost a prediction. Curtin, a man passionately devoted to his people, for justifiable and understandable reasons feared that the fall of Singapore—believed to have been the keystone of imperial defence in Asia and Australasia—would open a struggle for the possession of his homeland. Or so it very reasonably seemed at the time.

What followed was the Pacific War's greatest crisis, for both sides. The Japanese conquered South-East Asia, occupied half of the Pacific Ocean and advanced to India's borders and to within a few miles of Port Moresby. After a series of epic battles—in the Coral Sea, in Papua and the Solomons, and in the Central Pacific around Midway—the Allies at last wrenched the initiative from the Japanese. From late 1943, Allied forces finally began a series of counter-offensives that, beginning in New Guinea and extending to the Central Pacific and Burma, took Allied forces to within striking distance of Japan itself. Its armies isolated and starving, its merchant marine destroyed and its home islands devastated, Japan finally surrendered when the Soviet invasion of Manchuria and the detonation of two atomic bombs finally persuaded its hitherto intractable leaders that defeat was inevitable.

Is there a basis in history for the revival of this concept?

Australia, a nation feeling justifiably threatened with invasion, mobilised its military, industrial and civilian resources, accepted American aid and MacArthur's command and confronted the Japanese in the South-West Pacific. Alarmed by the crisis, Australia largely withdrew from the broader struggle, concentrating on the liberation of its territories and on operations on adjacent islands.

So while Australians played a substantial part in the battles of 1942, there was no 'Battle for Australia', as such. As it turned out, Curtin was wrong. There was to be no such battle, not as he envisaged it. Thank goodness.

How dare I say this, some of you may ask. I can assure you, I am not the first. I take my cue from official historians Gavin Long, Dudley McCarthy, Lionel Wigmore and Paul Hasluck. If *they* did not endorse the idea of a 'Battle for Australia', then we need to be convinced before we do.

The way in which proponents of this view have constructed a revisionist 'Battle for Australia' suggests that the real battle for Australia is a contest for an important part of the national historical imagination. The extent to which the Battle for Australia is now becoming accepted and fostered means that we cannot simply dismiss it as untenable. We need to take the Battle for Australia interpretation seriously, to consider why some want to endorse it. Further, we need to consider how we can live with this emotion and ask what purpose it might serve.

> Alarmed by the crisis, Australia largely withdrew from the broader struggle …

In doing so, we need to be wary of the myths and misunderstandings which have accumulated around this event. The first Darwin raids, for example, were undertaken to support the Japanese conquest of Timor. They did not prompt Curtin's celebrated turn to the United States. They did not herald invasion. They did not result in a thousand Australian deaths, as is now claimed. Of the 250 victims of those first two raids, very few were in fact Australian. The largest single group were the 188 American sailors killed aboard the destroyer USS *Peary*, while most of the rest were British Empire merchant seamen. Most of the Australians killed were civilians— merchant sailors, the oft-abused wharfies, the PMG telegraph girls killed in the Post Office, and Daisy Martin, the Administrator's Aboriginal servant girl. Of the 250 dead, only eighteen were uniformed members of the Australian services; the only Darwin dead to be commemorated in this memorial. I mention this because too often Australians have become impassioned about the '250 [or more] Australians killed in Darwin'.

> … we need to be wary of the myths and misunderstandings …

My aim is not to diminish the individual tragedy of these people's deaths, but we do need to understand them in perspective. Darwin's significance is largely symbolic rather than strategic. The damage at Darwin, though widespread, did not materially hinder Allied attempts to halt the Japanese conquest of the Netherlands East Indies, which was a lost cause anyway. Yet looking at it from a specifically Australian stance tends to inflate its significance, especially symbolically. The problem is that proponents of the Battle for Australia tend not to distinguish between the reality and the representation—they confuse history as what happened with history as it is popularly remembered.

There are several problems with the idea of an actual Battle for Australia.

One is that the idea conflates several different Japanese initiatives into a grand plan aimed at Australia. Japanese air commanders in the East Indies fought an air war over northern Australia as part of the occupation of Timor and the Netherlands Indies. Naval commanders in Rabaul or Truk embarked on submarine campaigns to support operations in the South-West or even central Pacific. Meanwhile, operations in Papua proceeded unrelated to either. All of these operations are represented (and, it has to be said, exaggerated) to imply a direct, actual and significant Japanese threat. In fact the Japanese war effort was chronically fractured. Its defeat stemmed partly from its commanders' inherent inability to co-ordinate plans or services.

> … proponents of the Battle for Australia tend not to distinguish between the reality and the representation …

The concentration on a defensive 'Battle for Australia'—as if the Japanese were actively trying to take Australia—diminishes the emphasis that informed commentators place on the Allied counter-offensives that dominated the second half of 1942 and beyond. David Horner, who quotes Curtin's 16 February speech to show how seriously Singapore's fall worried him, strongly makes this point. In his chapter in the Memorial's 1988 'Bicentennial' book, Horner makes clear how in early 1942 the Curtin Government's intention was 'to carry the fight to the Japanese just as soon as forces became available'.[12] In the event, almost all Australia's fighting from mid-1942 arose from Allied counter-offensives rather than from defending Australia directly.

There is also the problem that, at its most extreme, this 'Battle for Australia' is virtually a synonym for the entire Pacific War. Some versions of the Battle for Australia narrative end with the dropping of the atomic bombs on Japan in 1945. The atomic bombs were not dropped in

> The atomic bombs were not dropped in defence of Australia.

defence of Australia. Here, Australian particularism runs riot. Even if we take the Battle for Australia to have occurred as portrayed, surely it can only be justified as running between, say, the Japanese invasion of Australian New Britain in January 1942 to MacArthur's assurance that the danger had passed in June 1942. Curtin's belated public acknowledgement that an invasion threat had passed, in June 1943, comes a year too late to be tenable.

One of the curiosities of the Battle for Australia movement is that it represents the campaigns in the South-West Pacific as being neglected in favour of the war in the Mediterranean. This is clearly unsupportable. Think of the flood of books on the Papuan campaign—Professor Hank Nelson reckons that about 3000 pages have been published on Papua since 2002 alone—and compare it to the handful published about, say, Alamein, a battle fought at exactly the same time.[13] The South-West Pacific campaigns of 1942 are obviously not neglected—indeed, they represent a staple of Australian military publishing.

Then there is the problem that only Australians recognise the Battle for Australia. The Japanese, it must be said, do not use the term; whatever they thought the campaigns of 1942 were about, they were not for Australia. Nor do British and American historians see the war, even in our part of the world, in such narrow terms. For example, Hedley Willmott, the author of a magisterial sequence of books minutely examining Japanese and Allied strategy in 1942, simply does not recognise any such view of the war. Allied strategy in a global war cannot be constrained within a national perspective.[14]

… only Australians recognise the Battle for Australia.

Then there is the problem that it is based on one of the most tenacious myths of 1942, the idea that the Japanese planned to invade Australia. There is no doubt that the Japanese could not have invaded and decided not to; when we focus on more than Australia we realise how the scale of Japan's war of conquest in China made an opportunist advance in the south impossible. The evidence for the 'invasion' claim is weak. Assertions made on the basis of this evidence are highly tendentious and circumstantial, heavily reliant on hearsay and supposition. Acting under the residual effects of wartime propaganda, many Australians assume that a threat which was said to have existed in 1942 was real. Many accept spurious evidence—notably the supposed existence of 'invasion money'—to support their belief.

… the Japanese could not have invaded and decided not to …

However, we need to be careful in de-bunking this myth. I acknowledge that 1942 looks different in, say, Caloundra than it does in an archive in Canberra. In 1942 it was entirely understandable to suppose that, having conquered South-East Asia so swiftly, the Japanese would keep going. Indeed, the Government (which knew no better) fostered this belief. Not to have faced the real threat would have been irresponsible. In 1942 it was reasonable to believe that invasion was imminent. In 2006 that belief is untenable—the evidence shows without doubt that while the Japanese High Command considered an invasion, it decided against one. It decided that invasion was impossible and never had the opportunity to change its mind. We need to be careful not to imply that Australians in 1942 were wrong to hold this belief—they clearly weren't—but in 2006 we cannot continue to talk about Japanese plans or intentions to invade Australia in 1942 when there is no evidence for such plans, and much evidence to show that none was planned.

Again, this is not Johnny-come-lately 'revisionism'. Read the official histories of several nations. My colleague, Dr Steve Bullard, has just translated the relevant Japanese histories and they corroborate British, Australian and American accounts. Read Hedley Willmott's 1983 study of Japanese strategy early in 1942, *The Barrier and the Javelin*. He documents the divisions plaguing Japanese Army and Navy planning staffs, and how the attack-on-Australia option was dead by the end of January 1942—*before* the fall of Singapore. In over forty years no one has shown this view to be unwarranted. Indeed, if you read the authoritative studies that followed the official histories, such as David Horner's *High Command* (published in 1982), you find that those in charge knew that the danger of invasion ended not in mid-1943, when Curtin admitted it publicly, but in June 1942, when the Advisory War Cabinet accepted that invasion was unlikely and when MacArthur told Curtin that Australia's security was 'assured'.[15]

That is not to say that had events gone differently Australia would never have faced an actual threat. Had the battles of the Coral Sea and Midway been lost, had Australian and American forces failed to regain the initiative in the Solomons and Papua, then things might have gone differently. But history deals with what happened, not what might have happened. The

> … the evidence shows … that while the Japanese High Command considered an invasion, it decided against one.

> … the attack-on-Australia option was dead by the end of January 1942—before the fall of Singapore.

fact is that there was a potential Japanese threat in 1942, a decision was made not to invade and no further opportunity presented itself. We can only remember what actually happened.

It needs to be said very clearly and explicitly that in criticising the idea of a Battle for Australia I am in no way diminishing the sacrifice or achievements of those Australians who served, suffered and especially those who died in the war years. As I have said repeatedly, those who risked and gave their lives for the Allied cause in 1942 deserve the highest honour—the respect that they are accorded here at the Memorial.

We need to be wary, however, of engaging in an unseemly bidding war in which those who claim the moral heights of alleged national survival trump those who concede that deaths in war are not always justified by victory. It is doing no honour to the dead to represent that they all died 'defending Australia' directly, or to imply that those who died directly in defence of Australia (in Darwin, for example) somehow acquire an additional lustre. Those who died over Berlin, or at Alamein or in the Mediterranean—in actions intimately connected with Allied victory but not remotely connected to the direct defence of Australia—are equally worthy of our regard. We also need to be mature enough to acknowledge that in the South-West Pacific many died in support of flawed plans (such as the defence of the Malay Barrier), in actions unrelated to the defence of Australia or from causes unrelated to battle. Yet the fact of their deaths in support of the great cause for which Australia fought makes their deaths equally worthy of remembrance.

> … history deals with what happened, not what might have happened.

> Those who died over Berlin, or at Alamein … are equally worthy of our regard

So if we are not to re-cast our remembrance around a Battle for Australia, what should we remember?

I would argue that the Second World War should of course be remembered on the same plane as the Great War. I am not arguing that Gallipoli should be accorded a primacy—tomorrow [11 November 2006] we remember all Australians in all wars. Let us remember the Second World War, but let us not unduly accord privilege to one theatre of war over another. We share a desire to honour those who served and died, but let us not misrepresent the significance of that service and sacrifice.

By all means let us choose a day to remember the dead of the Second World War. Various anniversaries are proposed—recently the RSL's National Congress resolved to mark a Kokoda Day in November. The anniversary that most Battle for Australia protagonists seek to mark, in the first week of September, is in my view a fitting *date*. But they conceive of the event and the reason too narrowly. The present Battle for Australia commemoration is the first Wednesday in September: the anniversary of the end of the fight at Milne Bay. That was indeed a significant action, when a small force of Australian Militia and AIF troops, supported by Australian air and naval forces, and some Americans, defeated a Japanese attempt to establish a base in support of their designs on Port Moresby.

> … Australians ought to pause, to reflect and remember on 3 September each year.

Coincidentally, though, this is also more-or-less the anniversary of the beginning of the Second World War for Australia, as well as the anniversary of its end. On 3 September 1939 Robert Menzies announced Australia's entry to the war, and on 2 September 1945 Australia's representative signed the surrender document aboard the USS *Missouri* in Tokyo Bay.

I would argue that Australians *ought* to pause, to reflect and remember on 3 September each year. Let us do so in memory of all of those Australians who helped to fight Nazism and fascism in Europe and militarist aggression in Asia. Let us remember those who gave their lives for the freedom of the millions who actually were occupied and oppressed by Germany and Japan, and not in memory of a 'battle' that did not actually occur in the way it is said by some to have done. The sacrifices of all Australians in the Second World War helped to ensure that Australians inherited the society we cherish today. That seems to be a legacy of much greater significance and one worth remembering. Let me remind you of the reasons Robert Menzies gave for Australia's decision to go to war in 1939.

> Let us remember those who gave their lives for the freedom of the millions who actually were occupied and oppressed by Germany and Japan …

A week before the war's outbreak, as the European crisis deepened, Menzies had told the nation, 'in plain English', that 'the destruction or defeat of Britain would be the destruction or defeat of the British Empire'—he gave it a capital E—'and would leave us with a precarious tenure of our own independence'. In his 3 September broadcast—the one from which everyone remembers the phrase about 'melancholy duty', but little else—he

again detailed the reasons why the Australian Cabinet had decided to act. The aggression of Hitler's Germany had made it plain—'brutally plain', he said—that if it went unchecked 'there could be no security in Europe and no just peace for the world'.

Menzies appealed to principles that his listeners shared: 'honest dealing, the peaceful adjustment of differences, the rights of independent peoples to live their own lives, the honouring of international obligations and promises'. He affirmed that 'where Great Britain stands there stand the people of the entire British world'—a world that Australians then felt they belonged to. Yet his appeal was not simply to imperial loyalty: it was also an appeal to democratic principles. It was, as the official historian Paul Hasluck wrote, 'more than anything else an Australian decision'. These principles remind us that the Second World War began as, and remained, a crusade for the values at the centre of Western political culture: political liberty and tolerance—freedom as we understand it.

> … the Second World War [was fought] for the values at the centre of Western political culture …

This link between Australia and what the Allies fought for has increasingly been lost in early twenty-first century Australia. As we approach the seventieth anniversary of the war's outbreak, the Second World War against Nazi Germany and fascist Italy is increasingly being seen as a distant imperial war, one largely fought in (and only concerning) Europe, remote from Australian interests or involvement: the usual phrase is 'somebody else's war'.[16] The war with Japan is increasingly being seen as the most important part of the war. Not because it entailed the oppression and then the liberation of millions of Asians, but because the war touched Australia's shores. This re-interpretation of the war, which has been shaped to the point where it has now been given a new name, is unjustified. It emphasises an exaggerated interpretation. It separates us from the broader war rather than connects us with it, in a sort of historical isolationism.

> … Australians made a clear contribution to Allied victory, to the defeat of oppression and to the restoration of the international rule of law.

So, was there a Battle for Australia? No: not in the literal meaning of the term.

I would argue that we should indeed always remember that between 1939 and 1945 Australians mobilised to fight for values that we still hold dear today. In both Asia and in Europe, Australians made a clear contribution to Allied victory, to the defeat of oppression and to the restoration

of the international rule of law. Just as the conflict was a global war, so Australia's response was global. That gives a longer-lasting and more secure claim than to a concentration on a perceived threat to Australia itself.

In preparing this address I waited eagerly for the latest book to appear on Australia and the Second World War, Michael McKernan's *The Strength of a People*. Michael's book is not, I would have to say, the book I would write. It is written in his inimitable style, letting vignettes of individuals carry the story, often people he knew, met or admired: Beryl Beaurepaire (née Bedgood, whom we recall warmly as our former Chairman of Council), Ralph Honner and John Curtin. *The Strength of a People* tells an unashamedly Australian story, though reining in its nationalism, rarely adopting the strident tone of an historical barracker. Reading it, I was interested to note two things. First, Michael also does not adopt, does not even quote, Curtin's 'Battle for Australia' speech. Second, he ends with a strong endorsement of the argument I have just put. Recalling an exhibition at the Memorial of drawings by children who mostly died in Auschwitz, Michael mused that:

> … 'and they did, indeed, fight for a better world' …

> To liberate people in captivity everywhere and to prevent the domination of the world by evil men and evil ideologies: that was why Australian men and women gave themselves to the war, and were prepared to give their lives. This was the noble cause for which Australians fought …

He writes, in conclusion, 'and they did, indeed, fight for a better world'.[17]

I would argue then, that the Battle for Australia is a commemorative phenomenon that exists in our hearts, reminding us of Australia's contribution to freedom's war long ago. But it is Australia's part in the wider war that counts, not the undue concentration on a battle that did not actually occur.

Inga Clendinnen describes historians in two ways. They are, she says, 'the custodians of memory, the retrievers and preservers of the stories by which people have imagined their … lives'. At the same time they are 'the devoted critics of those stories'. This address reflects that two-fold task, especially in this place. What I have presented has been, I hope you will agree, rooted in a devotion to the idea of the Memorial as a place of scholarship inspired by remembrance and as a place of remembrance informed by scholarship.

ENDNOTES

1   I am grateful to those who've commented on drafts of this address, particularly the Director, Steve Gower, Dr Mark Johnston, and members of the Military History Section.

2   Paul Hasluck, *The Government and the People 1942–1945*, Australian War Memorial, Canberra, ACT, 1970, p. 70.

3   Argus, *While You Were Away: A digest of happenings in Australia 1940–1945*, Melbourne, VIC, 1945.

4   John Robertson, *Australia at War 1939–1945*, Heinemann, Melbourne, VIC, 1981, p. 93.

5   Andrew McKay and Ryoko Adachi, *Shadows of War*, Indra Publishing, Melbourne, VIC, 2005, p. 226.

6   http://www.users.bigpond.com/battleforAustralia/commemoration.html, consulted 16 October 2006.

7   http://www.battleforaustralia.org.au/council.html, consulted 16 October 2006.

8   Inga Clendinnen, *The Quarterly Essay*, 'The history question: who owns the past?', Black Inc., Melbourne, 2006.

9   James Curran, *The Power of Speech: Australian Prime Ministers Defining the National Image*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 2004, p. 220.

10   Joan Beaumont, 'Australian Memory and the US Wartime Alliance: The Australian-American Memorial and the Battle of the Coral Sea', *War & Society*, 2004, Vol. 22, No. 1.

11   They are: Rex Ruwoldt's 2005 *Darwin's battle for Australia*, Darwin Defenders 1942-45 Incorporated, Clifton Springs, Vic, and Tim Gurry and Robert Lewis's 2002 'electronic resource' *Battle for Australia.*

12   David Horner, 'Australia under threat of invasion', in Margaret Browne and Michael McKernan (eds), *Australia Two Centuries of War and Peace*, Australian War Memorial, Canberra, 1988, p. 258.

13   Hank Nelson, 'Kokoda: on the Track again', Joint Seminar: Pacific and Asian History, State Society and Governance in Melanesia, ANU, 26 October 2006, footnote 19.

14   H.P. Willmott, *Empires in the Balance: Japanese and Allied Pacific Strategies to April 1942*, Orbis, London, 1982; *The Barrier and the Javelin: Japanese and Allied Strategies February to June 1942*, Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, 1983*; The war with Japan : the period of balance, May 1942-October 1943*, SR Books, Wilmington, 2002.

15   David Horner, *High Command*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1982, pp. 194-95.

16   John Pilger, *A Secret Country*, Vintage, London, 1992, p. 151.

17   Michael McKernan, *The strength of a nation: six years of Australians fighting for the nation and defending the homefront in WWII*, Allen & Unwin, Crows Nest, 2006, p. 409.

THE AUTHOR

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HEALTH SUPPORT TO COMPLEX WARFIGHTING

MORE THAN JUST 'DEPLOY THE LEVEL THREE'

LIEUTENANT COLONEL SHAUN FLETCHER

ABSTRACT

As the contemporary battlespace evolves, consideration needs to be given to the requirements for Army Health. This article critiques the existing structure and use of health capabilities in the Army and suggests future developments to improve how Army cares for the medical needs of its members against the backdrop of complex warfighting.

I went over to Brizzo, who was still alive at this time. He was laying down and he had no wounds from his knackers up, but every square inch of his legs was just hole. He kept on trying to sit up, but I had to keep him down because I didn't want him to see his legs.

Jeff Sculley, Platoon Medic, Vietnam War[1]

TIME FOR CHANGE

When Jeff Sculley was deployed to Vietnam, complex warfighting was not taught—it was practised. Jump forward forty years and despite advances in combat body armour, a large number of the catastrophic wounds that Coalition forces are experiencing in Iraq and Afghanistan are remarkably similar to those suffered by Sculley's Vietnam casualties. The Australian Army is once again practising complex warfighting, teaching warfighting theory and restructuring the combat arms of Army to fight more effectively. What improvements, however, have been made or suggested to the way Army Health fights its battles?

> These changes … had a fundamental impact on the ability of Army Health to fight.

Army Health underwent revolutionary change as part of the overall restructuring of the Army in the mid-1990's which was termed 'Army for the 21st Century' (A21). This introduced the formation of standardised health capability structures to generate health support effects within the battlespace. Building upon the lessons of Rwanda, the Field Ambulances, Preventive Medicine Companies and Field Hospitals were removed from Army's order of battle. In their place arose new team-based structures to provide health support to deployed forces. At the same time, command and control of Army's deployable health assets was wrested from the hands of health professionals and passed to logisticians, and Health was excised as a function from Army Headquarters. These changes, in an era of change, have had a fundamental impact on the ability of Army Health to fight.

The health challenges of today's complex warfighting are different from those that generated the A21 structural changes. These challenges require a rethink of the way Army Health is organised and does business. It is time to move on.

This paper provides a glimpse of the health challenges for Army that it must overcome in order to maximise casualty survivability rates in the complex warfighting environment of the future. The lesson from Army's past is that it must prepare and adapt for the future. The ideas in this paper are a mile wide and an inch deep, but the intent is to generate interest in the deployed health system Army requires to support complex warfighting activities.

DEFINING COMPLEX WARFIGHTING

Army's capstone doctrine states that winning future battles will depend on skilled personnel, flexible organisations, robust support infrastructure, excellent training, the right equipment and sound doctrine.[2] The future battlespace is shaping to be one in which many factors are at play. Diverse urbanised terrain, a variety of state and non-state players, and a wide range of conventional and non-conventional threats increase the vulnerability of logistic and health support nodes, routes and assets. It is within this battlespace that the Australian Army is posturing itself to undertake complex warfighting.

For the purposes of this paper, complex warfighting is defined as multidimensional conflict—that is a conflict not just in space and time, but also in context. This context is created by the physical, political, cultural and informational environments where conflicts are fought.[3] 'Complex warfighting operations demand the application of precise and discriminating force, in a whole of government framework, to influence and control populations and perceptions'.[4]

Such warfighting occurs in a complex environment. This environment is characterised by physical, human and informational factors that interact in a mutually reinforcing fashion. A complex environment limits the utility of technological intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance and reduces opportunities for long-range engagement with a consequent increased emphasis on close combat.[5] Significantly for Army, close combat results in casualties and increased risk to any responding health system.

Of all the characteristics of the complex environment, asymmetry and the battlespace's non-contiguous nature provide the biggest obstacles to the provision of health support. Military asymmetry may be reflected by differences in composition of forces, intent, culture, technology or size.[6] The non-contiguous battlespace means that activities conducted in what were traditionally perceived as relatively secure areas now take place wherever contact with the enemy is possible.[7] In complex warfighting, the 'front line' is gone and a robust, fleeting enemy will maximise targets of opportunity using a variety of conventional and unconventional weapons and techniques.

> … close combat results in casualties and increased risk to any responding health system.

Army's approach to succeeding in complex warfighting is shaped by the Chief of Army's development intent for a Hardened and Networked Army (HNA). The HNA is to be capable of complex warfighting, using the combined-arms effect at the small team level to generate a capability for close combat in complex terrain.[8]

Supporting this intent demands a rethink of the way Army Health is currently commanded, employed and deployed. With complex warfighting comes complex health challenges—and Army Health must evolve to meet these challenges.

THE COMPLEX WARFIGHTING HEALTH CHALLENGES

Complex warfighting requires a specific approach to close combat—an approach which acknowledges that while combat does not itself guarantee victory, close combat remains an essential prerequisite for mission success. To be effective, forces must be organised and consciously optimised for close combat under conditions of complex warfighting.[9] This raises a number of unique challenges for Army Health.

A failure to understand the health threats faced by any deploying force will result in both an inadequate force protection posture and an unsuitable health system being deployed. Most casualties suffered by any deployed force will be disease and non-hostile injuries. Health participation in mission reconnaissance significantly reduces the non-battlefield casualties suffered by the deploying force. Reconnaissance missions use active or passive methods to obtain information about the activities and resources of an enemy or potential enemy, or about specific environmental data sets.[10] Army Health already adheres to this doctrinal guidance. Such reconnaissance achieves a number of outcomes. Firstly it validates the Strategic Health Intelligence assessment of the deployment area and provides an initial chance to scope the environmental and occupational threats that may impact on the deploying force. Secondly, it provides a chance for the on-the-ground Health Commander to ensure that the disposition of the deploying Health force conforms to the operational commander's in-theatre concept of operations. Finally, it performs the important corporate shaping task of ensuring that Health is visible to the operational commander as a separate and essential part of the overall force. Health is not logistics and logisticians cannot undertake this vital health reconnaissance task. Army's existing Health Threat Assessment Sections within each of the Health Support Battalions are ideally postured to undertake these missions—but they need tasking, restructuring and re-equipping to be effective.

Prior to deployment, Mission Rehearsal Exercises (MRE) are vital to the force preparation of Australian soldiers deploying into any operational environment. The active participation by Army Health Services in scheduled MRE must be considered

> Most casualties suffered by any deployed force will be disease and non-hostile injuries.

as essential. All deploying soldiers need to be exposed to the full spectrum of operational realities—and that includes traumatic injuries and mass casualty situations. Further, health personnel must be adequately force prepared and assessed. Statements such as 'you don't need access to that type of vehicle as it won't be your ambulance'[11] miss the point that, unless Army Health Services personnel train realistically and practice extracting and treating casualties from all dependency vehicle types, then they will not be able to operate effectively. Simple things like knowing where vehicle hatches are located, how to open doors and what type of casualty extraction equipment will be required will save lives. To validate the success of force preparation activities, Army must implement procedures for the formal assessment of collective health capabilities before deployment. Australia's major coalition partners already conduct assessments of this nature[12] and the reduction in their mortality and morbidity rates during current conflicts is testament to the success of this approach.

> Simple things …
> will save lives.

There is already abundant data on wound profiles being generated out of the Middle East. The adoption of an ever increasing range of combat body armour has seen a move in the pattern of fatal wounds away from the torso to the extremities and limbs. Unfortunately, due to the unclassified nature of this article, it is not possible to expand on this point, but what can be stated is that wound profiling of US and UK casualties reveals potential for improvements in combat body armour.[13] Capitalising on these lessons, the already highly significant reduction in mortality and morbidity rates *vis-à-vis* the Vietnam War can be further improved upon. The key lesson for Army Health from changing wound profiles is the need for specialist surgical support to be available to respond rapidly to the escalating number of extremity and head wounds. This requires development work on the skill set components of Army's Role Three surgical support capabilities and investment in securing an adequate pool of specialists for Army from the limited number available within the Australian community.

The civilian Airway, Breathing and Circulation (ABC) approach to the provision of first aid is redundant for military operations. The battlefield killer is, and has always been, the 'C'. This revelation is nothing new. Obsolete Army doctrine states that:

> the most common cause of death on the battlefield is haemorrhage. A large number of casualties bleed to death on the battlefield because of inadequate first aid. Research has shown that in cases of severe trauma, survival is improved if first aid can be provided within the first five minutes of the injury.[14]

Therefore, both history and our current experiences indicate that military battle-field trauma should be managed using a CAB approach, rather than the civilian-specific ABC model. Complex warfighting—and the greater use of individual force protection measures such as combat body armour—changes wound profiles and places a greater emphasis on the first responder to stop the inevitable extremity haemorrhage. Besides a change in our first response methodology, the HNA also requires both a greater percentage of Combat First Aiders in each combat team and a greater emphasis on individual soldier first aid skills. The Army standard must be for every soldier who is deploying to be a qualified Combat First Aider. The Canadian Army experience with this approach has seen a demonstrable improvement in their post-incident morbidity and mortality rates in Afghanistan.[15] Further, in order to ensure Army maintains a solid base line of basic medical skills, annual re-qualification in basic first aid must become mandatory and this must be recorded on PMKeys.

'Deploying the Level Three' is not the solution to every health problem. Sadly, too many non-Army Health planners (and a large number of Army's 'Operational' planners) can only see one solution to every health-related problem they encounter.

> Complex warfighting … changes wound profiles…

The current mind-set on deploying health support has come about as a result of the demise of Army Health as a corporate entity and the inclusion of Army Health into logistic organisations. Not only does this impact on the command and control of Army Health assets, it is the prime determinant of what health capability assets are deployed. Health and logistics do not have the same aim or outcomes. Logistics is about sustainment, Health is about force protection and force preservation. Health support to deployed forces is a system of elements and responses. Early threat assessment during the reconnaissance phase must be supported by a comprehensive evacuation continuum, ongoing environmental health support, timely and world-class casualty treatment, wounded soldier rehabilitation and finally hand-off back into the personnel management world. Continued reliance on a single element of that system to meet all requirements will result in institutional failure.

Whether in the jungles of Vietnam or in the urban sprawl of the Middle East, locating casualties has always been a difficult task. In this area technology may come to Army's assistance. Combat identification will be made simpler in the future through the use of emerging technology that will allow commanders to track and locate their subordinates at all times. Link these technologies with individual soldier system monitors[16] and the possibilities are endless. Importantly for Army Health, monitoring an individual's location and combat status facilitates a rapid treatment and evacuation response should that individual become combat ineffective due to

injury or illness. At the Theatre Level and above, global visibility of casualty movements through the health system, and visibility of each treatment asset's capability, must become a feature of the broader Army and ADF health system. Web-based casualty regulation and facility management tools will become a standard feature of future warfighting and are already in use by our coalition partners. There is now potential for the Australian Army to achieve real-time casualty visibility through the acquisition of the United States' TRANSCOM Regulating and Command and Control Evacuation System (TRAC2ES). TRAC2ES is currently the subject of an ABCA study for more widespread coalition use. Australia is intimately involved in this study and it is anticipated Australian access to the system could be granted from mid-2008.

Casualty evacuation is the critical link between life and death. The reduction in the time between wounding and treatment is directly related to lower mortality and morbidity rates.[17] The challenges of evacuating a casualty are complicated by the asymmetric and non-contiguous nature of the future complex battlespace—in complex warfighting, the casualty evacuation platforms themselves become prime targets of opportunity; soft-skinned B-vehicles become immediately obsolete. Aeromedical evacuation is not always an option due to time, space, platform availability and, more importantly, the growing vulnerability of the aerial platforms to increasingly sophisticated weapons and tactics. Army Health requires two response options for surface evacuation of casualties. Firstly, a fleet of 'conventional' hardened ambulance vehicles are required that have the same mobility, communications suite and self protection as the force they are supporting. These vehicles will be essential to undertake evacuations in an environment of threat to platforms, their occupants and to the very routes on which they travel. To demonstrate the importance of this point, the US Army now employs only up-armoured HUMVEE Ambulances in support of ground operations. Secondly, Army Health requires lightweight and robust uninhabited vehicles that are an integral part of the Combat Team organisation and whose role is to 'swoop and scoop' casualties back to a primary aid facility. The US Army is already exploring this idea and has termed its concept demonstrators 'Mules'.[18] Couple the uninhabited evacuation vehicle with developing suspended animation technology and an effective solution to casualty evacuation under fire emerges.

… locating casualties has always been a difficult task.

Casualty evacuation is the critical link between life and death.

Treating the casualty is actually the easiest and best understood part of the evacuation and treatment continuum. Army Health has long held the view that 'it is fundamental that developments in civilian medical practice are translated without delay into the military environment'.[19] The one enduring asset of Army Health is the high quality and training of its personnel. To bolster specialist numbers, the creation of a Specialist Reserve within Army will provide a greater and more responsive pool of critical medical specialists to support short-notice and long-standing Army activities. Treating a casualty becomes not so much a matter of how, but where. In an asymmetric non-contiguous battlespace, forward surgery becomes the only option. Supporting the forward surgical work, the importance of tactical and strategic aeromedical evacuation then becomes even more pronounced. The RAAF now has a role in complex warfighting on the ground—not by providing boots on the ground with under-prepared and inappropriately equipped personnel, but by adhering to core business.

> The reduction in mortality rates for severely injured soldiers comes at a cost.

The reduction in mortality rates for severely injured soldiers comes at a cost. Where once the rehabilitation services for Australian veterans were the envy of the world, as the numbers of aging veterans decline, the range and depth of services and corporate experience has also declined. Already in contemporary operations the United States has suffered tens of thousands of casualties including nearly 600 personnel with a minimum one limb amputation.[20] On top of this figure are the thousands of other US soldiers with severe long-term physical and psychological injuries. Complex warfighting produces complex casualties and increased survivability rates produce larger numbers of system-dependent individuals. The lesson from this overseas experience for the Australian Army is that veteran's health support services post-separation from Army must include services to cater for the long term system-dependent injured soldier. As the vast majority of complex warfighting casualties will be Army personnel, Army must engage with this issue and not leave it to the joint world to seek solutions on its behalf.

Liaison is essential to establishing an internal-to-force presence and, when operating within a coalition, an external-to-force credibility. With the current ADF reliance on coalition assets for the provision of all in-theatre health support above that organic to units and Combat Teams, liaison becomes an essential force multiplier. Force Level Senior Health Officers performing a planning and liaison role must be selected on skills, knowledge, attitude and ability and not on just being a member of one particular health services craft group. This interfacing gap is not only at the tactical and operational levels, it is also at the strategic level. Army appears to be at

an increasing disadvantage when senior non-Army Health Officers plan land-based warfighting health support without a full understanding of the range of effects Army Health can deliver. Army Health needs a strong advocate to champion its cause, and that strong advocate needs to be at Army Headquarters.

The critical component of any effective military organisation is command and control. Why then are Army's deployable health assets part of Logistics organisations and commanded by logisticians? Logisticians know as much about health as most medics do about ammunition stacking. Grouping health with logistics has not been successful. It is time to cut the losses of the A21 period and recognise that some ill-informed command and control organisational changes have not worked. It is time to optimise Army Health for the future by excising Health out of the logistic environment, centralising Army Health assets into one formation and addressing the Army Health command and control gap.

> Army Health needs a strong advocate to champion its cause …

THE HEALTH STRUCTURES ARMY NEEDS

The key to generating the right health effects for complex warfighting lies in the organisation and command and control of Army's deployable health assets. The centralisation of all Army's deployable health capabilities into one formation provides the only realistic solution if Army Health is to effectively contribute to combat viability. This concept is supported by Army doctrine that already states 'there are some forces or assets that require treatment as significant resources because of their wide utility but limited availability, or limited expert control cells.[21] In short, the Australian Army needs a Health Brigade.

Health Brigades are a reality for our major coalition partners, which grapple with the same health support problems as our forces. Health Brigades (or Medical Brigades) reside in both the US and UK armies and are viewed as essential combat multipliers. They are a

> … the Australian Army needs a Health Brigade.

specialised formation in which a limited, but essential, asset can be managed across a Corps or larger organisation. In the context of the Australian Army, centralising all Army's Role Two and Three Combat Health Support (CHS) units into one formation and forming a CHS Brigade will realise significant force preparation and mobilisation benefits almost immediately.[22] It will be far more capable than current organisations of generating and managing Army's limited health specialist rosters because all specialists will reside within the one organisation. Further, Army's force

health protection capability development would significantly benefit from having a single formation where capability development and management can be achieved with a minimum superfluous or repetitious staff effort. The examples of Special Operations Command (SOCOMD) and 16 Brigade (Aviation) are highly noteworthy examples of centralising a limited asset to generate sustainable and highly successful outcomes. Army's deployable CHS capabilities are another limited asset that could be far better commanded and managed in a single effects-focussed formation.

> … Army's force health protection capability development would significantly benefit from having a single formation …

On the equipment front, if Army is looking to an existing project for new equipment solutions to health capability gaps, then it is time to widen its horizons. In the past few years Joint Project 2060 (JP2060) has been viewed by many as the saviour for Army Health of the future. The reality is that JP2060 has become an almost irrelevant project and certainly not one aligned to producing an Army Health system capable of operating in tomorrow's complex warfare environment. The whole process of having to rely on watered-down joint concurrence to land warfighting support requirements delays the introduction of evolutionary equipment as a result of unnecessary and uneducated[23] joint and materiel staff floundering while trying to work out what is best for Army. Army Health equipment solutions must be compatible with Army's complex warfighting outcomes and methodology, not selected on the basis of political correctness or achieving non-Army program organisational efficiencies.

One of the realities of complex warfighting is the blurring in distinction between combat and support forces.[24] Casualty evacuation becomes a challenge when the evacuation platforms and personnel are softer targets than those they are support-ing—indeed, they then become the prime target. In order to maximise survivability rates, Army requires a standardised protected casualty evacuation platform at Role One and Two CHS units.[25] This fleet of platforms must have mobility, protection and communications commensurate with the force it is supporting. Statements in Land Warfare Doctrine 1 such as 'force protection will be difficult in the non-contiguous battlespace but must be kept in balance with mission needs'[26] become merely words in a risk averse, casualty averse society. The Australian public and the soldiers of the Australian Army will not accept casualties that occur as a result of not hardening or networking the support elements of our new HNA. New protected casualty evacu-ation platforms and uninhabited casualty extraction vehicles are not a luxury—they are a political and operational necessity.

Lastly, to make Army Health really work, there is a requirement for a strong advocate at Army Headquarters. Army is now the only Service that has not re-raised a Health Directorate within its service headquarters. The impacts of this are threefold. Firstly there is no central coordination or oversight of the Army Health systems operating within the three functional commands.[27] Implementing health policy is already difficult and there is virtually no extant Army Health policy. Secondly, there is no single Army Health voice in joint health forums and Army continually loses out due to the ability of other Services to 'divide and conquer'. Finally, there is no informed inter-action at the strategic level with force structure designers and concepts staff to ensure Army Health is an integral part of the force, not just some add on to logistics as an afterthought. Despite doctrinal rhetoric to the contrary, Army Health is not logistics. The reality is simple. For Army Health to avoid failure in the complex warfighting battles, a Health Directorate must be established at Army Headquarters, Army's CHS assets must be removed from their current logistic locations and centralised into a single formation, and a complete rethink must be conducted at the strategic level into the way Army Health does business.

> One of the realities of complex warfighting is the blurring in distinction between combat and support forces.

CONCLUSION

The restructure of Army Health under the banner of A21 was necessary to counter the perceived strategic threats of the time. Despite the changing strategic environment, it could be argued that the HNA of 2015 looks just like the soft un-networked Army of 2007—with a few more toys for the warfighters. Structures don't change, combat groupings don't really change, and even terminology doesn't change.[28] Yet, most disturbingly for Army Health, there are no planned changes from HNA initiatives. Something must be done before the reality of modern combat finds Army suffering as a result of its neglect of its own organic health services.

If Army Health is to operate in contemporary and future complex warfighting environments and ensure that the traumatic effects of battlefield wounds are minimised, then a full-function review of Army Health is required. This review must address the establishment of a Health Directorate at Army Headquarters, the reformation of Army's deployable Role Two and Three CHS assets into a single effects-focussed formation and the introduction of new fleets of equipment to generate a CHS effect capable of supporting the HNA in complex warfighting.

Brigadier George Mansford once wrote that 'the most tragic and disruptive impact on morale will be the unnecessary loss of life from friendly action'.[29]

He is wrong: the most tragic impact is the unnecessary loss of life from friendly inaction.

ENDNOTES

1   S. Rintoul, *Ashes of Vietnam: Australian Voices*, William Heinemann, Richmond, 1987, p. 133.

2   Commonwealth of Australia, LWD 1 *The Fundamentals of Land Warfare*, Department of Defence Puckapunyal, 2006, p. 30.

3   *Complex Warfighting Paper*, submitted to Chief of Staff Committee 31 March 2006, p. 2.

4   Ibid, p. 14.

5   *The Fundamentals of Land Warfare*, p. 84.

6   Ibid, p. 14.

7   Ibid, p. 28.

8   Lieutenant Colonel D. Kilcullen, 'Future Land Operating Concept', *Complex Warfighting*, Army Headquarters, Department of Defence, Canberra, 2004, p. 22.

9   Ibid, p. 18.

10   Commonwealth of Australia, LWD 3.1 *Intelligence Surveillance, Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance,* Department of Defence, Puckapunyal, 2006, pp. 1-2.

11   Made to the author when he attempted to shape an AMTG MRE casualty extraction activity.

12   Both the United States and United Kingdom have extensive pre-deployment assessment and certification regimes for their collective health capabilities.

13   From classified documents held in the LHQ Secure Registry.

14   Commonwealth of Australia, LWD 1.2 *Combat Health Support*, Department of Defence, Puckapunyal, 2004, p. 2.

15   Canadian Army observations made at the ABCA Annual Meeting 2007, noting that the vast majority of fatalities occur immediately at the point of incident.

16   I define the soldier system as the individual, their uniform and body armour and their equipment.

17   Commonwealth of Australia, MLW 2.1.1 *Medical and Dental Training: The Employment of the Health Services*, Headquarters Training Command, Department of Defence, 1984, pp. 1-2.

18   United States Army, *Army Transformation 2020: Experience the Future Force* (DVD), released 06 Oct 2003

19   *Medical and Dental Training*, pp. 1-2.

20   Correct as at 21 April 2007.

21   Commonwealth of Australia, 2003, LWD 0-0, *Command Leadership and Management*, Headquarters Training Command – Army, pp. 2-18.

22   CHS is to HSS as CSS is to Logistics. By definition Combat Health Support (CHS) is that health support provided to deployed forces within the area of operations. I therefore contend that we need a CHS not a HSS BDE.

23   'Uneducated' in that they lack an understanding or appreciation of Army and what Army requires. As Army Health makes up an overwhelming majority of the deployable personnel asset and health capability available to the ADF, a 'purple triumvirate' approach is not in Army's best interest.

24   United States Joint Forces Command Pamphlet 2007, *Joint Urban Operations*, p. 2.

25   NATO has adopted the use of *Roles* over *Levels* in its descriptive terminology for Health Support. ABCA publications are being amended to align with NATO and Australia will therefore need to start deleting the use of *Levels* and using *Roles*.

26   *The Fundamentals of Land Warfare*, p. 28.

27   Land Command, Special Operations Command and Training Command.

28   The 1995 pre-A21 RSG based upon 2 Cav Regt looks remarkably like the current BG Eagle.

29   G. Mansford, *Junior Leadership on the Battlefield*, Training Command Army Georges Heights, 1994, p. 9.

THE AUTHOR

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GERMS FOR GENERALS

BIOLOGICAL THREAT ASSESSMENT IN A CHANGING WORLD ORDER*

CAPTAIN TIM INGLIS

ABSTRACT

In a post–Cold War, post-11 September world, the field of biosecurity has increased, both in importance and scope, as a concern for military and civilian authorities. This article explores some of those nascent threats, and their implications for military forces.

INTRODUCTION

In the immediate aftermath of the attacks of 11 September 2001, the threats posed by the new world order that emerged shifted Defence and First Response agencies out of their post–Cold War comfort zone. Familiar threats, detection technology and delivery organisations became obsolete. Among the notable capability gaps to emerge in late 2001 was the need for better systems to deal with deliberate biological agent release. The white powder/anthrax attacks in the

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* This article has been peer-reviewed.

United States caused a wave of copycat incidents around the world. While almost all of these were the result of malicious hoaxes or civilian panic, response agencies were quickly inundated. The ensuing six years has seen a convergence of military and civilian emergency response tasking, with ever-closer collaboration between response agencies. The field of biosecurity has become very broad because everyone is potentially vulnerable, whether the biological threat is accidental, natural or deliberate. In this respect, there are no neutral parties; only threats and targets. Everyone is a combatant.

CHANGING BIOLOGICAL THREAT PROFILE

The list of biological threat agents kept in view during the Cold War was remarkably short.

Table 1: Soviet biological threat agents, 1926–92[1]

Biological agents	Weaponised	Research only
• Bacterial	• Anthrax • Glanders • Plague • Q fever • Tularaemia	• Brucellosis • Typhus • Melioidosis • Psittacosis
• Viral	• Smallpox • Marburg • Venezuelan equine encephalitis (VEE)	• Ebola • Bolivian hemorrhagic fever • Argentinian hemorrhagic fever • Lassa fever • Japanese encephalitis • Russian spring-summer encephalitis • Machupo virus • Yellow fever

An edited version of this list informed public health experts during the break-up of the former Soviet Union in the 1990s. Concern was expressed by former biological weapons scientists that these agents, and the relevant handling skills, could easily fall into the hands of the highest bidder.[2] The Soviet bio-weapon list therefore became a starting point for detection, protection and containment countermeasures. The worldwide elimination of smallpox paradoxically made the smallpox virus a more suitable biological weapon in the eyes of some experts.[3]

SMALLPOX

Smallpox is a contagious viral infection that was finally eradicated in the 1970s. Since the official announcement of its worldwide elimination in 1980, there has been growing concern about its potential for use as a weapon of bioterrorism. The principal reason for this concern is a combination of a high mortality rate (around 30 per cent), a lack of effective antiviral agents and an unvaccinated world population. Two high-security laboratories have been granted permission to keep stocks of the virus for research and vaccine development. These are at the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, Georgia, in the United States, and a Russian governmental laboratory in Koltsovo, Novosibirsk. Both are subject to inspection by the World Health Organisation. There has been persistent speculation that other nations such as North Korea have their own stock of smallpox virus. Nevertheless, current assessments indicate that this virus would be technically more difficult than anthrax to weaponise and effectively deploy, even if access to the virus could be established.[4]

The reluctance of a small number of laboratories with residual smallpox virus to destroy their stocks helped raise the potential weapon profile of this virus despite significant technical problems in transforming it into an effective tactical weapon. Further concern was voiced following belated recognition, almost fifteen years later, of the true nature of an accidental release of anthrax in Sverdlovsk, USSR, where over seventy people died following the accidental release of anthrax spores from a military compound.[5] The accident removed the covers from the Russian biological weapons program, confirming claims made by Alibek and other former Soviet experts.[6] Other potential biological weapons such as plague, glanders and tularaemia also featured in the Soviet program.

The anthrax attacks in the United States in late 2001 caused a significant shift in biological threat assessment.[7] Five years later, no perpetrator has been successfully indicted. Ominously, gene profiling suggests that the strain used in the 2001 attacks was similar to strains held in US culture collections.[8] Unfortunately, bacterial gene profiling was too slow in 2001 to inform forensic investigators before the trail went cold. However, it is clear that the anthrax used in these attacks was not the highly refined, weaponised type expected from a sophisticated, state-sponsored terrorist organisation. The possibility of biological attack by a disaffected US citizen, or a homegrown group with some scientific knowledge and a disruptive agenda, has not been completely ruled out.[9]

Another deliberate release event, only recognised afterwards, was the contamination of ready-to-eat foods with salmonella by a US religious group.[10] In 1984, a spiritual sect led by Sri Bagwan Rajneesh attempted to alter the course of a local election by deliberately contaminating ready-to-eat foods in ten salad bars in Oregon. At least 750 people were infected with *Salmonella typhimurium*, but it took more than a year to confirm that this was the result of a deliberate release. In this particular case the objective was a high attack rate without significant mortality.

SALMONELLA

Salmonella is a common bacterial cause of food poisoning and in previously healthy adults usually causes a gastro-intestinal upset that subsides eventually without the need for antibiotic treatment.

These events show how diverse the biological threat can be. The ambiguity of biological threat agents lies in our inability to recognise a deliberate release until cases of human disease appear. Even then, no suspicion of a deliberate release may arise until there have been sufficient cases to show unusual clinical features or pattern of disease. The earliest warning may come from an astute physician or an emergency department, and is quite likely to be confirmed when samples reach a public health laboratory. Unless prior intelligence is available, surveillance is largely passive. That means the very occasional biological weapon event has to be detected against a background of the entire swathe of infectious diseases. If the surveillance system is overly sensitive, false positive reports can create a level of complacency in response agencies and the wider community.[11]

Public health physicians advise that biological weapon exposure should be considered if the disease has an unusual range of clinical features (e.g. anthrax infection of the lungs), if there is a large number of cases, or if it is an animal infection and there have been no animal cases. However, this presumes a sophisticated level of health intelligence. In reality, the consequences of deliberate biological exposure are likely to change with the specific features of each event.

IMPLICATIONS FOR MILITARY RESPONSE

The changing perception of prevailing biological threats has forced a shift in the technical laboratory skills mix needed. Staff are needed who can work competently and confidently in personal protective equipment and safety cabinets, with unusual biological agents, in a field setting and with staff from other response agencies. This is not a job for entry-grade technicians. It needs a higher level of scientific and

INHALATIONAL ANTHRAX

Anthrax is one of the most studied biological weapon agents because of its suitability for airborne delivery, causing mass casualties with a high fatality rate. When the bacteria that cause anthrax (known as *Bacillus anthracis*) enter the lungs, they enter nearby tissues where the spores germinate. The bacilli then secrete the toxin that causes most of the effects of inhalational anthrax, including massive inflammation of the nearby lymph nodes and haemorrhage into the lungs. These effects can be recognised in a rapid onset of haemorrhagic pneumonia with widening of the mediastinal shadow on chest X-rays.

communication skills. The cost of developing and sustaining this level of service in any agency is prohibitive if only developed for occasional chemical, biological, radiological and explosive (CBRE) events and exercises. Thus, the growing interest in developing this type of service into a flexible, dual-purpose threat response suited to a wider range of biological threats. Unknown threats, such as powder in an unopened package, are particularly challenging because they require a mixture of chemical and biological analytical skills. Only a few response agencies have operationally tested procedures for unknown chemical and biological threats. More often, the skills and equipment to analyse these reside in different agencies.

In recent years, the perceived threat of bioterrorism has been the drive behind response capacity development. While the Defence Force is naturally relied upon for leadership and skilled manpower for counterterrorism, its assets and doctrine exist principally to counter external threats. Other agencies have developed and strengthened their counterterrorism capability. The opportunity now exists for the Australian Army to refocus its biological threat response capability on current and likely theatres of operation. In a specifically military context, the response posture depends on at least three different types of unit: Environmental Health, Pathology Laboratory and CBR Response units. These elements are likely to come under different chains of command, have different expectations for deployment, and

Table 2: Health threat assessment skills mix

Biological threat	Unit	Capability
Environmental hazard	Environmental Health	water, food, air, vector borne
Infectious disease	Pathology Laboratory	diagnostic microbiology
Biological weapons	CBR Response	detection & containment

do not necessarily exercise together. The health intelligence product provided by each of these types of unit has no immediate counterpart in civilian public health. These deployable logistic elements could combine in a comprehensive Health Risk Assessment Group (HRAG). An Army HRAG under a single command and control structure will give force commanders a more agile and flexible protective posture. The key elements of capability development will be a revised skills mix for lab, environmental and medical technicians. Individual and parent unit networking will contribute a strategic asset within the meaning of the HNA concept.

WARSTOPPERS

Chemical and toxic agents have received relatively more attention than biological agents as potential warstoppers. The rapid effect of chemicals and biological toxins was considered tactically useful in a Cold War setting. Though it was a civilian terrorism incident, the sarin attack on a Tokyo subway demonstrated how quickly a nerve agent could produce its effect on an unprepared population.[12] Biological agents, on the other hand, take longer to manifest their effects, with the exception of a short list of biological toxins such as such as ricin, staphylococcal enterotoxin and botulinum toxin. The military potential of the classical biological weapons agent lies more in the perceived threat of delayed but possibly fatal consequences. That threat can be enough to degrade operational readiness through the need to use CBR protective equipment, and could deny use of materiel or delay access to newly occupied territory. These may seem of little concern compared to the threat from munitions and small-arms fire. In a conventional warfare setting, the risk of collateral damage to friendly forces and non-combatants is much higher with a biological weapon. These considerations have probably stayed the hand of military commanders with biological weapon capability in past conflicts. The risk from these relatively uncontrollable weapons is tragically illustrated by the circumstances of the Sverdlovsk anthrax event.

… the risk of collateral damage to friendly forces and non-combatants is much higher with a biological weapon.

There is an evident paradox in the suitability of specific biological agents for tactical military use. The high profile agents that can theoretically survive dispersal and persist in the environment (e.g. anthrax spores, bacteria that cause glanders, melioidosis, tularaemia and Q fever) do not pose an immediate knock-down threat. While they have the potential to do serious harm and even kill following inhalation or exposure across broken skin, the attack rate would be low. They are probably more

important as instruments of territorial denial and psychological attack in prolonged conventional warfare; an inconvenience to field commanders whose troops have been slowed down by the use of CBR protective equipment.

Far more suitable are readily available infective agents that combine a high attack rate with a short-lived period of disability or prostration. In the short, hot war scenarios of recent times, a high attack/disability rate may be more important than a high case-fatality rate. Degradation of a unit's fighting ability through exposure to a new strain of influenza or viral gastroenteritis might have significant tactical consequences. A simultaneous double infection hit delivered to a front-line combat unit may degrade its defensive resolve.

So what are these agents? In recent times, attention has focused on pandemic and avian influenza (H5N1). These are different entities and pose similar but subtly different threats to the general population. Australia has not yet had an outbreak of either, but the encroaching threat

> … a high attack/ disability rate may be more important than a high case-fatality rate.

from nearby parts of South East Asia is considered sufficient for health planners to run a series of exercises in order to help plan for the predicted surge in demand for health services.[13] Contingency planning is therefore at an advanced level for the civilian population, but has more specific relevance to a military context. These new biological threats, or emerging infectious diseases, illustrate how quickly new respiratory infections can appear and spread. Particularly noteworthy is their capacity to spread through the healthy adult population with which a peacetime army has regular contact. If any further reminders are needed about the ever-present threat of transmissible respiratory infection, the spread of pertussis (whooping cough) through parts of the adult population in Australia, including military personnel, should be noted. The level of respiratory compromise may seem relatively trivial to a civilian physician, but it can still mean the difference between combat fitness and temporary medical restrictions. An outbreak of pertussis or other acute respiratory infection in the lines therefore needs much more aggressive containment measures than would be applied in the civilian community. A common feature of many transmissible respiratory and gastrointestinal infections is the importance of young family members as preliminary incubators for subsequent adult infection. Children of primary and pre-primary age are particularly susceptible, and represent an indirect threat to service personnel in family quarters.

The other consideration for the suitability of biological threat agents is its wider psychological context. Intense media interest has introduced the civil population to the vocabulary of bioterror, but has not succeeded in educating people in how remote or specific the actual risks are. The more easily spelled historical diseases like

anthrax, plague and smallpox have been demonised in the lay press. The media have had a mixed reputation as the major source of public information on biological threats. Leaving aside a lamentable record for scientific accuracy and subsequent correction of error, the mass media have inadvertently contributed to an increase in public panic levels during specific events like the white powder incidents of 2001, when a wave of panic, hoax and copycat incidents swept around the world in the wake of events in the United States.[14] More immediate biological threats, such as endemic influenza and other potential biological threat agents with less familiar names like glanders and tularaemia, hardly rate a mention. Obviously, they have little or no terror potential. There are plenty of opportunities for sensationalism when public concern is at an unusually high level.

> Intense media interest has introduced the civil population to the vocabulary of bioterror …

PROTECTIVE POSTURE THROUGH TECHNICAL SYSTEM ENHANCEMENTS

The technical response to biological threat agents comes from microbiology. This discipline has accumulated a range of procedures for amplifying signals that cannot be detected by the unaided human senses. By definition, microbes cannot be seen by the naked eye; a microscope is needed. In the case of viruses, this has to be an electron microscope—a very large piece of kit. While microscopy is fast, it remains easily detected and is not sufficiently specific to give a name to the threat agent in question. Biological amplification (culture) is therefore used to build up numbers so that growth can be easily seen on Petri dish agar plates. This material can then be used for agent identification and antibiotic sensitivity tests. Culture introduces a delay of around one to three days, making it unsuitable as an immediate command-decision aid. Moreover, viruses and some fastidious bacteria cannot be cultured easily. Some viruses cannot be cultured at all. Microbiologists have therefore developed specific methods to detect the molecular components of microbes. The most recent series of technical developments relies on direct amplification of microbial genes with a method called polymerase chain reaction (PCR). PCR-based tests can be performed in a few hours and are very specific. A range of methods have been developed

> There are plenty of opportunities for sensationalism …

around PCR-based systems to detect most of the biological threat agents. Portable PCR laboratory equipment has been trialed for field use. Deployable molecular microbiology is close to operational readiness as an effective solution to the problem of looking for a very small range of threat agents in samples that can contain a very wide range of non-pathogenic micro-organisms.

The issues that these new technical capabilities raise will be familiar to many senior logistic officers: who owns the service, what will its footprint look like, what will its command and control structure look like, and who will take care of training, maintenance and replacement? While recognising that these questions will be cause for debate for some years to come, now is a good time to make a few assertions based on what we can see already:

- biological threat detection technology is entering a period of rapid change, necessitating a more flexible materiel acquisition process;
- the main concentration of molecular microbiology skills is in civilian health care, from where Army will need to draw its technical and scientific officers;
- similar technical and scientific skills are required in Army pathology labs, environmental health and CBRE response units, raising the possibility of enhanced interoperability and skills retention with the Hardened and Networked Army concept;
- point-of-care diagnostic systems developed for civilian health care lend themselves to forward deployable laboratory units with minimal adaptation;
- culture-based systems will be rendered obsolete by deployable molecular biology tests, and should be considered as reference centre functions for sending base hospital operations;
- a review of pathology technician trade qualifications and rank structure would be timely, bearing in mind the double difficulty of recruiting into the civilian diagnostic laboratory and then into Army; and
- the role of the Combat Support Pathologist in future operations needs to be reconfigured in view of an increased operational tempo.

This is a list of more generic issues to be resolved before Army can reach the desired outcome of a comprehensive biological threat-assessment toolbox and the personnel to use it to best effect. We can anticipate a need to resolve the best way to achieve critical mass of operational expertise via expansion of vital trades, GRes recruitment and selective mobilisation. Reliance on GRes personnel and even civilian contract agencies may complicate the command and control structure, forcing the development of a less unified jurisdictional network, at odds with the HNA concept. The small number of currently available skilled personnel indicates that while executive command will logically be at Service or Joint Operations level, operational units will need a clear jurisdictional footprint. In order to begin the journey towards the desired outcome, the active participation of a range of Army

stakeholders will be needed. Their input is essential to ensure concentration on the main effort and avoidance of mission creep. Without a clear view of a shared objective, there is a danger that biological threat assessment could include nearly everything but achieve next to nothing. In the author's view, the logical next step is to pursue the development of a critical logistic resource in conjunction with the most frequently deployed Army Health units, whether for regional humanitarian aid or for combat missions.

CONCLUSION

The possible range of biological threats facing a deployed force is large and well beyond the capacity of a small, field-deployable laboratory unit or environmental health company. Emerging detection technologies offer the prospect of improved surveillance, early warning and faster threat clearance. Until systems have been developed to embed these technologies in an upgraded operational concept of health threat assessment, a rational approach can be adopted in which a tiered approach is taken to identify, contain and neutralise new threats. This tiered incident response will match more closely the approach taken by civilian first response agencies, and thus tap into a wider pool of professional emergency and disaster response skills. Development of military health threat assessment capability makes sense given the increasing likelihood that ADF elements will be deployed as a part of our national response to major humanitarian crises in our region.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ARE YOU TEACHING *ME* WHAT I NEED TO LEARN?

ASSESSING ARMY RESERVE OFFICER TRAINING FROM A STAFF CADET'S PERSPECTIVE*

SECOND LIEUTENANT AARON P. JACKSON

ABSTRACT

As our modern army is called upon to operate in complex battlespaces against non-traditional enemies, or to undertake activities other than traditional warfighting, is the training provided to Staff Cadets applicable to the situations junior commanders will face in their future careers? This article assesses the Part Time General Service Officer First Appointment Course and highlights possible changes that would make it more relevant to the challenges facing junior officers today.

*　This article has been peer reviewed.

It is 1130 hours, slightly chilly, with a mild breeze. To my front, about 200 metres away across open ground, is the objective—a farmhouse located in approximately 100 square metres of medium vegetation. Running off to the right of the farmhouse, perpendicular to my current axis, is a creek line surrounded by light vegetation (in the form of thirty metre-tall gum trees). About 200 metres to my right—or so my map says, I have not yet been able to 'do a recce'—is a disused quarry that could potentially conceal my platoon's movement to the creek. To my left is more open ground and, although it is undulating and could potentially provide some cover on the approach to the objective, it does not immediately endear itself to me. About a kilometre beyond the objective, across even more open ground, is a tree line, which is the start of a medium-to-dense gum forest.

So why is this farmhouse my objective? Let me start with the bigger picture. A few weeks ago, the Musorians[1] invaded northern Australia and began moving rapidly south towards the 'boomerang coast'. They have moved so rapidly across Australia's arid interior, however, that they have overstretched their supply lines and thus have been forced to temporarily adopt a defensive posture while they wait for their supporting elements to catch up. In order to take advantage of the situation, Australian forces have launched a new offensive—which is where I come into the picture. The farmhouse and the surrounding vegetation is an enemy position, the lead element of a Musorian motorised battalion. Intelligence confirms that somewhere in the gum forest a kilometre beyond the farmhouse is the lead company of the same battalion. In accordance with their doctrine, to which they tend to adhere rigidly, a squad-sized observation post has been established to the front of the position as early warning. My mission is to conduct a platoon attack against the observation post and clear it of the enemy.

Of course, the scenario given above is fictional, written purely for the purposes of this paper; although importantly it does mirror actual training scenarios I have encountered. What would happen next, were the above scenario real, is that I would begin to conduct the individual military appreciation process (IMAP). After having gone through this process, the end result should be a fairly sound plan of attack against the enemy position. This is the level of proficiency a Staff Cadet should have attained by the time they near the end of the Army Reserve Officer training program (officially the 'Part Time General Service Officer First Appointment Course'; hereinafter referred to as either the PT GSO FAC, or simply as 'the course').[2] By the final stages of the course a Staff Cadet should be familiar

> Is this the information a Staff Cadet needs to know in order to graduate from the Royal Military College …

with the IMAP, with Australian forces (both those under their direct command and the supporting assets that may be at their disposal) and with the Musorians and their military doctrine.

Is this the information a Staff Cadet needs to know in order to graduate from the Royal Military College (RMC) fully prepared to undertake their role as a platoon commander in the modern Army Reserve? Establishing an answer to this question is my intent in this paper, although I am aware of the constraints I face in reaching an accurate answer—I am an Army Reserve (very) junior officer with no operational experience. What I do have, however, is access to a wealth of material that enables me to learn from the experience of others, which I will draw upon throughout this piece in order to substitute for the gaps in my own experience. Hence, this paper consists of three sections. Firstly, an overview of the current structure of the PT GSO FAC is provided for the benefit of readers who may not be familiar with it. This is followed by a brief discussion of the tasks and challenges facing the contemporary junior commander. Drawing on the conclusions reached in this discussion it becomes obvious that, despite containing several relevant training components, there are also a number of areas in which the PT GSO FAC may be improved in order to better prepare today's Staff Cadets for the challenges they are likely to face as junior commanders. Discussion in the third section of this paper highlights six of these areas, along with the inclusion of some suggestions regarding possible ways to improve the course.

THE PT GSO FAC SYLLABUS[3]

Like its full-time equivalent, the PT GSO FAC is divided into three 'Classes': Third, Second and First. Within each Class, training is further broken down into 'modules' of one or two weeks, which allow the Course to be undertaken in several short blocks (see Figure One). Cadets are generally allowed up to three years to complete all required modules and graduate from RMC; due to the times of year when each module is conducted, the minimum period over which training may be conducted is fourteen months, however this rate of completion is rare and Cadets usually finish the course over a period of approximately two years.

Third Class Cadets begin their training where everyone else in the Army does: learning the basic soldierly skills. During their initial modules Cadets are assessed on a range of skills including field craft, navigation, weapon handling, teamwork, first aid and infantry-minor tactics at the individual level (most of the learning objectives for these modules are similar to those taught at the Army Recruit Training Centre – Kapooka). This aspect of the course is conducted over four modules—three two-week blocks of field-based training and a one-week block of barracks-based training wherein Cadets are taught the basics of Army administrative procedure.

On progression to Second Class, Cadets attend one two-week module of field-based training, where they are assessed in the role of section commander, and one nine-day module of barracks-based training that concentrates on teaching Cadets the 'fundamentals of land warfare' as defined in LWD-1.[4] Throughout their training, Third and Second Class Cadets are also progressively taught about the Musorians—firstly about their squad and platoon compositions, then about their battalion and brigade structures, and finally about their military doctrine. This is an important component of the course, as the Musorians are 'the enemy' that Cadets train against throughout the course.

Once these training courses have been completed, the final modules of the PT GSO FAC are conducted at RMC Duntroon over a continuous seven-week period. Assessment for this component of the course includes demonstrating competence as a platoon commander in the field and conducting tactical exercises

> … the Musorians are 'the enemy' that Cadets train against throughout the course.

Staff Cadet Training Modules

III Class	Induct	Mod III A1	Mod III A2	Mod III A3	Mod III B
Effective team member within Mil environment	3 Days	15 Days	15 Days	15 Days	9 Days

Mod III Induct	Barracks Based	Intro to Military life, dress & equip issue, mandatory briefs, drill, discipline, physical training
Mod III A1	Field Based	Military ethics, Army routine / rules, teamwork, drill, F88 austeyr weapon, first aid, navigation theory, communications
Mod III A2	Field Based	Navigation by day & night, weapons training, F1 grenade, other weapons, field routine, section tactics, leadership theory
Mod III A3	Field Based	Section leadership, planning & orders, understand how to operate as an effective team member
Mod III B	Barracks Based	Defence writing / speech, Service Discipline Law, understand capabilities & units / sub-units of Aust Brigade

II Class	Mod II A	Mod II B	Mod II C
Effective team leader within Mil environment	16 Days	9 Days	30 Days

Mod II A	Field Based	Section level operations within Platoon setting, section leader proficiency, effects of uncertainty & privation on team
Mod II B	Barracks Based	Warfighting doctrine, command philosophies, Aust forces offensive ops, enemy forces defensive ops, command, administration
Mod II C	Field Based	Pre-cse study guide, Aust forces offensive / defensive ops, terrain appreciation, Platoon level ops within Company setting

I Class	Mod I A	Mod I B
Professional Mastery	15 Days	15 Days

Mod I A	Barracks Based	Explain leadership theory, produce Defence correspondence, resource mangmt principles, plan trg, conduct theory lesson
Mod I B	Barracks Based	Comb. arms off/sec ops, COY level ops within Battalion setting, decision planning/making, Aust strategic environmt, PR, media

AUR/Uni Regt Cse	RMC-A Cse	LWC (Post Graduation)

Figure One. Army Reserve Staff Cadet Training Modules.
Source: Army Reserve Recruiting Material

without troops (TEWTs)—this paper's opening scenario is similar to those that may be encountered in a typical TEWT. Once these final modules are completed, Cadets graduate from RMC at the rank of Second Lieutenant. A further sixteen-day training module is required prior to promotion to Lieutenant and corp-specific training modules are generally a prerequisite for obtaining an operationally deployable status.

THE TASKS AND CHALLENGES FACING THE CONTEMPORARY JUNIOR COMMANDER

Leaving aside the day-to-day personnel management tasks that are inherent to any management position, military or otherwise, defining the tasks and challenges facing the contemporary junior commander may at first glance appear simple. To some extent this is true—at the most basic level the role of the junior commander remains unchanged from ages past: the junior commander is given a mission and must lead troops towards the goal of completing it. The 'principles of leadership' also remain largely untouched.[5] What has changed dramatically over the past few decades, however, is the nature of the missions that junior commanders are likely to be tasked with and the environment in which they must be achieved. Largely, this shift is due to a broader shift in the nature of contemporary conflict—a shift that warrants further examination.

> … defining the tasks and challenges facing the contemporary junior commander may at first glance appear simple.

The first significant contributing factor to this shift is that contemporary conflict is likely to manifest itself differently today than twenty years ago, when the possibility of large-scale conventional warfare in Europe was most likely. Even Australia, isolated from Europe by its geography, prepared to fight a large scale conventional war—the 1986 'Dibb Report' (on which the 1987 *Defence White Paper* was based) asserted that:

> Australia faces no identifiable direct military threat and there is every prospect that our favourable security circumstances will continue … It would take at least 10 years and massive external support for the development of a regional capacity to threaten us with substantial assault.[6]

Despite the admission that 'Australia is one of the most secure countries in the world',[7] the Australian Defence Force (ADF) was geared toward continental defence against the prospect of a large-scale conventional invasion, which may have originated somewhere to Australia's north.

In contrast, Australia's security environment today is far less benign. The Australian Army, which in 1986 had not undertaken a major overseas operation since the Vietnam War, is today involved in four: Iraq, Afghanistan, East Timor, and Solomon Islands.[8] Furthermore, each of these operations is unique in nature, meaning that success in each requires an inherently more flexible Army than that of twenty years ago. This need for flexibility has been accompanied by a broader variety of threats to Australian security that mean the military can no longer solely prepare to protect the Australian continent from a 'substantial assault' by a conventional force. Instead, it must be prepared 'to protect and defend our people, and our interests, and our way of life … well beyond our shores'.[9]

This shift in Australia's security strategy has necessarily resulted in a shift of focus within the Army, towards expeditionary operations both within Australia's immediate region and around the world.

In addition to Australia's strategic shift of focus, tactical requirements have also changed substantially over the past twenty years. Despite the plethora of different (and often competing) theories offered during the 1990s and early 2000s to explain the nature of contemporary conflict,[10] today variety is often acknowledged as being its defining characteristic. To an extent elements of each theory therefore remain valid. This situation is summarised by Michael Evans, who asserts that, following the end of the Cold War:

> This shift in Australia's security strategy has necessarily resulted in a shift of focus within the Army …

> War became at once modern (reflecting conventional warfare between states), postmodern (reflecting the West's cosmopolitan political values of limited war, peace enforcement, and humanitarian military intervention), and premodern (reflecting a mix of substate and transstate warfare based on the age-old politics of identity, extremism, and particularism).[11]

In essence, this divergence means that modern militaries, including the Australian Army, must now prepare for conflict across the entire spectrum of operations (see Figure Two), rather than only at its 'top end', as was traditionally the case.

This change in the scope of conflict has been accompanied by several new technologies and environmental and societal trends, all of which have led to changes in the nature of the tasks and challenges facing the contemporary junior commander. First, the dissemination of night vision equipment means that night operations can now be conducted more easily, leading to the concept of 'the continuous battle' in which forces may be required to conduct operations around the clock, potentially for several days.[12] Second, shifting demographics mean that contemporary operations are more likely to occur in an urban environment (in the 100 years to 1990, the percentage

of the world's population living in cities increased from 14 to 43, a growth trend that continues to the present day).[13] Third, strict rules of engagement (particularly during peacekeeping operations) can severely constrain the use of force, meaning that a junior commander may not necessarily have access to the full range of options previously available to facilitate the completion of this type of mission.[14] This is, to an extent, linked to the fourth shift in the nature of conflict—the increased role of the media in determining the course of conflicts.[15] For the junior commander, this shift has resulted in a greater need to ensure that all personnel under one's command are aware of the impact their actions may have on the broader development of a conflict.[16] Fifth, the traditional notion of a 'linear battlefield' has been largely replaced by the concept of a four-dimensional 'battlespace', one in which it is difficult to determine the enemy's fronts and flanks.[17] Increasingly, this shift is resulting in the need to take a combined-arms, joint force or interagency approach in order to successfully engage enemy forces.

Indeed, one of the most significant changes of the past twenty years has been adapting to enemy forces that are vastly different in nature to traditional (i.e. conventional) forces. Whereas the Soviet military was characterised by a strong emphasis on centralised control, had a well-developed military doctrine that was closely followed

> … the traditional notion of a 'linear battlefield' has been largely replaced by the concept of a four-dimensional 'battlespace' …
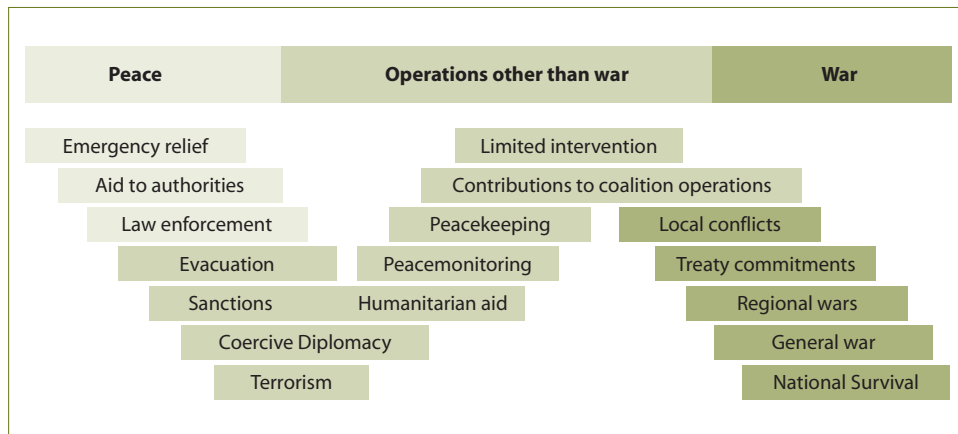
Figure Two. 'The Spectrum of Operations'.

Source: Commonwealth of Australia, *ADDP-D.3: Future Warfighting Concept*, Department of Defence, Policy Guidance and Analysis Division, Canberra, December 2002, p. 24.

at all levels and a conventional strategy that relied heavily on weight of numbers,[18] the enemies confronting Australia's forces today rarely have any of these features. Instead, the adversarial forces faced today are frequently 'amorphous, locally and regionally based groups and networks lacking a unifying ideology, central leadership, or a clear hierarchical organization'.[19] Furthermore, these forces frequently exploit their superior local knowledge in order to hide amongst the local population, making them difficult to identify (a factor that both enables and exploits the 'battlespace' concept discussed above). Armed with this advantage, the enemy is also usually harder to engage prior to an attack being launched against friendly forces and harder to find once they disengage

EFFECTIVELY PREPARED STAFF CADETS?

Overall, this plethora of new developments means that contemporary commanders face a far more complex and fluid environment than that of twenty years ago, which leads me back to the intent of this paper—does the current PT GSO FAC effectively prepare a Staff Cadet to be a platoon commander in this environment? Contrasting my experience of the course with the character of modern conflict described above, my answer is that although the PT GSO FAC does prepare Staff Cadets for the challenges they are likely to face as junior commanders, there are a few key areas in which the course could prepare them better. Due to space constraints, the following discussion does not address the many positive aspects of the course in great detail. Rather, it is limited to an examination of six key areas: four where training should be improved and two where positive aspects of the course could be better capitalised upon. Some suggestions of possible ways to make improvements are also made with regards to each area.

> … contemporary commanders face a far more complex and fluid environment than that of twenty years ago …

YESTERDAY'S ENEMY

I will begin with the most immediately apparent shortfall in the current PT GSO FAC: the lack of training against forces that are similar in structure and *modus operandi* to those likely to be encountered by Australian forces on operations. At present, Staff Cadets spend the majority of the course training to fight an enemy that uses Soviet doctrine, albeit that this is thinly disguised behind a Musorian veil. In order to better prepare junior commanders to fight contemporary enemy forces, the simulated enemy that Staff Cadets train against should be updated to take into account current operational experiences. For example, a training scenario could include an intelligence

brief stating that the enemy has been using improvised explosive devices (IEDs) along certain routes through the area of operations. This would encourage Staff Cadets to consider which routes are the safest to use from a different perspective (e.g. 'am I likely to take casualties from IEDs if I use this route to the form-up-point?').

This example is, of course, overly simplistic. In reality, the inclusion of such details would have to be carefully managed in order avoid causing confusion during the early stages of training. Providing this was to occur however, training against a simulated enemy that more closely mirrors those encountered on current operations would be greatly beneficial. Whilst I will refrain from making suggestions about the exact form such an enemy should take, it is important to note that the objective of any alteration to the enemy simulated in training scenarios should be the encouragement of greater levels of lateral thinking about the situation and possible actions of the enemy forces.

> … training against a simulated enemy that more closely mirrors those encountered on current operations would be greatly beneficial.

YESTERDAY'S SCENARIOS

As the scenario presented at the start of this paper suggests, tactics and doctrine are currently taught in relation to the 'defence of Australia' scenario, which is anachronistic in light of Australia's contemporary security challenges and the current focus on expeditionary operations. A more realistic training program would involve scenarios wherein Australian forces were deployed overseas in aid of an allied government (rather than only involving scenarios wherein Australia is being invaded). Furthermore, training scenarios should be updated to take into account modern battlefield conditions, for example by including areas heavily populated by civilians. Such an inclusion would serve not only to increase the realism of training scenarios, but would also reinforce other aspects of the training program, such as the laws of armed conflict (LOAC) component, by forcing Staff Cadets to take it into account when conducting the IMAP.[20]

This problem is not, however, limited to the tactical and doctrinal components of the course. The historical components of the course syllabus, although engaging learning aids, are frequently of only partial relevance to contemporary junior commanders. This is because, although they provide good examples of sound planning, mission execution and

> … training scenarios should be updated to take into account modern battlefield conditions …

the application of the 'principles of leadership', they do not necessarily demon-strate to Staff Cadets how to successfully transplant their application into the modern context. This situation could be easily remedied by expanding the scope of pre-course training components, which currently include a case study of the Battle of Maryang San (2–8 October 1951) and the lessons to be drawn from it. The inclusion of a second, more recent case study, such as the Second Battle of Fallujah (November 2004)[21] would promote a greater understanding of the nature of current 'high intensity' battles.[22] It would also allow Staff Cadets to learn about the challenges facing the contemporary junior commander by way of historical contrast, in addition to reinforcing the notion that the 'principles of leadership' are a timeless phenomenon. Any subsequent discussion that contrasts the two battles would have a positive reinforcing effect.

TOO NARROW A SPECTRUM

Given the variety of operations in which the Australian Army is currently engaged, the scope of the PT GSO FAC should be broadened to take into account both more complex environments and the array of military endeavours that occur at all levels of the spectrum of operations (see Figure Two). Currently, the PT GSO FAC focuses only on operations that occur at the 'top end' of the spectrum (i.e. large-scale conven-tional warfighting), in a battlespace where the enemy is clearly defined and the rules of engagement are simplistic. Instead, training should be broadened to take into account the variety of environments in which junior commanders may now find themselves. This could be done by increasing the focus given to preparing for operations further down the spectrum.

Prior to offering some suggestions as to how this may occur, it should be mentioned that on the few occasions that I have raised this issue with my peers and instructors alike, the reply is generally that training focuses on conflict at the 'top end' of the spectrum of operations because these operations are the most difficult type of conflict. The implication, therefore, is that if Staff Cadets can become proficient at 'top end' warfighting, mastering other forms of operations will be easy. My reply to this assertion is twofold. Firstly, even if this claim were accurate, the nature of modern warfare means that contemporary operations at the 'top end' of the spectrum of conflict are different in nature to those we are currently training to fight (see above). Secondly, the idea that training focused solely on warfighting at the 'top end' of the spectrum of operations will result in the successful conduct of other types of

> … successfully conducting operations at the 'top end' of the spectrum remains an essential requirement for modern militaries …

operations is erroneous. As recent operational experience has testified, challenges presented to the junior commander during operations other than high-intensity warfighting can be just as stressful and difficult to overcome. Indeed, the elevation of one group of challenges to a position of pre-eminence within the PT GSO FAC training program may actually reflect the Australian Army's history and cultural values rather than an evaluation of actual opera-
tional experience.[23] Nevertheless, there is a solid case for broadening the focus of the PT GSO FAC so that it better prepares Staff Cadets.

This broadening of scope could be achieved quite easily via one (or more) of a number of options. For example, part of the course could focus exclusively on addressing the requirements of a platoon commander that are unique to peace

> … there is a solid case for broadening the focus of the PT GSO FAC …

enforcement or low-level counterinsurgency operations. Alternatively, the requirements of the junior commander during different types of operations could be taught using the 'three block war' approach currently practiced by the US Marine Corp and Canadian Forces.[24] Cadets could, having learned the 'principles of leadership', apply them to the situations they could expect to encounter in each. Subsequently, field modules of the course could simulate the environments contained within each of the 'blocks' within close temporal proximity, allowing Staff Cadets to both experience the rapid change in environments they are likely to encounter on operations and apply their training within each environment. This approach would have the added bonus of providing both relevant and stimulating training without greatly increasing the length of the course.

YESTERDAY'S GROUND

I was the only Staff Cadet in my unit whom had seen an urban operations training facility. Given the trend towards operations occurring in the urban environment, this situation constitutes a deficiency in the current training program. Furthermore, I suspect that this is not a problem limited to the PT GSO FAC, but rather is a widespread deficiency in Army Reserve training. The good news with regard to this shortfall is that the situation may soon be remedied as recognition of the need for greater levels of urban training for Regular Army personnel has recently led to the construction of several urban operations training facilities around the country.[25] Over the next few years this will no doubt result in a 'flow-on' effect to Reserve training. In the interim, this training shortfall could be partially addressed by the inclusion of some 'basic' urban tactics theory lessons in one or more of the PT GSO FAC's continuous training modules. Although far from an ideal solution, such an inclusion would be an improvement over the current situation.

GETTING BETTER MILEAGE

The contribution of training staff at all stages of the PT GSO FAC has been, in my experience, outstanding. One of the major benefits of the course is the combined wisdom and consistently high levels of enthusiasm brought to it by training staff from a variety of backgrounds within both the Australian Regular Army and Reserves. That said, training staff remain an under-utilised asset in a few key ways; the training program could benefit further from their experience, particularly those that have served on recent operations as junior commanders. This is a situation that can be remedied simply. First, encouraging training staff to give presentations to Staff Cadets about their personal experiences is a great way to allow them to directly pass on the lessons learned from those experiences.[26] It also has the added benefit of engaging Staff Cadets by presenting them with situations with which they can readily empathise. Second, given the increasing incidence of combined-arms and joint approaches, the corps-specific background of non-Infantry Corps staff could be more heavily drawn upon throughout the course. A greater understanding by Staff Cadets of the roles of the various corps would ultimately result in a greater incorporation of combined-arms approaches into their TEWT solutions, in a learning environment where solutions can be critiqued by staff from a variety of backgrounds and with a variety of experiences.

> … training staff remain an under-utilised asset in a few key ways …

One of the benefits of a training program that draws heavily on LWD-1 is that the models contained within LWD-1 are flexible enough to be relevant to most situations. The same could be said of the IMAP. In short, what can be summarised as the 'how to think, not what to think' philosophy remains a valid paradigm in the contemporary environment. This element of the course should therefore be retained; however, the way in which it is taught will need to be altered if the shortfalls identified above are to be addressed. For example, a discussion of the additional situational factors that need to be taken into consideration during typical missions encountered by junior commanders on peacekeeping operations or during urban operations would allow Staff Cadets to practice applying the 'how to think, not what to think' approach to environments that are not at the 'top end' of the spectrum of conflict, against an enemy that does not adhere strictly to doctrine. This broadening of the scope of the training program would ultimately provide great benefit because it would teach Staff Cadets to more effectively apply the 'how to think, not what to think' approach in a broader variety of situations.

FINAL THOUGHTS

In November 2002, a company strength Army Reserve contingent deployed to East Timor as a part of 5/7 RAR—the first overseas operational deployment undertaken by a sizeable contingent of Australian Army Reserves since the end of the Second World War.[27] More recently Army Reserves have also been deployed on operations in Sumatra (in the wake of the Boxing Day Tsunami in 2004) and to Solomon Islands. Thus it is increasingly essential for Army Reserve training courses, including the PT GSO FAC, to reflect operational realities. At risk of sounding clichéd, it is of increasing importance that the Army Reserve trains as it intends to fight, for ultimately Reserves will fight as they have been trained.

> … the 'how to think, not what to think' philosophy remains a valid paradigm in the contemporary environment.

It should be noted, however, that despite the need for improvements in specific areas, the remainder of the course is generally highly relevant to the contemporary situation, especially with regard to the teaching of individual soldierly skills. To this end, two of the positive aspects of the course were also highlighted above and some ideas regarding how to better utilise them were postulated. Returning to the question posed at the start of this paper—does the PT GSO FAC effectively prepare a Staff Cadet to be a platoon commander in the contemporary operational environment—my answer is that, while the course is effective overall, it could nonetheless be improved in several ways. Ultimately these improvements would make the course even more valuable, maximising the chances that Staff Cadets will become effective junior commanders in the modern operational environment.

ENDNOTES

1   Musoria is a fictional country located somewhere to Australia's north. It is used by the Army as a training aid when a simulated enemy force is required. Although there is not much interest in Musoria outside of the military, a quick Internet search nonetheless led me to a website that revealed that 'Musoria represented a much larger country that supposively [sic] had the ability to carry out a fully-fledged invasion of the Australian landmass, adopting Soviet military doctrine and order of battle'. See: <http://everything2.com/index.pl?node_id=1531004>, accessed 14 November 2006.

2   By 'nearing the end of the Army Reserve Officer training program' I am referring to a Staff Cadet who has completed Third and most if not all of Second Class, and is preparing to attend RMC for the final modules of the PT GSO FAC.

3   For more information on the PT GSO FAC syllabus see: *The Royal Military College of Australia: Handbook*, Duntroon: RMC-A, 2005, pp. 21–2.

4   See: Australian Army, *LWD-1: The Fundamentals of Land Warfare*, Land Warfare and Development Centre, Puckapunyal, 2002.

5   Australian Army, *LWD 0.0: Command, Leadership and Management*, Land Warfare and Development Centre, Puckapunyal, 2003, pp. 3.20–3.23.

6   Paul Dibb, *Review of Australia's Defence Capabilities: Report for the Minister of Defence*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1986, p. 1.

7   Ibid.

8   Commonwealth of Australia, *The Australian Army in Profile 2005*, Army Headquarters, Canberra, 2005, pp. 4–63.

9   The Right Hon. John Howard, *Address to the ASPI Global Forces 2006 Conference – Australia's Security Agenda*, Hyatt Hotel, Canberra, 26 September 2006 [Transcript available online, accessed 14 November 2006: http://www.pm.gov.au/news/speeches/speech2150.html]

10 For example, see: Martin van Creveld, *The Transformation of War*, The Free Press, New York, 1991; Alvin Toffler & Heidi Toffler, *War and Anti-War: Survival at the Dawn of the 21st Century*, Little, Brown and Co., Boston, 1993; United States Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Vision 2020*, US Government Printing Office, Washington DC, June 2000; Thomas X. Hammes, *The Sling and the Stone: On War in the 21st Century*, Zenith Press, St Paul, MN, 2004; Barry R. Posen, 'Command of the Commons: The Military Foundation of US Hegemony', *International Security*, Vol. 28, No. 1, Summer 2003, pp. 5–46; John Garnett, 'The Causes of War and the Conditions of Peace' in John Baylis, James Wirtz, Eliot Cohen & Colin Grey (eds), *Strategy in the Contemporary World: An Introduction to Strategic Studies*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2002, pp. 66–87; Jeremy Black, 'War and Strategy in the 21st Century', *Orbis*, Vol. 46, No. 1, Winter 2002, pp. 137–44.

11 Michael Evans, 'From Kadesh to Kandahar: Military Theory and the Future of War', *Naval War College Review*, Vol. 56, No. 3, Summer 2003, p. 135.

12 Australian Army, *LWD-1*, p. 24.

13 L. B. Sherrard, 'From the Directorate of Army Doctrine: The Future Battlegroup in Operations', *The Army Doctrine and Training Bulletin* (Canada), Vol. 6, No. 3, Fall/Winter 2003, p. 6 (esp. figure 1-1).

14 See Leslie C. Green, *The Contemporary Law of Armed Conflict*, 2nd ed, Juris Publishing Inc, New York, 2000.

15 Margaret H. Belknap, 'The CNN Factor: Strategic Enabler or Operational Risk?', *Parameters*, Vol. XXXII, No. 3, Autumn 2002, pp. 100–114.

16 Peter Leahy, 'Welcome to the Strategic Private', *Defence Magazine*, October 2004 [Available Online, accessed 14 November 2006: http://www.defence.gov.au/defencemagazine/editions/011004/groups/army.htm].

17   Australian Army, *LWD-1*, pp. 42–4.

18   John Erickson, Lynn Hansen & William Schneider, *Soviet Ground Forces: An Operational Assessment*, Westview Press, Boulder, 1986, pp. 51–140.

19   Michael Eisenstadt & Jeffrey White, 'Assessing Iraq's Sunni Arab Insurgency', *Military Review*, Vol. 86, No. 3, May–June 2006, p. 33.

20   For example, the presence of civilians in the Area of Operations may preclude the use of artillery support to a platoon attack, even if such assets are offered as part of the scenario. Identifying that the use of such an asset would violate LOAC (and hence be against the rules of engagement) would become a vital part of the IMAP in such a scenario.

21   This Battle would provide a good point of contrast as it, like Maryang San, lasted several days and involved detailed planning on the part of Coalition forces. Unlike Maryang San, the conduct of the Second Battle of Fallujah was affected by several of the aspects of contemporary warfare discussed above. For further details of the Second Battle of Fallujah, see: Thomas E. Ricks, *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq*, Allen Lane, London, 2006, pp. 398–406.

22   I do not advocate replacing the case study of Maryang San completely because there are some key differences between it and the proposed case study of the Second Battle of Fallujah. Importantly, for example, Maryang San was fought by Australian forces, meaning its continued use as a case study has the additional benefit of teaching Staff Cadets about Australian Army history and traditions. *The Battle of Maryang San: 3rd Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment, Korea, 2–8 October 1951*, Headquarters Training Command, Canberra, 1991.

23   This is not a phenomenon limited to the Australian Army alone; rather, it has been asserted that the pre-eminence of 'top end of spectrum' conflict is a longstanding feature of 'Western' culture. See: Jeremy Black, *Rethinking Military History*, Routledge, London, 2004, esp. pp. 55–8.

24   *A Soldier's Guide to Army Transformation: Three Block War*, Canadian Forces, 2006 [Available online, accessed 14 November 2006: http://www.army.gc.ca/lf/English/5_4_1_1.asp].

25   At the time of writing, the most recently constructed 'temporary' urban operations training facility is located at the School of Infantry at Singleton. Chris Bennett, 'Temporary UOTF', *Australian Infantry Magazine*, October 2006–April 2007, pp. 80–1.

26   It should be noted that I have experienced this first hand from time to time, although not as a formal component of the course, and it is this experience that has convinced me of the benefit of presentations of personal experience as a training mechanism.

27   Damien Kook, 'Operation Citadel: First Reserve Deployment Overseas Since WWII', *Australian Infantry Magazine*, October 2002, p. 33.

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HARNESSING THE SPECTRUM

INTELLIGENCE, SURVEILLANCE, TARGET ACQUISITION AND RECONNAISSANCE (ISTAR) FOR THE HARDENED AND NETWORKED ARMY*

COLONEL JOHN C. BLAXLAND

ABSTRACT

This article reflects on the increased prominence of ISTAR and reviews the spectrum of ISTAR functions for land-based operations, demonstrating the effects of networked technology and the need for improved ISTAR management for complex warfighting. These developments indicate that a visionary repositioning of ISTAR within Army's warfighting concepts is called for to harness the greater significance and growing range of ISTAR capabilities. A way ahead is offered to better manage the ISTAR functions on operations and at home, particularly within Army's Training and Land Commands.

As the Army strives to become more networked and hardened to better face a complex warfighting environment, reconsideration is called for of how Army gains and retains the knowledge edge. Until recently, an understanding of the military capabilities and intentions of nation states was almost all that was called for to generate the necessary military posture. Today, however, the demands are far greater, with added complexity arising from sub-state actors whose camouflage is the very societies in which they operate.

This situation is exacerbated by the proliferation of means to collect and disseminate information around the battlefield and the world. This explosion of unprecedented masses of data reinforces the need for the Army to re-think, from first principles, its approach to gaining and retaining superior situational awareness. In other words, the Army needs to be smarter, more efficient and more effective—not just in how much information it can collect, but in the way it processes and distributes that information. To achieve the decisive edge in the Information Age, where every misstep can be publicly scrutinised and exploited by an adversary, value-added or fused intelligence drives superiority in decision-making to an unparalleled degree.

> … fused intelligence drives superiority in decision-making …

'SITUATIONAL AWARENESS', IMPROVED TACTICAL 'FUSION' AND INFORMATION OVERLOAD

To date, government-commissioned studies have shown that even with this heightened complexity, the Australian Defence Force (ADF) has a significant range of information collection capabilities to adequately inform on the tactical and operational challenges it encounters. Indeed, the Army controls a significant portion of the ADF's collection assets and, when configured into joint task forces (JTFs), the land component invariably is given access to a wide range of Navy and Air Force intelligence, surveillance, target acquisition and reconnaissance (ISTAR) sources, as well as those from national agencies and allies. This range of sources provides an extraordinary quantity of unprocessed information.

While quite capable in terms of its collection capabilities, the Army is challenged when it comes to timely processing (or 'fusion'[1]) and dissemination of accurate and relevant value-added information. With the plethora of information generated from the various ISTAR assets undertaking collection, commanders today face information overload at a time when clarity of thinking and comprehension is of the utmost importance. The need for corrective action has been recognised with a strategic-level review of 'ISR' as well as an Army-led study on the use of land ISTAR

assets. Such reviews receive little scrutiny outside select circles, and those consulted often have little time to step back and reflect more deeply on the ramifications of what is at hand within the ISTAR domain.

Recent operational experience points to the benefit of bringing together processed information at the tactical level to generate fused and actionable intelligence. That fused intelligence picture, drawing on a variety of sources of information, can generate an unprecedented degree of tactical and time-sensitive situational awareness for commanders. On operations, this is working relatively well because of the Army's 'can-do' approach. Yet the various components of the ISTAR domain have developed in a number of poorly linked 'stovepipes' of specialisations. Indeed, it is largely due to the goodwill and professionalism of individuals that the stovepipes have not turned into 'smokestacks'. This approach has worked thus far more by goodwill and personal competence than by design.

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Where design has contributed well is with the new HQ Joint Operations Command (HQJOC). Resulting from the dramatic surge in operational tempo in recent years and the lessons derived therein, HQJOC has emerged with an intelligence branch under a one-star Director General Intelligence (DGINT) that is also integrally linked to the strategic intelligence agency, the Defence Intelligence Organisation (DIO). For once there is a single point of accountability for all intelligence support required for the conduct of operations, through the Director DIO (dual-hatted as the strategic J2) and his branch head, DGINT, embedded in HQJOC. In effect, DGINT acts as the integrator of intelligence support, capturing the national agency collection and support capabilities and requirements across the various intelligence domains at the strategic and operational levels to deliver unprecedented operational- and tactical-level support. To capitalise on the excellence witnessed on operations and these organisational developments, there needs to be a streamlining within the Army's ISTAR realm. First, however, we need to be clear about what the ISTAR realm contains.

ISTAR COMPONENTS

ISTAR has been conceived of the aggregation of information gathering capabilities, with little emphasis given beyond collection. However, the ISTAR spectrum includes not only information-collection but also the staff and analysis functions that are required to process (or fuse) information into actionable intelligence. To date, the Army has managed its ISTAR capabilities largely as discrete and secondary

functions, trusting in the 'can-do' approach to deliver a refined product from the *ad hoc* allocation and 'brigading' of ISTAR elements. Yet this approach is proving inadequate because of the complexity involved in harnessing the spectrum of ISTAR components outlined below.

- **Geospatial intelligence (or GEOINT),** for instance, is largely the domain of the Royal Australian Engineers (RAE) normally associated with 1 Topographical Survey Squadron (1 Topo Svy Sqn). This increasingly sophisticated capability merges geospatial and thematic data with imagery to deliver value-added environmental data. Linked with this is the emergent Rapid Environmental Assessment capability being developed within HQJOC to support a spectrum of GEOINT components across the maritime, land and air domains.

> … the ISTAR spectrum includes not only information-collection but also the staff and analysis functions …

- **Imagery intelligence (IMINT)** is shared between RAE in 1 Topo Svy Sqn and the Intelligence (AUSTINT) Corps imagery analysts (IA) trained at the Defence Intelligence Training Centre (DIntTC). 16 Brigade and the Army Aviation Corps, as well as the RAAF, have a stake in IMINT. The requirement for IAs is burgeoning with the acquisition of armed reconnaissance helicopters (ARHs) and uninhabited aerial vehicles (UAVs). Yet IAs have no real champion within Army and the DIntTC training focuses on high-end, often highly-classified, overhead imagery analysis. In the meantime, the training requirements for analysis of fast moving, oblique, time-sensitive and often grainy tactical video imagery associated with ARHs and UAVs have yet to be fully scoped. At the strategic level, the geomatic and imagery functions are managed by the Defence Imagery and Geospatial Organization (DIGO).

- **Locational intelligence (LOCINT), or target acquisition (TA),** is another growth industry. Traditionally, artillery has provided a locating capability through Army's 131 Surveillance and Target Acquisition (STA) Battery. In fact, both 20 STA and 2 Cavalry Regiment also operate ground thermal surveillance radar systems that add to the TA picture. However, Army's rapid acquisition of UAVs has led to a rethink. UAVs are being managed by Artillery and this has led to the expansion of 131 STA Battery into 20 STA Regiment, where locating skills are more closely linked with those of IAs than ever before. Moreover, LOCINT is increasingly dependent upon fusion to generate the necessary precision required in modern warfare. In addition, there is a virtually insatiable demand for such tactical information to be networked to commanders for rapid decision-making. Once again, at the strategic level, DIGO has a prominent role, preparing target intelligence for use by HQJOC.

- **Electronic warfare (EW),** with its role in electronic reconnaissance, surveillance and signals intelligence (SIGINT), has tended to be the domain of the Royal Australian Corps of Signals (RASigs), particularly 7 Signal Regiment (7 Sig Regt), with more narrowly defined aspects of SIGINT analysis and staff functions falling to AUSTINT. Yet for both RASigs and AUSTINT corps personnel, the SIGINT/EW domain is not considered mainstream, inhibiting the prospects of developing a greater level of professional mastery. The Defence Signals Directorate (DSD) is Defence's strategic-level agency responsible for SIGINT. Like DIGO, DSD's focus is not on resolving Army's internal split-personality approach to this crucial specialist field.

- **Human intelligence (HUMINT)** is conducted by the Army's 1st Intelligence Battalion (1 Int Bn), which consists almost exclusively of AUSTINT Corps personnel trained in 'field HUMINT' techniques at DIntTC. The formal HUMINT discipline in Army is less than a decade old and, due to operational demand, is in a significant growth stage. Yet in large part because of a lack of understanding of HUMINT amongst commanders, the use of 1 Int Bn's full capabilities has tended to be unduly constrained. Anecdotal evidence also suggests that a majority of actionable intelligence gained in recent operations has been derived from this form of ISTAR. Not surprisingly, therefore, this thinly resourced unit is being beefed up under HNA. Like the other ISTAR functions, the HUMINT domain lacks a higher-level champion within Army. Such a champion could coordinate and support operational deployments in the form of trained staff while also ensuring that the raise, train and sustain (RTS) functions are streamlined and actioned with the necessary organisational strength.

- **Soldiers as ISTAR nodes.** While not trained as a HUMINT specialist, the individual soldier remains vital as an information collector, much as Australian soldiers have always been. Today, however, the soldier is increasingly networked; thus elevating the individual's significance both as an ISTAR node and as potential 'strategic privates'. What is more, the concept of every soldier as a sensor is only meaningful if the output of the soldier's sensors value-adds to the wider picture. Such value-adding can only take place if the architecture and personnel are in place to take the information and process (fuse) it into timely and actionable intelligence. Indeed, the increased prominence of the strategic private points to the increased complexity of ISTAR management at battlegroup headquarters—and it is this complexity that makes the requests for better ISTAR management within Army such a pressing concern. In turn, this complexity points to the growing need for the orchestration of the full spectrum of ISTAR assets.

- **Ground reconnaissance** has always featured cavalry playing a prominent role. For the Australian Army, the infantry has been the predominant reconnaissance and surveillance tool, with foot- and vehicle-mounted patrols and observation posts. Today the cavalry and infantry arms (also now aviation, with the introduction of

the ARH) are being equipped with more capable and sophisticated equipment, making them, more than ever, part of the networked ISTAR realm. Their ISTAR capabilities at the tactical level are vital, and their warfighting functions distinguish them from other ISTAR elements. The warfighting characteristics of cavalry and infantry also hold true for the special forces that, while equipped for surveillance and reconnaissance, are not generally considered as functionally specialising in ISTAR. Still, the important and increasingly networked ISTAR components of the cavalry, infantry, aviation and special forces need to be fostered holistically, considering their complementarity with Army's other ISTAR capabilities.

- **Battlegroup HQ ISTAR.** The information gathering roles of infantry, cavalry and special forces receive less emphasis than their more dramatic manoeuvre role. For cavalry, in particular, the need in recent years to generate battlegroups to support operations has meant that the manoeuvre-unit role has been emphasised above the reconnaissance role. Yet the 'find' battle needs to be adroitly managed at the battlegroup level. It follows that the battlegroup headquarters could also be re-arranged to better accommodate ISTAR elements involved in the tactical 'find' battle. Such an adjustment would capitalise on the function of the S2 staffs on brigade and battlegroup headquarters, but would go beyond that functionality to more effectively exercise command and control over the ISTAR spectrum as an integral aspect of the battlegroup's method of operating. Here, perhaps, the cavalry could play a prominent role, aided by other ISTAR domain practitioners, particularly once trained in ISTAR management.

- **AUSTINT Role.** Traditionally, AUSTINT personnel draw on their training in intelligence analysis and staff work, with specialisations in the ISTAR collection and reporting fields of HUMINT, SIGINT and IMINT, and as well as field security (FS) and counterintelligence (CI). The 'competitive advantage' of AUSTINT personnel in key staff positions is that, in addition to their career focus on managing aspects of the ISTAR spectrum, they come with appropriate security clearances and working knowledge to perform these functions (including access to highly sensitive material) as their primary specialty. For personnel from other corps, these tend to be secondary or tertiary disciplines. While some AUSTINT personnel may be faulted for not fully understanding the fast-evolving capabilities of certain tactical collectors, they remain best placed to control the directing and processing components of the ISTAR cycle. After all, they are the only ones currently trained specifically to understand how to direct the collection efforts of ISTAR elements (the 'sources and agencies'), process the collected material and then ensure appropriate and timely dissemination of fused and actionable intelligence. Theirs, however, is a small pool of specialist personnel that are in great demand. Consequently, other ISTAR component managers need to be prepared to play more prominent roles, advising on their collection capabilities, working more closely with the S2/J2.

- **Joint ISTAR.** Land force ISTAR managers also need to understand the capabilities of the other Services and national agencies' ISTAR functions. Such capabilities include blue-force trackers, the Royal Australian Air Force's Airborne Early Warning and Control (AEW&C) and Orion aircraft, as well as Royal Australian Navy's multi-array ships platform sensors. The latter is best suited for the collection of acoustic intelligence (ACINT).

- **Measurements and signatures intelligence (MASINT)** is a further aspect of the ISTAR realm that few understand let alone conceive of its tactical applications. This emerging field is likely to have considerable impact on the conduct of military operations once emergent capabilities evident at the strategic level are made available for ready access at the tactical level. Yet Army lacks a natural centre of excellence for integrating such developments.

This review of the ISTAR components demonstrates that, at the deployed operational and tactical level, currently the 'go to' place for ISTAR is the S2 staff. Essentially, this arrangement should continue, with the S2 providing that expertise, but the S2's resources should be bolstered by an improved and increased ISTAR staffing footprint drawn from those domains that focus on specific ISTAR components. The solution is not simply to subordinate the S2 beneath a 'patrol master'—who thinks he or she knows best but in fact has little if any exposure to and understanding of niche, complex, sensitive (often highly classified or compartmented) and networked collection systems. The solution is to more centrally place ISTAR in Army's thinking about the way to train for and conduct military operations. Such repositioning would help raise a pool of officers who are trained to better manage the ISTAR spectrum. This review of ISTAR components also demonstrates that, beyond the new DGINT structure within HQJOC and the tactical-deployed operational domain, a 'go to' land ISTAR entity does not exists within Army to (1) manage the raise, train and sustain functions, (2) provide the operational planning advice and (3) coordinate in-barracks, developmental and operational requirements. This capability gaps points to the need for urgent organisational change.

> … parent corps have tended to view them as unnecessarily narrow …

HOLISTIC LAND ISTAR MANAGEMENT

For Army, its corps-specific approach to the management of the various ISTAR functions may have worked adequately in the major wars of the twentieth century, although even this is debatable. For those who have chosen their particular ISTAR field as a specialty, their parent corps have tended to view them as unnecessarily

narrow to maintain their promotion prospects within that speciality. Thus, for instance, an officer trained in EW is well advised not to linger in the EW domain if he or she values a successful career in RASigs. Indeed the same has held true for those in AUSTINT and the survey domain of RAE. This approach is no longer tenable. After all, the Army needs to foster such specialists to a greater extent than ever before, offering them career prospects that do not frighten them into leaving the Army too soon. Arguably, the better generalist is one who has a degree of expertise in at least two of the ISTAR fields. In the case of AUSTINT, for example, anecdotal evidence suggests that J2/S2 staff that do not have a detailed understanding of more than one ISTAR domain (such as SIGINT or HUMINT), are too generalist. What this points to is the need to foster the right level of expertise within Army for an integrated approach to the whole ISTAR domain while still offering career development.

> … effective operations are dependent upon not generating undue resentment arising from 'collateral damage' …

Making matters more complex is the fact that, until recently, most of the Army's assets have been optimised to face a 'low-level' conventional threat. They have not necessarily been optimised for the complex counterinsurgencies—sometimes described as 'war amongst the people'—that are being faced in the context of instant and global media coverage. Today, however, effective operations are dependent upon not generating undue resentment arising from 'collateral damage', which is caused by applying blunt lethal force against precise but poorly identified targets. Remote from home, in a culturally foreign land, such targets tend to be difficult to discriminate from the many others that they closely resemble. Yet the significance of making such mistakes is considerable and the consequences for Australia's dispersed and vulnerable forces have never been greater.

> [ISTAR] resembles police-like forensic work in its quest for accuracy.

In today's world, the ISTAR detection 'threshold' has dropped below the level of detection capable of any particular ISTAR domain. No longer is it sufficient to be able to identify a village or town with insurgents just from a single-sourced report or grainy video picture. Under the watchful eye of the media and with tight legal and procedural constraints on using lethal force, a far greater level of precision and veracity is demanded by commanders from the ISTAR-enabling functions. Often the level of detail and reliability required resembles police-like forensic work in its quest for accuracy. The combination of the lower ISTAR 'threshold' and greater

scrutiny points to the need for even better equipment, matched with superior ISTAR-focussed training and more refined procedures. Consequently, the calls for holistic management of the ISTAR spectrum are more important than ever.

The demand for holistic management of ISTAR support at brigade and battlegroup levels is reinforced by the need to enhance situational awareness, particularly for force protection purposes. Today, battlegroup commanders and even combat team and platoon commanders on operations near and far have a remarkable spectrum of forces allocated from the various ISTAR-related units. Yet that allocation has occurred with no-one other than the unit S2 staff being trained to maintain comprehensive oversight of the ISTAR spectrum available at the tactical level. While the S2 staff function remains pivotal, there remains a need for a wider pool of personnel trained in ISTAR management, much like the need for a pool of personnel from the combat arms who fully understand combat operations.

The importance of ISTAR management is illustrated by recent experience. For the Australian Overwatch Battle Group West (OBG(W)) in southern Iraq in 2006 and 2007, and the Special Operations Task Group (SOTG) in Afghanistan in 2006, the mission of the combat and manoeuvre elements was not just informed by ISTAR but often driven by ISTAR priorities. Yet concerns have been expressed about the appropriate fusion point for all ISTAR assets. For instance, having a commanding officer (CO) as the single point of fusion for a plethora of information sources, rather than a subordinate ISTAR manager, has proven to be a risky arrangement. With the masses of information available, COs need the ISTAR fusion to be undertaken for them, enabling them to exercise unencumbered and clear-headed command. Recent experience points to the need for Army to provide a more systematic and well-rehearsed way of managing the complex and surprisingly pivotal tactical ISTAR domain.

> … COs need the ISTAR fusion to be undertaken for them …

Perhaps Army's difficulties with regard to managing complex battlegroup ISTAR would best be addressed if the Army recognised the key unit of action as the battlegroup and configured the battlegroup ISTAR function accordingly. Conceivably, such a reconfiguration, even for periods in barracks, could act as a catalyst for some intuitive and creative thinking about how the Army can best reconcile the new centrality of ISTAR for modern-day complex warfighting. This would then prompt a reconsideration of doctrine to better explain how the 'find' battle should be conducted once deployed.

ISTAR PROFESSIONAL MASTERY

Regardless of the centrality of the battlegroup, to be most effective the managers of ISTAR functions at the tactical through to the strategic level must better capitalise on the network of systems and capabilities available to them. Such effectiveness is best achieved by harnessing the various ISTAR components of the Army as well as the other ADF, national and allied intelligence assets that can support a deployed force. To capitalise on this latent capability, a new level of professional mastery of the ISTAR domain within Army is required. After all, recent operational experience has highlighted the primacy of intelligence as the driver of precision and effects-based operations. It is no longer adequate for the Army to consider ISTAR as a domain not requiring holistic and professional mastery. Expertise in, say, HUMINT, SIGINT or UAV's alone does not offer commanders' staff with the expertise to manage the increasingly complex spectrum of ISTAR functions required to deliver actionable results.

> … a new level of professional mastery of the ISTAR domain within Army is required.

What is becoming increasingly clear is that, for land force operations to be effective, they need to be driven by well-managed and fused ISTAR, delivered to the commander with an unprecedented level of timeliness and fidelity. The so-called 'all sources' cell managed by the S2 is intended to be the point of fusion for the range of ISTAR-sourced information required by the commander for effective decision-making. Yet incidental evidence suggests that, with the exception of the special forces' focussed and resourced all-source cell known as the fusion analysis and targeting cell (FATC), the approach taken to date is inadequate. After all, no-one 'owns' the ISTAR function and no-one is really mandated to be the champion for full spectrum ISTAR within Army. In other words, no-one has the mandate to coordinate Army's adaptation to the rapid change evident in the ISTAR domain. Although managing ISTAR operations are technically an 'ops' or S3 function, S3 staff usually lack the expertise. What is more, with the numerous other functions they are responsible for, the management of ISTAR at battlegroup and formation level is often relegated to a lower priority—and so it typically falls back on the AUSTINT S2 to drive the ISTAR coordination. Yes, there are other staff officers with an ISTAR remit, but other than a small number of experienced officers, particularly in AUSTINT Corps,

> … no-one has the mandate to coordinate Army's adaptation to the rapid change evident in the ISTAR domain.

the Army offers them little in preparation. For most, their experience is from on-the-job experience or in narrowly defined components of ISTAR associated with their specific corps background and ISTAR specialisation. There is no organisational structure currently designed to harness and foster ISTAR support holistically at the various levels of land-force command on operations.

To date, the 'all-sources' intelligence cell has tended to be the exclusive domain of AUSTINT Corps officers trained primarily in intelligence staff functions, analysis and HUMINT operations. There is no question that the management of the processing (or fusion) and dissemination functions is a challenging field that requires a degree of specialisation apart from the specific operational management of ISTAR collection functions. To date, the AUSTINT Corps has focussed on performing these S2 functions, with training undertaken at DIntTC. Yet officers thus trained can lack sufficient experience in other ISTAR functions, and their skills do not necessarily extend to expertise in running a command and control node of an ISTAR asset such as UAVs or EW teams. After all, the collection operations function is performed in large part by members from other corps, ranging from artillery, engineers, aviation, armoured (cavalry) and infantry. In other words, line-managers of ISTAR information collection functions tend not to be AUSTINT Corps personnel and ISTAR commanders tend to be excluded from management of the 'all source' direction, processing (or 'fusion') and dissemination functions, being left instead to focus on their single-source collection activities.

In the Information Age, however, at a time when situational awareness and information dominance plays such a large part of the commanders' conceptual space, professional mastery of ISTAR is arguably beyond what can be reasonably expected from any one corps within Army—particularly a small corps such as AUSTINT. Without question, AUSTINT maintains an advantage in usually having the requisite security clearances (and access to sensitive information) and in having robust training and experience in managing the intelligence process. As the Army becomes more networked, the imperative is growing for holistic ISTAR mastery beyond the scope of any one corps. The requirement for a higher-level ISTAR champion within Army is becoming increasingly apparent. What is more, such a champion needs to have an adapted organisation that supports such a focus, with ISTAR focal points formalised throughout the chain of command—both for the raise, train and sustain functions (including force development) that Army performs at home and for the tactical functions performed as part of deployed JTFs.

> As the Army becomes more networked, the imperative is growing for holistic ISTAR mastery beyond the scope of any one corps.

TRAINING FOR 'ALL ISTAR', LIKE 'ALL COMBAT ARMS'

The solution is not simply to replace AUSTINT Corps officers as managers of the intelligence function with those from arms corps. Yet the fact that this has been primarily the domain of the AUSTINT Corps has perhaps added to the inertia from those with other corps backgrounds who have resisted such change, perhaps unwittingly, not seeing the need to overcome the bureaucratic sluggishness because of not sensing that they owned the problem that requires solution. Indeed, on their own, the facts about ISTAR addressed in this article amount only to a series of interesting observations; but when drawn together, they clarify the urgency of the issue at hand.

The call for broader ISTAR mastery also points to the need for the currently disparate aspects of Army's ISTAR capability to be aggregated and re-positioned as a force-multiplying arm of the Army and as part of the joint and Defence-wide team. Indeed, Army's current arrangements concerning the traditional ISTAR disciplines are no longer adequate for the task at hand. No doubt, continued development of expertise is required in the core ISTAR specialisations of HUMINT, IMINT, LOCINT, GEOINT, SIGINT and EW, as well as the other capabilities normally associated with target acquisition, reconnaissance and surveillance and the emergent MASINT field. Today's challenges point to the need to breakdown the expertise 'stovepipes' and develop a reliable cadre of cross-trained experts and staff specialists who are trained on an ISTAR course. Such a course would specifically enable them to 'manage the intelligence battlespace', exercising command and control over the spectrum of ISTAR assets and contributing to intelligence fusion of ISTAR product. Only then will Army be able to fully benefit from emerging technologies across the ISTAR-related disciplines. Until an effort is made to start breaking down these barriers in the training environment, and making exposure to full-spectrum ISTAR part of the standard collective training cycle for each organisation involved, then Army will not be able to achieve the requisite level of ISTAR fidelity on operations. This approach is needed to develop staff who can, on behalf of commanders, manage the full spectrum with a sound understanding of its components. At the same time, that will only happen when commanders themselves have a clear understanding of the new centrality of ISTAR management.

> Army's current arrangements concerning the traditional ISTAR disciplines are no longer adequate …

Critics may contend that such a proposal dismisses the inherent value of having the traditional corps allocation of responsibility for various ISTAR functions. The argument made here is not intended to overturn those arrangements but to enhance them. In fact, a wholesale rush to abandon, for instance, the specialist intelligence management of the four phases of the intelligence cycle (direction, collection, processing [or fusion] and dissemination) would be harmful for Army. A solution lies in opening up the realm of ISTAR management to members of ISTAR-related corps who have experience in the field and who can be given intelligence staff management training. An 'all ISTAR' management training program could be developed (much as the Army has already developed for its 'all combat arms') for those who have worked with the various 'INTs' and who have the aptitude and inclination to take up the ISTAR challenge, regardless of their corps background. The argument made here is that the time has come for such an outcome. Training Command, particularly DIntTC, is the logical repository for such a course.

> A solution lies in opening up the realm of ISTAR management …

TRAINING COMMAND, LAND COMMAND & MANAGEMENT OF ISTAR

To date, Training Command has recognised the similarities in management requirements for some of the schools covering aspects of the ISTAR spectrum. Thus, the Schools of Signals, EW and Languages (a critical enabler for HUMINT) are to be grouped under a Command Support Directorate within Training Command. Yet there is scope for this to be expanded further, incorporating the full spectrum of ISTAR-related training courses across Training Command. Such an expansion could include DIntTC, where IMINT and HUMINT, as well as intelligence staff and management training, is conducted. Other schools could also be tied in, particularly the School of Military Engineering's Geomatic Engineering Wing and the School of Artillery's Surveillance and Target Acquisition Wing.

Within Land Command, a similar re-alignment is called for. At the end of 2006, ISTAR-related units were delegated from Land Command to an already busy Headquarters 1st Division (HQ 1 Div). This new arrangement coincides with the greater prominence of ISTAR capabilities resident in 1 Topo Svy Sqn, 20 STA, 7 Sig Regt and 1 Int Bn for the current types of operations conducted in Australia's region and in the Middle East. Without other adjustments, this potentially creates an internal staff imbalance whereby HQ 1 Div commands three brigades and six direct command units.

This surge in workload for the divisional headquarters, without an intermediate headquarters for ISTAR-related units, portends the need for the brigading of ISTAR assets to act as the coordinator and fusion master for the 1st Division and the wider Army. An ISTAR group could be structured to provide both collectors and the ISTAR staff bricks to perform the C2 and fusion functions at any level of deployed command. Already Army has seen the wisdom in brigading its aviation and logistics elements, with considerable benefits accrued. Their experience, and the increasing prominence of ISTAR assets for the effective conduct of operations, suggests brigading of ISTAR is also required. Such an arrangement would see a one-star headquarters basically dedicated to championing the ISTAR

> Army has seen the wisdom in brigading its aviation and logistics elements …

cause— in capability development, training, planning, and ongoing support and sustainment of operations. This would then become Army's logical focal point for furthering all of the issues and deficiencies identified in this article. Indeed, as per the aviation and logistic examples, the ISTAR components' habitual relationships with the combat brigades would remain. The creation of an ISTAR brigade would be intended to enhance rather than detract from such relationships.

One way in which an ISTAR brigade could provide that enhancement would be to act as the focal point for the input into the development and science and technology domains concerning emergent ISTAR capabilities. Such an arrangement would facilitate focussed research and rapid acquisition in conjunction with key agencies. Such agencies include the Capability Development Executive (CDE), the Defence Materiel Organisation (DMO), the Intelligence and Security (I&S) Group, HQJOC and the Defence Science and Technology Organisation (DSTO), particularly the Land Operations and ISR Divisions. It is not too late for such changes to be incorporated in the HNA plan.

> … ISTAR elements … enable the combat forces to excel in the midst of adversity and complexity.

The imperative for such change within Army is growing thanks to the continuing emergence of technical solutions, often developed at the national level, that tend to take years before deployable tactical applications are readily available. Such applications are slow to 'trickle down', in part because of the lack of an organisational conduit through which to deliver them quickly into the tactical domain, not as an afterthought. The creation of an ISTAR brigade would help ensure that respective national and tactical capabilities are properly aligned and networked.

Detractors may argue that such an aggregated arrangement was tried and failed in the early-to mid-1990s with the creation of the RISTA Regiment, which attempted to merge what was then the 1st Intelligence Company and 131 Divisional Locating Battery. However, that attempt sought to bring together two dissimilar entities at unit level. The arrangement was complicated by inappropriate oversight and by being poorly resourced. What is more, it was attempted in a period when ISTAR functionality had not yet proven to be so central to Army's ability to conduct complex warfighting. After all, at the time there was no operational imperative for making ISTAR work because Army was not deployed on operations, and ISTAR was 'out of sight, out of mind'. Today, it is the very complexity—both of the ISTAR systems and the battlespace—that now demands a more holistic approach to the management of these disparate but crucial elements. It is these ISTAR elements that enable the combat forces to excel in the midst of adversity and complexity.

> The creation of an ISTAR brigade would help ensure that respective national and tactical capabilities are properly aligned and networked.

Such holistic ISTAR management needs to include a reconsideration of how to employ ISTAR staff at each level, from HQJOC down to JTF and battlegroup level. Unless each level of headquarters has a properly trained and resourced staff dedicated to managing ISTAR coordination, then the practical application of this ISTAR concept will likely not improve very much. After all, Army has already learnt the lesson about the need for dedicated information operations (IO) and civil-military-cooperation (CIMIC) staff to be allocated to JTFs. This article points to the need for a similar concept for ISTAR management, with properly trained and resourced ISTAR staff.

CONCLUSION

On operations near and far, ISTAR is playing a much more prominent role in the effective conduct of land-based operations. Not only has the available spectrum of ISTAR assets increased significantly with the advent of new and better-networked technologies, but the demand has grown for the delivery of fused ISTAR-derived information down to the lowest tactical levels. The prominence of ISTAR stems from the complex and volatile nature of today's conflicts against fast-adapting adversaries who are difficult to distinguish from non-combatants within the communities in which they operate. This prominence also stems from the societal expectations for precision, accountability and casualty minimisation.

The criticality of ISTAR for modern land-based operations points to the need for it to be re-positioned more centrally in Army's intellectual construct. Indeed, the circumstances that have led to the development of the Hardened and Networked Army have also led to the increased significance of ISTAR for land-based operations. In order to capitalise both on the experience gained incidentally in managing ISTAR on operations to date, and on the organisational developments at the operational and strategic levels, there needs to be a re-organisation of Army's ISTAR components. Such a move would see the brigading of ISTAR assets within Land Command with a clear ISTAR 'champion' identified, the holistic management of ISTAR training domains within a single directorate of Training Command, and the creation of an ISTAR staff management training program that encompasses officers from all the ISTAR domains, much as has already taken place with 'all combat arms' training. Admittedly, the ISTAR training program would require development and fine tuning, but the organisational change could take place quickly. The result would be an Army operationally focussed by its networked ISTAR capability—a truly amazing Army.

> … the circumstances that have led to the development of the Hardened and Networked Army have also led to the increased significance of ISTAR …

ENDNOTE

1 In this sense, fusion involves the processing (analysis and integration) of information from a wide spectrum of collection sources to provide high quality, timely and actionable all-source intelligence.

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THE LESSONS OF 2006

ARMY OPERATIONS IN EAST TIMOR AND SOLOMON ISLANDS

COLONEL JOHN HUTCHESON

ABSTRACT

At its highest operational tempo since the Vietnam War, the Australian Army in 2006 was deployed widely for a range of tasks. Two of these, East Timor and Solomon Islands, were short-notice deployments to provide security and stability for regional neighbours. The lessons of these missions, explored in this article, relate to the nature of the contemporary conflict environment, operating with international and interagency partners, the role of the media, and the skills that Army soldiers require to prevail in fluid and uncertain situations.

'There have been literally hundreds of unexpected events—incidents that you would not encounter in your wildest dreams. That is when you fall back on training and adaptability.'

Brigadier Mick Slater, East Timor (2006)

INTRODUCTION

In April of 2006, Army was committed to the provision of a battlegroup and training team in Iraq, a Special Operations Task Group in Afghanistan, a regional combat team in Solomon Islands, support to domestic operations, and peacekeepers in the Middle East, East Timor and Sudan. To support these elements there were a number of staff officers on Joint Task Force Headquarters and embedded in multinational coalition headquarters. By June, Army had deployed a battlegroup to Solomon Islands and a Task Force to East Timor. These commitments meant that of a ready combat force of approximately 10 000, Army had over 3500 personnel committed with a further 3500 preparing to sustain operations. In August 2006, the Government announced the raising of a further two battlegroups to meet domestic and international commitments such as those in East Timor and the Solomons. So what did the Army learn from these deployments?

In both East Timor and Solomon Islands, Army confirmed that the conflict environment is complex, diverse, lethal and diffused—regardless of the level of intensity. In that type of environment, even though the context of each crisis differed, the use of military force sought to manage and influence people's actions and perceptions. This view acknowledges that conflict now contains many non-state actors with selfish goals, many seeking to undermine the state. For example, the burning and looting of Chinatown in Solomon Islands in 2006 was a deliberate and targeted activity by people (using disgruntled youths) who sought to undermine the change of government and, by default, create a shift of power. The actors may have changed but it is a clash of wills that remains central to understanding a fight that is now amongst people rather than between nation states.[1] This observation fits well with Army's *Complex Warfighting* and *Adaptive Warfighting* concepts.

> … the conflict environment is complex, diverse, lethal, and diffused—regardless of the level of intensity.

Putting quality individuals and small teams into operations in close proximity to any adversary and the population at large is critical to supporting whole-of-government initiatives for resolving a conflict. Therefore, the quality of soldiers that are placed 'amongst the people', and the management of their actions as part of those initiatives, is the key determinant of success. A large number of poorly prepared soldiers diminish the commander's ability to control the population. Moreover, the environment requires soldiers and junior leaders to be in personal contact with the population. Both these facts are important if the commander is to ensure that his or her operational actions will support the strategic-level objectives.

Interagency operations in complex environments, amongst the people and in the glare of public attention, are the reality for Army's officers and soldiers—this article reflects upon that reality.

SOLOMON ISLANDS

In July 2003, Australia led the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI), in support of the restoration of law and order in that country. The response was a regional initiative to a formal request by the Solomon Islands Government to assist in re-establishing the conditions in which a functional (and respected) police force could operate effectively and by which enduring governance mechanisms could be developed. A military component of 1800 personnel drawn from across the region (Australia, Fiji, Tonga, New Zealand, and Papua New Guinea) was deployed to assist the Participating Police Force (PPF) in the restoration of law and order. This force was reduced in July 2004 to a steady state of approximately 100 personnel in-country to provide a security guarantee.

In mid-April 2006, a general election resulted in a change of government that was not well received in Honiara. The announcement on 18 April that Mr Synder Rini was to become Prime Minister prompted rioting and looting in Chinatown. Seven PPF officers were injured; the next day the Australian Government deployed the Ready Company Group to demonstrate resolve and a desire for calm to be restored. This action was in response to a letter from Mr Rini to the Australian Prime Minister that sought military support to assist the police in stabilising the situation, and a general reassurance to the Solomon Islands population. The force was expanded to a regional Australian-led battlegroup in late April and quickly established a strong visual presence, setting the conditions for the police to re-establish law and order. The force was drawn down to approximately 150 personnel in June 2006 and will remain at that level into the foreseeable future.

> … the Australian Government deployed the Ready Company Group to demonstrate resolve …

EAST TIMOR

In 1998, as part of his reform process, the Indonesian President B.J. Habibie proposed a vote on special autonomy for East Timor, to be conducted 11 June 1999 and monitored by the United Nations. The result was received badly by those who believed that East Timor should remain part of Indonesia, and widespread militia violence broke out within days. On 13 September 1999, after significant international

pressure, Habibie allowed an Australian-led international peacekeeping force (INTERFET) to stabilise the situation in preparation for a handover to the United Nations in February 2000. The United Nations presence created a secure environment that allowed democratic elections to occur on 30 August 2001. The Fretlin Party, led by Mari Alkatiri, was announced the winner and the United Nations began the process of transitioning authority to his Government with a view to be out of East Timor in June 2006.

The instability in 2006 in East Timor was a direct result of longstanding ethnic tensions, discontent with the police and military, and the failings of the Alkatiri Government to deliver on expectations. Tensions escalated in February 2006 when elements of the military staged a peaceful protest in front of President Gusmao's Dili office. The Chief of Defence, Brigadier Taur Matan Ruak, dismissed 600 striking soldiers who dispersed peacefully to their home towns. During a televised address the President condemned the military leadership's handling of the situation. On 28 April approximately 400 demonstrators, including ex-soldiers, conducted a protest in Dili that quickly turned violent. When the police could not deal with the situation the military was deployed and up to fifteen demonstrators were killed. After the violence there was another split within the military, with Lieutenant Commander Reinado leading a group of dissident police and soldiers who called for an inquiry into the actions of the Alkatiri Government. On 24 May, it is believed that this dissident group fired on police being escorted by United Nations personnel, killing ten, after Alkatiri was re-elected as Primet Minister at the Fretlin Congress (17–20 May). This action resulted in a letter from the President to the Australian Prime Minister requesting the deployment of a stabilisation force to restore law and order in the country.

The Australian intelligence community had warned of a deteriorating situation in April 2006 and, as a result, Army prepared to conduct evacuation operations of Australian nationals and to deploy a battlegroup to stabilise the situation. This action included the pre-positioning of force elements in Darwin and Townsville, demonstrating that Australia was ready to commit if the situation deteriorated further. Coalition partners (New Zealand, Malaysia and Portugal) indicated willingness to support an Australian-led stabilisation operation, and a Joint Task Force headquarters was established in Townsville.

> The Australian intelligence community had warned of a deteriorating situation …

> … a military presence to guarantee security will remain for a number of years.

On 26 May the Combined Joint Task Force was deployed to conduct evacuation operations, to stabilise the situation in Dili and to allow the United Nations to mediate a solution. The deployment involved approximately 3000 Defence personnel of whom 2000 were Army. The drawdown of forces to a steady state of approximately 900 personnel, including a Task Force headquarters and a battlegroup, commenced in August 2006. This force is likely to remain at these levels until a review to be conducted following the 2007 elections, but it is expected that a military presence to guarantee security will remain for a significant time.

WHAT DID ARMY LEARN?

These 2006 deployments are still being analysed to appreciate any changes at the tactical and operational levels since the last time Army deployed into the two theatres. Therefore the following observations represent the author's first impressions of what occurred with those deployments.

THE CONFLICT ENVIRONMENT

The environment in which soldiers found themselves operating was highly complex. For Brigadier Slater, Commander Joint Task Force 631 in East Timor:

> [t]here are layers of complexity. We came into a society on the brink of civil war. Although the ethnic divisions were very emotive to the local population there was no visible distinction between them in our eyes. So we had a very complex human terrain, with gangs, ethnic groups, mutinous soldiers and police alongside those who considered themselves loyal to the government. Overlaying all that we had a potential humanitarian disaster with large numbers of people seeking refuge in temporary camps. And of course every incident had the footloose global media on hand to scrutinise our handling of it. While we did not have a lethal conventional enemy in that mix, there was a period when it was conceivable that we could face formed bodies of police or soldiers in complex urban terrain. [2]

This set of observations has a significant effect on commanders' decisions and soldiers' actions. First, soldiers operated in urban areas and villages that were adjacent to the sea as well as close vegetation in mountainous regions. Such terrain consists of areas that are open and act as manoeuvre corridors and engagement areas, whilst others are more restricted. These inhibit movement, deny observation and limit the effectiveness of sensors. The result is that soldiers can be drawn easily into close combat without warning. For example, during the initial days of the deployment into East Timor, there were

> … soldiers can be drawn easily into close combat without warning.

running battles between youths and coalition forces in the confined streets of Dili. The issue for Army is how soldiers operate in these confined spaces and still react appropriately in a timely fashion to emerging circumstances.

Second, the soldiers found themselves in situations in which they confronted many different groups, such as rioters, demonstrators and youth gangs, as well as disgruntled police and military (East Timor) and organised criminals (Solomon Islands). In both operations there was a large proportion of people that, due to a lack of security, took the opportunity to loot and destroy infrastructure, with some activity being coordinated by a number of key personalities that wished to take advantage of the situation. These many different groups were not threats in the traditional sense but applying military force against them was problematic for legal, moral and technical reasons. Such groups continued to adapt, countering the tactics used to gain positional and/ or temporal advantage and exploiting the key differences in the 'defeat threshold'.[3] Therefore soldiers had to 'exercise mature judgement in a very demanding environment in the face of a lot of provocation'.[4]

The traditional view is that these types of stabilisation operations require limited force protection measures (i.e., combat body armour, ballistic goggles, etc.) because they are low intensity. In East Timor the soldiers faced youths with slingshots, darts and machetes, as well as mutinous soldiers and police with weapons. Solomon Islands did not present as direct a threat; however, there were high-powered weapons cached in the community[5] and rocks were often thrown at military vehicles travelling through Honiara. This set of observations would imply that if soldiers are operating amongst the people there is a need for increased personal protection.

> … soldiers had to 'exercise mature judgement in a very demanding environment …'

COALITION OPERATIONS

The development of a coalition of interested parties, particularly those from the region, is critical for establishing legitimacy and sharing the load. The coalition partners in both operations provided substantial manoeuvre forces—by their standards—but the key enablers (health services, helicopters, etc.) were provided by the Australian Army. The issue for Army is that in most cases Australia will have to initially provide key enablers before a long-term contracted solution can be sought. This observation will require more work to be done in building redundancy into Army's current force structure.

With any coalition there remain differences between what the troop contributing nations (TCN) perceive the mission to be, levels of acceptable risk, and attitudes towards the local population that a commander needs to consider in achieving the

mission. Bearing these points in mind, there were a number of situations in Solomon Islands that highlighted the strengths and weaknesses of each TCN. For example the ease with which personnel from Pacific Island nations are able to establish a good rapport with the local population was noticeable. In particular, the ability to speak and understand Pidgin greatly assisted patrols conducted by the Papua New Guinea Defence Force to gather good, relevant and timely intelligence. The downside, of course, is the varying degrees of doctrine and operational experience, the understanding of levels of acceptable force and in the standards of training. Different standards of training were less a problem in East Timor; the Australian, Malaysian, New Zealander and Portuguese forces had worked previously in the same environment between 1999 and 2003, and had operational experience and relevant doctrine for stabilisation operations. However, Brigadier Mick Slater has acknowledged that there were issues over what constituted acceptable risk, as well as 'differences in style and mindset'.[6]

> … the key enablers (health services, helicopters, etc) were provided by the Australian Army.

The conduct of in-theatre task-specific training packages to counter such differences and to build a collective capability is an option once the situation has stabilised, but there is little that can be done in the initial stages of the deployment. There is a need for Australia to sponsor a regional initiative to develop doctrine and standardisation of training across South Pacific countries that supports a rapid deployment of a coalition force anywhere in the region. This idea could be expanded to create a virtual standing force among interested countries to deal with incidents of regional instability.

INTERAGENCY OPERATIONS

The underlying theme behind the planning and conduct of interagency operations is that the military provides the secure environment in which other agencies can develop the mechanisms required to allow a country to govern itself. Interagency operations, like all operations, require agencies to have a single and mutually agreed purpose. Whilst Army is becoming more adept at such operations—based on previous experience in East Timor and Solomon Islands—there are a number of issues that still require attention.

First, a number of the operations conducted in support of the PPF in Solomon Islands and of the Australian Federal Police (AFP) in East Timor demonstrated that there is still a difference in the planning methodology and descriptive

> … create a virtual standing force among interested countries …

language that each agency employs. Army has a proactive planning culture that seeks to view an operation as part of a wider campaign plan in order to manage multiple tasks. The police possess a more reactive outlook to a situation that tends to translate into compartmentalised task-specific planning. This difference is exacerbated by differing threat assessment methodologies that result in the lack of a common operating picture between agencies. In Solomon Islands, significant work has been done since the initial RAMSI deployment and 'whilst there were some obvious cultural, command and control, administrative and procedural differences, at no time did these prevent a sound working relationship'.[7] This observation is an important step towards developing interagency doctrine and conducting training activities that build on this good working relationship between the AFP and Army. The recent establishment of an Interagency Working Group is a good start to focus limited resources on developing protocols, common planning and threat assessment methodologies, and cultural appreciation of each other.

> … an Interagency Working Group is a good start to focus limited resources …

Second, a critical factor to the success of operations in Solomon Islands and East Timor was the fact that police and soldiers were able to work together at the tactical level. In the Solomons, the use of combined patrols on the streets of Honiara and 'presence patrols' aimed at RAMSI supporters in the countryside—in order to deny any adversary freedom of movement—created a secure environment. These 'presence patrols' based at PPF Provincial Outposts also sought to make contact with outlying communities to pass on information and build situational awareness to counter the rumour mill. This action was a deliberate attempt to disrupt criminal activity by restricting access to supplies and secure hideouts and counter the intimidation tactics used to control the local population. To complement these patrols, the deployment of Uninhabited Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) would have greatly assisted situational awareness on village layouts (including routes to and from), and to provide a visual deterrence that indicates 'we can see you'; highly effective in a country where the majority of people live in outlying villages and are very much in awe of technology. The deployment of tier-one UAVs to East Timor has enhanced the situational awareness of the Task Force Commander.

Third, the importance of ensuring that police are involved in the majority of arrest operations cannot be understated. During the initial stages of the East Timor operation the Joint Task Force established a detainee centre that processed individuals before handing them over to the local authorities. Once international police arrived the military handed over the policing function to the United Nations to indicate to the population that the rule of law had returned to East Timor. In

Solomon Islands, the author's 2004 guidance to soldiers supporting police stationed outside Honiara was that each police patrol was to have two soldiers (with radio), as a minimum, to provide protection and communications back to the outpost. If the patrol was likely to encounter a Person of Interest (POI) who had access to a weapon then a four-person fire team with a medic and communications was the minimum requirement. This guidance was a deliberate attempt to avoid the chance of soldiers being independently involved in the arrest of any POI, and ensured that the police were attributed with the success of the operation. Moreover these actions assisted in reassuring the local population that normalcy had returned to Solomon Islands.

MEDIA

In both operations there was significant international and domestic interest that generated considerable media attention. The actions of commanders and soldiers were heavily scrutinised, with each journalist trying to develop an edge on the competition. One now-famous incident involved Brigadier Mick Slater and the Nine Network's stage management of an interview for the *Today Show*. In some

> The actions of commanders and soldiers were heavily scrutinised [by the media] …

cases the media used images of the looters and gangs to continue to portray instability as a way to build a story. The consensus is that the management of the media during the East Timor and Solomon Islands deployments was a success. Australian soldiers are routinely trained to meet the media challenge and were aware of the political and military imperatives of their actions. The management of journalists and guidance to soldiers was carefully coordinated by media liaison teams to ensure the messages were simple, reassuring and clear to the target audiences.

For the author, the most effective way for soldiers to deal with the media is to assume they are a non-military friend or 'family member'. This assumption ensures that all ranks are consistent in their dealing with the media and do not stray into areas that might prove difficult or embarrassing. The three rules that should underlie soldiers' interaction with the media are:

- comment only on those activities personally conducted;
- do not lie or bluff (say 'I do not know'); and
- do not offer a personal opinion.

COMMAND AND CONTROL

The deployments confirmed two key tenets of Army's *Adaptive Campaigning* concept. First, the notion that to react quickly there exists a need for an 'on-scene commander' who controls a situation, regardless of rank, until their superior has sufficient situational awareness. In the traditional sense the functions of command and control tended to go together, with the superior controlling the situation from afar. Now the superior assumes control of the situation when a tactical pause allows or through a process of 'battle handover' with the commander on-scene. The key is for the superior to be able to defer decision-making to their subordinates with her or his actions supporting their decisions.

> The deployments confirmed two key tenets of Army's *Adaptive Campaigning* concept.

The deployments indicated that Army has come a long way in creating informed situational awareness and placing trust in the on-scene commander, but more work can be done to improve the ability to conduct coordinated interdependent actions across operations. When rioters and youth gangs shift their activities faster than soldiers can react there is a genuine need to get inside the cycle of violence to regain control of the situation. This observation was evident in the early stages of the East Timor deployment when the fluidity of activities required key decisions to be made at the lowest level.

Second, Army must continue to develop small, autonomous teams that can generate the key effects of manoeuvre, firepower, situational awareness and command and control. These small teams need to be able to disperse to cover a large area. They also need to be networked, able to concentrate at a time and place to control populations and manage perceptions. The commander must be able to extend his or her footprint and create the illusion that she or he is everywhere without requiring extensive 'boots on the ground'. This tactic requires the commander to also have a lightly equipped mobile element to reinforce the patrolling forces (or sensors). In East Timor the tactic was to have small teams spread across Dili with two mobile forces (air- and APC-mounted) of sub-unit size to react to the shifting rioters and local gang activity. Those patrols eventually included members of the United Nations police force. The goal is to use the small teams to dislocate an adversary and then dispatch a larger force to deal with them.

> …there is a genuine need to get inside the cycle of violence …

SOLDIERS' SKILLS

A number of observations have been made by commanders in both operations on what is essential for soldiers. First, soldiers must be proficient in their weapon and communication skills, patrolling techniques, and expert at unarmed combat. These proficiencies allow soldiers to have graduated options, from lethal force to negotiation skills, in order to respond to an incident. Importantly, the ability to dominate an area to disrupt the actions of adversaries and to maintain control through aggressive patrolling has not changed.

Second, Army has come a long way over the past few years but more work can be done in developing soldiers' thinking and decision-making skills. Army must continue to work at placing soldiers in a variety of scenarios to support their decision-making skills at home and in-theatre. Underlying this development is a sense of being able to apply precise, discriminating and tailored solutions to a situation. The understanding of the application of lethal force was good in both operations, but developing other techniques (and non-lethal weapons) to subdue an adversary will increase the number of options available to soldiers.

> … allow soldiers to have graduated options, from lethal force to negotiation skills …

Third, there is a need to have soldiers culturally adept at working as part of an interagency force. These skills include the ability to negotiate, understand and appreciate the organisational culture, and to be prepared to 'take a back seat' to support the other agencies' actions. These interpersonal skills are a key enabler for the conduct of interagency operations.

Fourth, Army needs to develop more soldiers with the linguistic and cultural skills to allow them to operate in the likely regional conflict areas. For Brigadier Slater in East Timor, 'the decency of our people gets us there, but we need more linguists. They are a force multiplier and … invaluable in helping us to avoid recourse to force'.[8] Since the need to develop these skills has been previously identified, now it may pay to consider the employment of a language instructor on operations to teach soldiers the language in-theatre (after hours). On completion of a tour of duty the soldier could have that qualification (and financial incentive) placed on her or his record of service.

> … more work can be done in developing soldiers' thinking and decision-making skills.

Fifth, soldiers need to be able to deal with the challenges that emerge during a deployment with a view to maximising their own resources without recourse to large or sophisticated support

systems. There is a tendency to build force structures that cater for all contingences rather than rationalise, prioritise and encourage reachback. This action must occur if Army is to be able to deal with the operational tempo in the foreseeable future.

Sixth, the deployments indicate that soldiers require a fair degree of physical, mental and moral robustness to deal with situations. For the author, the more mentally and physically robust the soldiers are, the better they will be in achieving their tactical objectives. This point is not to say that Army is doing little in this area but rather that there is a requirement to have more conditioning during training if soldiers are to operate in these environments.

CONCLUSION

Since 1999 the Australian Army has been involved in a number of significant operations, from the liberation of Iraq, fighting the War on Terror, to the permissive intervention operations aimed at stabilising deteriorating domestic situations in East Timor and Solomon Islands. In these last two, Army has discovered that the battlespace in which soldiers operate is complex, diverse, lethal and diffused, regardless of the perceived level of intensity. Success in this conflict environment requires Army to be able to orchestrate the required effects as part of whole-of-government responses. In reality, Army will continue to be the foundation for these responses as it is the only government agency that is capable of projecting power offshore and initially supporting other government agencies in-theatre. This action requires Army to become more adaptable and agile in performing, and transitioning between, a wide range of tasks that are not related to the traditional view of warfighting.

A scan of the daily newspapers highlights security issues in Papua New Guinea, Fiji and Vanuatu that indicate there is a reasonable chance that another whole-of-government response is possible. If that is the case, then Army will be expected to provide soldiers to ensure security and logistic support to the mission. The level of Army's commitment, of course, will depend on what effect is required on the ground and how far other agencies have developed their own support capabilities. A good guess is that, at a minimum, Army would be required to provide logistic support due to the simple fact that the Australian Defence Force can project power offshore and support operations overseas. In addition, it is highly likely that Army will need to provide a Quick Reaction Force in-theatre (or on reduced notice in Australia) to guarantee a secure environment that allows other agencies to achieve their goals in support of the Government's objectives.

> … it is essential that work continues in developing interagency doctrine …

Therefore, it is essential that work continues in developing interagency doctrine for command and control, intelligence assessment, conduct of operations and logistical support. Selling the Joint Military Appreciation Process as a basis for developing a methodology for interagency planning is a good start point. The goal must be to get all agencies 'singing from the same sheet of music'. This action will need to be supported by considerable work to review how to develop an interagency campaign plan supported by a communications strategy that seeks to shape the information environment, and the development of in-theatre training packages to build familiarity and confidence in each other. Furthermore, there is a need to explore the feasibility of a regional initiative to develop doctrine and standardise training across Pacific Island nations to support the rapid deployment of a regional military force to help failing neighbours.

Within Army, the focus must be on developing the thinking and decision-making of soldiers and junior leaders. These soldiers must be physically and mentally robust, and culturally adept at working 'amongst the people' and with other agencies. The leaders need to have the skills that allow them to act within their superiors' guidelines as the on-scene commander to achieve networked effects. The soldiers must be part of autonomous teams that have improved individual force protection measures, mobility, access to firepower and enhanced situational awareness. This modular design of force structure needs to be expanded to incorporate other agencies and coalition partners with which Army is likely to work, and should form the basis for the development of tactics, techniques and procedures.

The recent deployments to East Timor and Solomon Islands were successful for Army due to sound planning, ongoing positive support to other agencies, and a desire to create the secure environment for the people to go about day-to-day business free from the threat of violence. The two operations pushed many people to the limits of their expertise and there was a need to make soldiers constantly aware of the broader aspects and political sensitivities of the mission. Yet soldiers continue to develop because of their operational experience and demonstrate adaptability at all levels. Moreover, they maintained the image of a capable, disciplined and professional force that was sensitive to the culture of the local people and a model for military support to similar future missions. Those missions will see soldiers performing what some perceive as non-conventional 'warrior' tasks, but with thinking leaders and soldiers that remain adaptable, team-orientated, and who never give up. As in the past, Army will stand ready to contribute.

> … soldiers continue to develop because of their operational experience …

ENDNOTES

1   General Sir Rupert Smith raised the notion of a paradigm shift to a 'war amongst the people' in his recent publication *The Utility of Force*. R.Smith, *The Utility of Force: The Art of War in the Modern World*, Allen Lane, London, 2005.

2   Slater, M, 'Point Blank', *Australian Army Journal*, Vol. 3, No. 2, Winter 2006, pp. 12–13.

3   The 'defeat threshold' is the level and degree of damage required to a force in order to defeat it. Army tends to have a low strategic 'defeat threshold' due to the fact that operations are vulnerable to changes in public opinion, political will and (perceived or actual) casualty aversion. However, Army's tactical 'defeat threshold' is high as it is hard to defeat Australian land forces when conducting operational actions. Conversely, many potential adversaries have low tactical 'defeat thresholds' (i.e.: they are easily beaten in close combat) but because they are often small, non-state, semi-autonomous groups, they are relatively invulnerable to changes in political will, community support or public opinion and therefore they have a higher strategic 'defeat threshold'. For more see Army's CASAC endorsed *Complex Warfighting* and *Adaptive Warfighting* concepts.

4   Slater, M, 'Point Blank', p. 13.

5   A member of the PPF (Constable Matt Dunning) was shot and killed in December 2004 by one of the many weapons cached outside Honiara.

6   Slater, M, 'Point Blank', p. 12.

7   Gallaway, A, *Operation Phoenix Post Operation Report*, 24 July 2006, p. 14–15.

8   Slater, M, 'Point Blank', p. 14.

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OPERATIONS

REGIME CHANGE

PLANNING AND MANAGING MILITARY-LED INTERVENTIONS AS PROJECTS*

COLONEL MARCUS FIELDING

ABSTRACT

While the experience in Iraq has generated a degree of political caution in the West towards mounting military-led interventions, it will inevitably only be a matter of time before fading memory and circumstances reverse this reluctance; this article offers a conceptual construct for such deployments. It first considers the nature of military-led interventions intended to effect regime change, and then develops a conceptual construct for reconstruction and societal reform that intervention forces can apply at the national, provincial and local levels of a society.

Western states now seem to generally accept that lasting security in their homelands requires proactive and sustained efforts abroad to prevent security threats emanating from unsatisfactorily governed locations.[1] State governments that complicitly, or through their ineptitude, allow the export of violence and terrorism, illegal weapons (particularly weapons of mass destruction),

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illegal drugs and disruptive ideologies to the rest of the world must continue to be given the message that such activity is unacceptable. If such states are unwilling or unable to arrest these activities within their sovereign territories, then one can make a case to justify external intervention—potentially with the use of force.[2] While the experience in Iraq has generated a degree of political caution in the West towards mounting military-led interventions, it will inevitably only be a matter of time before fading memory and circumstances reverse this reluctance.

Replacing an unsatisfactory government is a key objective in a military-led intervention in these circumstances, but there are often contributing issues that also demand attention. The success of any replacement government depends on the conditions achieved within that state. Intervention forces (those military as well as non-military agencies that establish a presence in the target state) may, therefore, become concerned with reconstruction and perhaps societal reform—activities associated usually with the term 'nation-building'.[3] This has been the case in Panama, Haiti, East Timor, Afghanistan and Iraq—states that had significant societal issues in addition to unsatisfactory governments.[4] Indeed, the Bush Administration's dismissal of deeper issues, its initial antipathy towards nation-building and the concomitant lack of preparatory organization for the post-conflict reconstruction of Afghanistan and Iraq explains, at least in part, why strategic victory in both remains elusive. We must accept, therefore, that effecting a 'regime change' will inevitably also require some degree of effort to reconstruct and reform other parts of that society.

> Replacing an unsatisfactory government is a key objective in a military-led intervention …

Replacing an unsatisfactory government, then reconstructing and reforming a society from one condition to a better condition, is a complex, time consuming, expensive and difficult venture. It is important in light of recent regime change ventures to consider how future military-led interventions might be better planned and managed. Learning from history is valuable, and there has been a recent raft of books and articles about challenges and shortfalls in the case of Iraq.[5] Given that every situation is unique, we must also consider military-led interventions in a generic conceptual sense. To this end, this article offers a conceptual construct for military-led interventions. It first considers the nature of military-led interventions intended to effect regime change, and then develops a conceptual construct for reconstruction and societal reform that intervention forces can apply at the national, provincial and local levels of a society.

> Learning from history is valuable …

ON MILITARY-LED INTERVENTIONS

All of us know that to secure peace and protect the vulnerable, it is sometimes necessary to intervene, and in extremis to coerce.

Javier Solana, High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union[6]

Military-led interventions initially and temporarily employ the military as a change agent (or catalyst) to enable the achievement of a higher political strategic objective. A victorious military force's very presence conveys an authority and establishes the conditions whereby change in all aspects of society at least seems possible—particularly to the indigenous population. Soon after the apparatus of the unsatisfactory government or regime is defeated in a particular location, the indigenous population expects change, and intervention forces should, therefore, be prepared to commence local reconstruction and societal reform action immediately. Regime change, reconstruction and societal reform ventures demand an integrated effort by many different agencies. Inevitably, such ventures will also require the combined legitimacy and resources of a coalition of willing states and other non-state agencies.

> Regime change, reconstruction and societal reform ventures demand an integrated effort …

When a political decision is made to conduct a military-led intervention, the military is typically assigned the leadership role for the first stage of the venture.[7] Not surprisingly, the military instinctively views the activity through the lens of their own culture, and their relatively sizeable planning and organising capability generates a particular momentum, sometimes to the detriment of non-military considerations. While the prospect of imminent military action can draw people's attention, such action is only a means to an end. The political masters who decide to unleash 'the dogs of war' retain responsibility to ensure that the military dimension of the intervention is integrated with broader non-military objectives and plans. Sometimes, however, these broader other-than-military objectives and plans are either non-existent, suffer from a lack of definition or organization, or are overly optimistic.[8]

> … a military-led intervention should be considered as an intervention project …

In order to prevent the military from inadvertently, and perhaps inappropriately, steering the course of the venture, or worse, becoming

committed to an activity with doubtful prospect of strategic success, a holistic approach is warranted. But how can the actions of many agencies from several states, as well as international non-state agencies, be effectively integrated towards achieving a common objective? And how can these *actions* be brought together to achieve the desired *results*? The military has well-developed doctrine to plan operations to defeat an opponent and remove the apparatus of an unsatisfactory government, but that doctrine does not apply equally well to meeting the subsequent reconstruction and societal reform requirements.[9] I contend that a military-led intervention should be considered as an *intervention project* in which resources (including organizations and their actions, money and time) are integrated and optimized to achieve a defined objective.

MILITARY-LED INTERVENTIONS AS PROJECTS

We have to start planning for wars within the context of everything else.

Thomas P.M. Barnett, author and consultant[10]

Project management is a well-established discipline more commonly associated with building structurally complex systems.[11] A society, though, is an interactively complex system in which the number of individual elements coupled with the degrees of freedom that each of those elements enjoys generates an almost infinite number of permutations. So, once begun, an intervention may proceed along any number of potential paths. It may even give rise to new groups that seek to resist and challenge the venture—witness those that have emerged in Iraq. While the direct result of any action by intervention forces can be predicted with some degree of confidence, this certainty diminishes rapidly for second- and subsequent-order results. Despite these challenges, I contend that a project management approach has great utility to holistically plan and manage interventions. Accepting this approach, plans for military-led interventions need to include the following features:

> … an intervention may proceed along any number of potential paths …

- A *strategic objective* that defines the desired result and subordinate objectives that contribute to the achievement of the strategic objective. All objectives must be defined, realistic, legally and morally legitimate and ideally agreed upon by all members of the intervention coalition.

- A holistic and comprehensive consideration of the target society. This analysis will involve a breaking down of the intervention project into *societal sectors, each with its own reconstruction or reform objectives*. It is vital to recognize that the target society is an interactively complex system and that the reform sectors are ultimately all linked. The plan must identify these links and anticipate that actions in one sector may also have an effect in other sectors.
- An ability to *manage the conduct of the intervention*. This involves the means to assign responsibility to agencies and apply resources to regulate the pace of efforts in each reconstruction and reform sector relative to others such that the results in each are integrated to achieve the strategic objective.
- An ability to *adapt to a changing environment* with identified alternate ways to achieve objectives within each reconstruction and reform sector. The changing environment potentially includes an evolving strategic objective—particularly as this environment strains the will and resources of the coalition partners. In the event, the intervention force has to adopt these alternate ways, each of these ways require contingency resourcing.

We will now consider each of these features in more detail.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

The object in war is to attain a better peace - even if only from your own point of view.

Basil Liddell Hart, Historian[12]

An intervention force's generic strategic objective is to reform a target state such that its new indigenous government can independently exercise sovereignty to a standard acceptable to the coalition—that is, to be a viable, effective, and responsible member of the global community of states. For a particular military-led intervention, the strategic objective should be fully described with a series of attendant conditions. It may be difficult to achieve complete agreement on the strategic objective among all members of the intervention coalition but investment of effort prior to the start of the venture builds a sense of ownership and commitment across the coalition. Given the interactively complex nature of the environment, it should also be anticipated that the strategic objective might evolve throughout the course of the intervention. The degree to which the strategic objective evolves directly impacts on the legitimacy of the intervention and the coherence of the intervention coalition.

> … the strategic objective should be fully described with a series of attendant conditions …

RECONSTRUCTION AND REFORM SECTORS AND OBJECTIVES

We need to morph the battlefield into a lasting political victory.

Admiral (Retired) Arthur K. Cebrowski, former Director of the
Pentagon's Office of Force Transformation[13]

Organizing any complex project is ultimately a balance between the way it is broken down into smaller parts and the way these smaller parts are brought back together to form the whole. The key is to align this process of organization with the application of logic, and more significantly the authority for action as well as the responsibility and accountability for results.

The US *National Strategy for Victory in Iraq*, released in November 2005, provides an insight into the challenges of organizing and managing a large-scale reconstruction and societal reform project. The document clearly articulates the strategic objective and then defines three *tracks*—political, security and economic.[14] It characterizes these three tracks as 'mutually reinforcing' and asserts that they are integrated but it does not describe any linkages between tracks. In an effort to articulate how to implement the strategy, the document additionally identifies eight *strategic pillars*.[15] The document states: 'To organize these efforts, we have broken down our political/security/economic strategy (tracks) into eight pillars or *strategic objectives*.'[16] Yet this conjunction implies that these strategic pillars are also *strategic objective*s that the three tracks are moving through or towards. The document then states that each strategic pillar contains at least five *lines of action*, each with 'scores of *sub-actions* with specific objectives.' The document continues further, stating, 'Underlying each line of action is a series of *missions* and *tasks* assigned to military and civilian units in Iraq.' Yet there is no description or diagram in the document that depicts the relationship between the tracks, strategic pillars, lines of action and underlying missions and tasks. Clearly, this venture is a complex arrangement. While the document may simply be serving as a public communication tool, it would do well to clearly explain how all this activity is going to be integrated to achieve the strategic objective—if, indeed, such a holistic plan exists.[17]

> One of the most significant challenges in planning and managing an intervention is that of perspective …

One of the most significant challenges in planning and managing an intervention is that of perspective; specifically determining what reconstruction and reform is needed and what sectors should be defined. The organizational structure of the government of the coalition's lead nation tends to strongly influence the character of plans that intervention forces have developed to date. Reflecting a sense of the lead nation's

innate value, intervention plans have therefore tended to reflect the environment and organization of that nation—which is not necessarily appropriate where the prevailing societal conditions in the target state are significantly different. Furthermore, conducting these ventures is not just about which government department from the lead nation has the lead at any particular stage. In fact, the planners must objectively consider the venture with the perspective of the target state's indigenous population uppermost. The formation of an intervention coalition provides an opportunity to plan and implement an intervention with more objectivity and reduced influence from the organizational structure and interests of the government of the coalition's lead nation.

United Nations (UN) peacekeeping or humanitarian missions are military-supported interventions vice military-led interventions, yet they can offer an insight. When the UN plans and conducts peacekeeping missions, it typically establishes a number of 'pillars'. Historically, the pillars of UN mounted missions have been governance, security, humanitarian aid and development. The civilian mission commander (and his or her staff) assigns responsibility for the pillars to subordinate organizations and co-ordinates the efforts in each pillar. The governance pillar typically consists of UN civil servants, but the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe is presently responsible for this pillar in Kosovo. The security pillar is typically the responsibility of a military force. The military element creates a more secure environment that allows the other pillars to achieve their objectives. One of the UN agencies, such as the UN High Commission for Refugees or the UN Development Programme, typically leads the humanitarian aid and development pillar. The needs of the particular situation dictate the pillars created. While the military-led interventions that the West might mount in the future may be more challenging than military-supported UN peacekeeping missions, the pillars approach as a conceptual construct and the alignment of an organization against each pillar is instructive.

In a similar vein, military planners have developed a broad range of conceptual tools to design military operations. One of these tools is a concept called a 'logical line of operation'.[18] A logical line of operation (LLOO) links a series of 'actions' or 'results' in the most appropriate sequence to achieve

> …planners must objectively consider the venture with the perspective of the target state's indigenous population uppermost …

> The military element creates a more secure environment that allows the other pillars to achieve their objectives.

an objective. Elements within the military organization undertake actions. These actions seek to achieve results in the environment external to the military organization. A military plan that utilizes LLOO should link either actions or results—but not both. If a plan articulates both actions and results in the same context, the ability to match or correlate organizational actions with environmental results is reduced. A more sound approach is to have a plan that defines results, supported by a series of subordinate plans detailing the corresponding actions required to achieve those results. Ideally, the plan assigns each LLOO to a single organization that has the authority for action as well as the responsibility and accountability for results.

When military plans (or plans influenced by military planners) seek to address more than the military dimension, the LLOOs used have tended to be derivatives of the instruments of national power. The United States uses the DIME (diplomatic, information, military and economic) model to describe the elements of national power, while the United Kingdom uses DME (underpinned by the I that is explicit in its US equivalent). Using the instruments of national power as LLOO reflects the internal organization of the intervening state or coalition, not the nature of the target state or the reforms required. Thus, this approach tends to emphasize actions rather than results. It has, however, enabled the military to align itself with the military dimension and create the expectation that other agencies accept responsibility for the other LLOO. In recognition of a tendency to emphasize action rather than results, there has been a progressive evolution of LLOO from a basis in the instruments of national power towards grounding in broader societal constructs.[19] Several paradigms developed within the military using acronyms such as PMESII (political, military, economic, social, infrastructure and information), ASCOPE (area, structures, capabilities, organizations, people and events) and MIDLIFE (military, information, diplomatic, law enforcement, intelligence, finance and economic), while designed for analyzing a problem or society rather than reforming it, have evident utility as potential LLOO for military-led interventions.

> … this approach tends to emphasize actions rather than results.

Outside of the military and focusing on post-conflict environments, the US Department of State's Office of the Co-ordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization has identified five 'technical areas' of reconstruction's essential tasks: security, governance and participation; humanitarian assistance and social wellbeing; economic stability and infrastructure; and justice and reconciliation.[20] In *Losing Iraq - Inside the Postwar Reconstruction Fiasco*, David Phillips proposes the following 'focus areas': humanitarian relief, transitional security, rule of law, infrastructure reconstruction, economic development and political transition.[21] From a slightly nuanced perspective of nation building, the RAND Corporation

identified the following 'key areas': security, health/education, governance, democratization, economics and basic infrastructure.[22] Additionally, the role the private sector plays in contributing towards the achievement of the strategic objective is becoming more evident from the experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan.

These 'pillars', 'LLOO', 'technical areas', 'focus areas' and 'key areas' are divisions used to enable a conceptual breaking down of the venture. While the use of any divisions is inherently artificial given the interactively complex nature of a society, some division is necessary in order to align responsibility with different agencies in the intervention force.

> … the role the private sector plays in contributing towards the achievement of the strategic objective is becoming more evident …

For the purpose of this paper, therefore, I will use the term *reconstruction and reform sectors* on the basis that different sectors will need different combinations of reconstruction and reform action. But what set of reconstruction and reform sectors has the most utility for the conduct of a military-led intervention? On balance, the logical seams suggest that there are five reconstruction and reform sectors that should guide planning for a military-led intervention as follows:

- *Public Governance.* This sector includes the reform of all government responsibilities and institutions as well as the policies that set the conditions for the other sectors—particularly the private commercial sector. The public governance sector also includes the involvement of the population in the political process.
- *Public Security.* The public security sector includes the constabulary (police, border security and customs) and military elements of a state.[23] The military stage of the intervention establishes the public security environment that enables reconstruction and reform in all of the other sectors. The failure to achieve minimum acceptable levels of security will preclude other non-military agencies from commencing action in other sectors.[24] In this situation, the military is sometimes drawn into performing actions in other sectors—actions for which it is not necessarily designed or trained. The military's primary objective, therefore, is to create a level of public security that will allow, and in fact encourage, other

> The military's primary objective … is to create a level of public security that will allow … other agencies to be able to commence work…

agencies to be able to commence work and to persevere unhindered in other reconstruction and reform sectors. The objective within the security sector is to create an enduring indigenous capability to maintain minimum acceptable levels of public security. This sector is conceptually part of the public governance sector, but is initially separate because the military force establishes it before any action can commence in the other reconstruction and reform sectors. Additionally, the new indigenous government will take some time to form and develop the capacity to take on authority and responsibility for the public security sector.

- *Public Infrastructure.* The intervention force must repair the damage caused by the military stage of the intervention and be seen to be making a material difference that validates the removal of the previous government. Reconstruction and reform in the public infrastructure sector is an essential enabler to progress in other sectors—particularly the private commercial sector. At some stage in the venture, certain aspects of the public infrastructure sector may develop in conjunction with the private sector in public-private partnership activities.[25] Like the public security sector, the public infrastructure sector is also conceptually part of the public governance sector, but because the new indigenous government will take some time to form and develop the capacity to take on authority and responsibility for this sector, it is also initially separate.

- *Private Commercial.* The enabling conditions for enhanced private commercial activity include minimum acceptable levels of public security, sound government institutions and policies, and adequate public infrastructure. When the intervention force achieves these enabling conditions, the private commercial sector can generate significant momentum for broader societal development. Foreign direct investment and trade are key features, and an effective taxation system enables the state to become viable in the long term. The objective in this sector is to create a self-sustaining market-based economy.

- *Social.* Reform of certain aspects of the target society's culture may be required to include reducing the influence of detrimental concepts (such as an unsatisfactory political ideology or corruption) or by inculcating certain positive concepts (such as democracy and the rule of law). This sector may also include a social reconciliation process if parts of the indigenous population feel disenfranchised.

These five reconstruction and reform sectors reflect the fact that once the initial military stage of an intervention is complete, an intervention focuses on the public (civil) sector. The intervention force must plan, resource and organize to commence action in each of the five reconstruction and reform sectors well ahead of the military stage of an intervention so that physical action in each sector can commence on the ground as soon as possible.
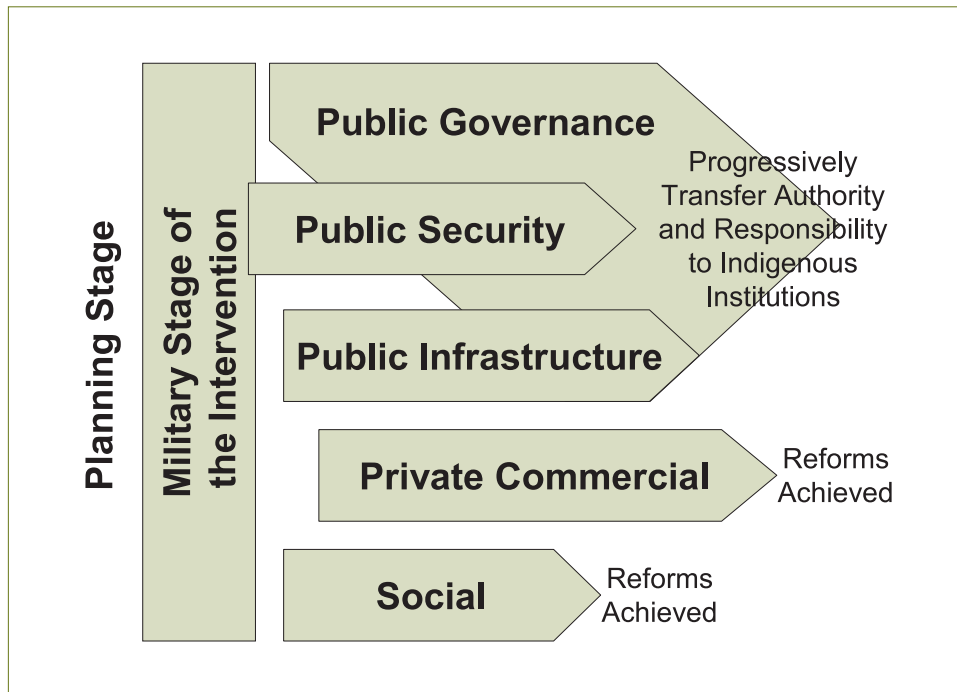
Figure 1

Figure 1 depicts an intervention project and shows the military stage of the intervention and the five subsequent reconstruction and reform sectors and their inter-relationships. The figure shows how the military stage of the intervention directly creates the public security environment that enables action in the other four sectors to commence. Of the five sectors, the public governance sector is likely to be the most challenging, as ultimately, the indigenous government has to have full authority for all aspects of sovereignty. Thus, as the public governance sector strengthens and the indigenous government develops its capacity to govern, its mandate progressively expands to include taking on responsibility for the public security and public infrastructure sectors—although not necessarily in that order.

> Of the five sectors, the public governance sector is likely to be the most challenging …

The public governance sector includes efforts to develop policy and laws that establish the environment for the private commercial sector. The coalition's efforts in the private commercial sector are oriented towards getting the national economy to a position where it becomes self-sustaining. As states with market economies

mature, they strive to maximize the private sector and minimize the public sector. A similar trend applies to an intervention project. Therefore, the relationship between the public governance sector and the private commercial sector needs close management. Achieving the desired social reforms may take a relatively short period or it may take several generations. If social reforms are the last remaining sector that the intervention force is working, then the public governance sector also assumes authority and responsibility for it in order to allow the intervention project to be terminated. When the intervention project is terminated, the target state continues to interact normally with the rest of the world.

MANAGING THE CONDUCT OF THE INTERVENTION

Cry 'Havoc!' and let slip the managers of war.

Paul Cornish, academic[26]

The argument so far indicates that, taking from the project management discipline, the intervention coalition should appoint an *intervention project manager*. The project manager should be responsible to the owners of the project—that is the states and other non-state agencies of the intervention coalition, who are in turn responsible for providing the resources the project manager identifies.[27] While the project manager will most likely be a citizen of the coalition lead-nation, representatives from all coalition states and agencies, to include both the public and private sectors, leaven the project manager's staff. The project manager identifies those agencies best suited to take on the responsibility for the military stage of the intervention and each of the five reconstruction and reform sectors. The project manager supervises action in the military stage of the intervention and across the five sectors, but

> The project manager supervises action in the military stage of the intervention and … integrates the results achieved in each.

more importantly, integrates the results achieved in each. The project manager decides when the indigenous government has the capacity to take on responsibility for the public security and public infrastructure sectors. To carry out this array of tasks, the project manager must be given a degree of authority over each of these agencies—particularly over the military forces conducting the military stage of the intervention and responsible for the public security sector.

Beyond the question of authority, for the project manager to be most effective, the intervention plan must identify the desired results or objectives in each reconstruction and reform sector. The agency responsible for each particular sector then determines the actions required to achieve those objectives. Once the strategic objective and subordinate objectives within each reconstruction and reform sector are determined, it should be possible to identify a critical path—that is, the path of results or subordinate actions that is most limited by the available resources. Often, the public governance sector will require the most time—especially if there is a lack of sufficiently educated indigenous people to become the civil servants that operate government institutions.

The society of a target state is unlikely to perceive that it requires reform and the intervention coalition must strive to convey to them a positive message. Use of the terms 'reform' and 'intervention project manager' may be inappropriate. The intervention project manager's leadership role and his or her authority for the venture also require emphasis. Indeed, as with any venture, leadership, transparency and relationship building will also be important to the success of the activity. The title, 'Transition Authority Leader' may be acceptable to all parties—particularly the indigenous population of the target state. Identifying the right person for this appointment is clearly important.[28] The Transition Authority Leader and his or her staff should establish their offices in the capital city of the target state as soon as practicable. The Transition Authority Leader's moral authority remains high if the strategic objective is defined, transparent and clearly communicated to the indigenous population. When the intervention force achieves the strategic objective, the intervention coalition dismisses the Transition Authority Leader and disbands the intervention force.

> The society of a target state is unlikely to perceive that it requires reform …

ADAPTING TO A CHANGING ENVIRONMENT

Whosoever desires constant success must change his conduct with the times.

Niccolo Machiavelli[29]

All plans require a degree of built-in flexibility and this is especially true for a complex and potentially evolving project such as a major reconstruction and societal reform venture. The Transition Authority Leader needs to be responsible for managing the pace of achieving results in each of the reconstruction and reform sectors so that they become mutually supporting towards achieving the strategic objective. In order to develop an ability to adapt to a changing environment, each

reconstruction and reform sector must seek to anticipate potential changes and identify alternate ways to achieve its objectives. If adopted, each of the identified alternate ways must be feasible, acceptable and able to be resourced. The changing environment may also bring about an evolving strategic objective—particularly as the will and resources of the coalition partners are strained. The responsibility for managing this circumstance rests on the Transition Authority Leader and his or her ability to interact with the intervention coalition.

A NESTED APPLICATION

As soon as the military force removes the apparatus of the unsatisfactory government, action must commence in each of the five reconstruction and reform sectors. Successive transitions at the local level contribute to provincial level transitions and ultimately lead to a transition at the national level. Thus, the conceptual construct of a military stage followed by five reconstruction and reform sectors, as

> … each reconstruction and reform sector must seek to anticipate potential changes and identify alternate ways to achieve its objectives …

well as the appointment of provincial and even local Transition Authority Leaders, applies at multiple levels in an intervention project.[30] As the patchwork of locales where the military stage of the intervention transitions to the reconstruction and reform stage, those agencies responsible for each of the reconstruction and reform sectors must progressively expand and integrate their actions. Co-ordinated effort at the local level is especially important where direct contact with the indigenous population occurs and actions with tangible results have the most impact.

CONCLUSION

The replacement of an unsatisfactory government by a military-led intervention will inevitably require some degree of effort to reconstruct and reform other parts of the society of the target state. Military-led interventions initially and temporarily employ the military as a change agent (or catalyst) to enable the achievement of a higher political strategic objective. This paper considers a

> Co-ordinated effort at the local level is especially important …

military-led intervention to effect regime change as an *intervention project* in which resources (including organizations and their actions, money and time) are integrated

and optimized to achieve a defined objective. The use of a project management approach enables a more objective and holistic approach to planning and managing military-led interventions. This article offers a conceptual construct to plan and manage interventions with the appointment of a Transition Authority Leader as project manager who is responsible for integrating the results of the military stage of the intervention and of five reconstruction and reform sectors: public governance, public security, public infrastructure, private commercial and social. Intervention forces can concurrently apply this construct at the local, provincial and national levels of a society.

ENDNOTES

1   The term 'unsatisfactorily governed' is deliberate. Unsatisfactory state governments include weak or failing state governments as well as 'tyrannical', 'rogue' or 'aggressive' governments. Any definition of what constitutes unsatisfactory governance will be contentious. An objective measure is probably impossible and any definition will often be subject to particular interests. The UN Security Council and other multilateral intergovernmental bodies will play a role in making such determinations.

2   The West has an interest in maintaining a Westphalian-based order in which states are the principal geopolitical actors. While some argue that sovereignty and societal organization along a state basis are dated or redundant concepts, in the absence of established and successful alternatives this paper will assume that these two concepts will continue to remain relevant for the immediate future.

3   For the purpose of this paper, a society is a definable group of human beings and the tangible and non-tangible elements that make that group distinctive.

4   For a synopsis of these examples and others see Francis Fukuyama (ed.), *Nation-Building: Beyond Afghanistan and Iraq*, The John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, MD, 2006.

5   See for example David Phillips, *Losing Iraq – Inside the Postwar Reconstruction Fiasco*, Westview Press, Boulder, CO, 2005, or Michael Gordon and Bernard Trainor, *Cobra II: The Inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq*, Pantheon, London, 2006.

6   Speech to the 40th Commander's Conference of the German *Bundeswehron* 11 October 2005. See <www.ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/¬ dlscours/86523.pdf>, accessed on 16 February 2006.

7   Given that other non-military leverage to achieve objectives may still be pursued, while preparations are made for a military-led intervention.

8   An example is the US Department of State's *Future of Iraq Project* that produced a large volume of information on requirements and recommendations but no clear objectives or plan that intervention forces could action. The issue became moot, however, when the US Department of Defense's Organization for Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance largely ignored the project's work. See Philips, *Losing Iraq*; Mitchell Thompson, 'Breaking the Proconsulate: A New Design for National Power', *Parameters*, Winter 2005–2006, pp. 68–70; and Gordon and Trainor, *Cobra II*, p. 159.

9   Western military operations planning is conceptually based on identifying enemy Centers of Gravity on the presumption that their destruction or defeat will consequently achieve the objective or bring about the desired end state. For an excellent critique, see Pierre Lessard, 'Campaign Design for Winning the War… and the Peace', *Parameters*, Summer 2005, pp. 36–50.

10 <http://www.thomaspmbarnett.com/pnm/conversation.htm>, accessed on 25 February 2006.

11 Note that the definition of a 'system' is arbitrary. A system is simply a collection of components that have elements related in some way.

12 Basil Liddell Hart, *Strategy*, revised second edition, Meridian, London, 1991, p. 353.

13 <http://www.fletcherconference.com/oldtranscripts/2003/cebrowski.htm>, accessed on 25 February 2006.

14 These tracks are very similar to the diplomatic, military and economic instruments of national power. Interestingly, the document omits the information instrument despite the recent emphasis on public diplomacy and strategic communications within the US Government and a perception that the Global War on Terrorism is essentially a war of ideas.

15 These eight strategic pillars are: defeat the terrorists and neutralize the insurgency; transition Iraq to security self-reliance; help Iraqis form a national compact for democratic government; help Iraq build government capacity and provide essential services; help Iraq strengthen its economy; help Iraq strengthen the rule of law and promote civil rights; increase international support for Iraq; and strengthen public understanding of coalition efforts and public isolation of the insurgents. National Security Council, *National Strategy for Victory in Iraq*, November 2005, pp. 25–6. The strategy also describes a differently articulated strategic objective for each of these strategic pillars in the appendix of the document. National Security Council, *National Strategy for Victory in Iraq*, November 2005, pp. 28–35.

16 Ibid, p. 25.

17 The use of this example does not imply that the US strategy for victory in Iraq is flawed or not achieving its strategic objective, just that organizing a reconstruction and societal reform venture is a complex activity.

18 A logical line of operation equates to a conceptual line of operation.

19 See for example an article by Major General Peter Chiarelli and Major Patrick Michaelis, 'Winning the Peace – The Requirement for Full Spectrum Operations', *Military Review*, July–August 2005, pp. 4–17. <http://usacac.leavenworth.army.mil/CAC/milreview/¬ download/Engtish/JulAug05/chiarelli.pdf>, accessed on 24 February 2006.

20 US Department of State, Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization, *Post Conflict Reconstruction Essential Task Table*, 15 April 2005. See <http://www.state.gov/s/crs/rls/52959.htm>, accessed on 19 February 2006.

21 Phillips, *Losing Iraq*, p. 226.

22 Seth Jones, Jeremy Wilson, Andrew Rathmell, and Jack Riley, *Establishing Law and Order After Conflict*, RAND Publications, Santa Monica, CA, 2005, p. 11.

23 An excellent reference for reform in the public security sector is Jones *et al*, *Establishing Law and Order After Conflict*.

24 A level of security as perceived by the organizations responsible for action in the other reform sectors.

25 Afghanistan is now using this approach albeit four years after the intervention began. See <http://usinfo.state.gov/sa/Archive/2006/Jan /30-583095.html>, accessed on 19 February 2006.

26 <www.nato.int/acad/fellow/99-01/cornish.pdf>, accessed on 22 February 2006.

27 Resource donors are not limited to the states of the Coalition, and organizationally the project management team would perhaps require a section to coordinate resource contributions.

28 I don't ascribe to the view that ambassadors make effective nation-builders. While the ability to communicate with the stakeholders and see different perspectives, there is little in a diplomat's traditional career path that would develop the range skills required of a Transition Authority Leader. Some military leaders have proven adept nation-builders in the past, but in the modern information-economic driven era I suspect that Chief Executive Officers of large complex corporations might be the best area to find a Transition Authority Leader.

29 <http://www.leadershipnow.com/changequotes.html>, accessed on 25 March 2006.

30 This approach is similar to the Provincial Reconstruction Team organizational framework that has evolved in Afghanistan and is planned for Iraq.

THE AUTHOR

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THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COIN

RECONSTRUCTION OPERATIONS IN SOUTHERN AFGHANISTAN

LIEUTENANT COLONEL MICK RYAN

ABSTRACT

This article reflects on the operation of the Australian Army's 1st Reconstruction Task Force, which deployed to Afghanistan's Uruzgan Province in August 2006. The author highlights the importance of civil affairs, such as reconstruction, education and capacity-building, in an overall counterinsurgency effort.

As for the character of our enemies, they have been unusually ruthless and nihilistic. Their only purpose in violence has been to tear down, not to build up an alternative vision they genuinely support. They are ruthless killers who often seem to kill just for the pleasure of it. There is no merit in [their] vision according to any serious cultural or moral code in the world today.

Michael O'Hanlon[1]

INTRODUCTION

Since Western nations commenced operations in Afghanistan in 2001, they have undertaken a complex counterinsurgency. As General David Petraeus commented recently, the insurgencies in Iraq and Afghanistan were not the wars for which the armies of the West were best prepared.[2] Yet these are the wars in which many Western armies are engaged—and are likely to be so for the foreseeable future. Insurgency will be the favoured approach of violent non-state actors well into the twenty-first century. Ironically, the nature of Western armies is at least part of the problem: the overwhelming superiority of Western military forces now compels those who wish to challenge the *status quo* to resort to insurgency operations. Such operations claim many recent successes in Iraq, the southern Philippines and Afghanistan.

Faced with the complex challenges of counterinsurgency operations in southern Afghanistan, and the need for cognitive-realm solutions to counter the extreme ideas of the Taliban, the Australian Army has fashioned its own response in the development of the reconstruction task force organisation. The first of these organisations, the 1st Reconstruction Task Force (RTF), deployed to Afghanistan in August 2006 as part of the Dutch–Australian Task Force Uruzgan. For eight months, this task force worked to rebuild the physical infrastructure of Uruzgan Province, to build an indigenous capacity to undertake engineering activities there and to support the Dutch Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT).

> … the Australian Army has fashioned its own response …

This article examines the role and contribution of Australian Army reconstruction operations as an element of the counterinsurgency fight in southern Afghanistan. The overarching purpose in Uruzgan was to make the Taliban irrelevant. With this aim in mind, this article examines the way in which the 1st RTF conducted its operations and projects a future path for civil affairs activities.

COIN AND RECONSTRUCTION

Reconstruction and civil affairs are not obvious elements of counterinsurgency operations, a term that, to general understanding, simply suggests the prosecution of insurgents. Yet reconstruction does have a place within the broader spectrum of such deployments. One of the mainstays of counterinsurgency theory is the separation of the insurgent from the populace. While this theory certainly has a physical and 'kinetic' dimension, counterinsurgency rests primarily in the cognitive realm—commonly known as the 'battle to win the hearts and minds'. The counterinsurgent must persuade the population to withdraw physical and moral support for the insurgent.[3]

Like other counterinsurgency campaigns, the outcome of the war in Afghanistan will be decided by the degree to which the counterinsurgent gains the support of the people. This demands a continuous balancing act between kinetic actions (the employment of lethal force undertaken by the combat arms) and non-kinetic actions (undertaken by Provincial Reconstruction Teams and the Reconstruction Task Force). The RTF trod a difficult path between the kinetic and non-kinetic elements of the military contribution to counterinsurgency operations, seeking to present the Afghan population with a softer side to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF).[4] Coalition forces were portrayed not as a destructive presence, but as a force for good, focussed on rebuilding and assisting local communities.

Military reconstruction operations provide time and space for the creation of indigenous capacity to backfill military capabilities. They also allow time for the eventual arrival of aid organisations. In many areas such as southern Afghanistan, the tenuous security situation prevents a vast majority of aid groups and other agencies from establishing a presence. However, there remains a dire need for nation-building and reconstruction in addition to security operations. This must be provided by highly capable organisations with the integral mobility and protection to allow the conduct of reconstruction with minimal physical interference from the insurgent. Only military organisations—and military engineers in particular—possess the ability to undertake reconstruction activities while concurrently providing a robust level of self-protection. It is the military reconstruction operation that provides the critical link between warfighting operations and the return of normality to civil society.

The conduct of reconstruction operations by military engineers and attached elements of the combined-arms team requires the diversion of a significant level of resourcing from traditional security operations to areas previously considered support roles such as construction and civil liaison. Yet the benefits of reconstruction are not confined to restored infrastructure. Military engineers have the ability to transfer skills in basic trades and the planning and conduct of construction tasks to the local populace to ensure the growth of indigenous capacity. Providing skills to the population is an effective way to assist Afghans to help themselves, and is also an important element of ISAF's ultimate exit strategy.

> … the war in Afghanistan will be decided by … the support of the people.

> … the benefits of reconstruction are not confined to restored infrastructure.

A COMPLEX ENVIRONMENT

Undeniably, the human dimension was the most complex aspect of the environment in which the 1st RTF operated. While the physical environment in Afghanistan was extremely demanding, it was the people of the province who determined the complexity of the environment as a whole. Ethnically, the inhabitants of Uruzgan are overwhelmingly Pashtun. Tribal affiliation provides the single greatest distinction within the local people and, during the 1st RTF tour in Uruzgan, the *Populzai* was the dominant tribe in the region, boasting the Governor and senior security personnel among its members. *Populzai* dominance—and the enmity it sparked— remained a constant sensitivity.

Inter-tribal rivalry, however, was not the only source of tension. The drug trade plays a key role; Uruzgan is one of Afghanistan's largest producers of poppies. This illicit industry constitutes the most significant proportion of the local economy and involves a large percentage of farmers and other members of the community. As a consequence, any effort to disrupt the drug trade incurs hostility from the local people and active and violent resistance from drug traffickers and major dealers.

Other sources of conflict in the province include political differences, residual conflict over the roles of various individuals during the Soviet occupation, and honour killings under the *Pashtunwali* code of conduct that governs behaviour throughout most of Uruzgan.[5] The parlous nature of provincial governance provides a further level of complexity.

> … the Taliban applied constant pressure throughout much of the RTF's deployment.

A further complicating factor in this intricate and difficult environment is the presence of the Taliban. While not as active in Uruzgan as in some other parts of southern Afghanistan, the operations of the Taliban applied constant pressure throughout much of the RTF's deployment. The effect was a constant requirement for security on worksites, during convoys and on engineer reconnaissance. Taliban tactics were principally indirect, and they favoured the use of improvised explosive devices and rocket attacks to disrupt Coalition operations.

This complex tableau of ethnic and tribal affiliations, political allegiances and government agencies, local and foreign adversary forces, criminal/drug groups and Coalition forces presented the RTF with constant and multifaceted challenges. Sources of conflict were never clear-cut: it was rarely a simple matter of Taliban versus Coalition forces. Likewise, the linkages between different actors, some of whom the RTF was required to interact with regularly, were far from apparent.

Physically, the area in which the RTF conducted operations was notable for the striking disparity between the 'green zones' along the rivers and the harsh and arid desert that dominated the remainder of the province. The green zones represented a significant physical obstacle—a complicated amalgam of irrigation channels, orchards, small villages and *wadis* that contained the major concentrations of people and also provided perfect concealment for the insurgent. The basin in which the RTF primarily worked was surrounded by high mountains: rocky, sheer and totally devoid of vegetation.

The climate served to exacerbate the daunting physical challenges. From May through to November, the weather is searingly hot and dry, with dust storms a constant hazard. The beginning of the year, however, saw the arrival of rains that, while dampening the dust, bedevilled operations by clogging the transport of goods into the area. The onset of winter brought extreme cold weather (down to minus 15 degrees Centigrade) and confirmed perceptions that this was a harsh and hostile climate in which to work.

> Sources of conflict were never clear-cut …

The complex situation—both physical and human—in Uruzgan constantly tested friendly operations. Coming to terms with this intricate environment was crucial from the earliest stages of planning for the deployment. This was a mission that would require an intelligence-led organisation.

INTELLIGENCE-LED RECONSTRUCTION

One of the basic tenets of reconstruction operations is that they must be intelligence-led—knowledge of the operational environment is paramount. Within the human environment, understanding the complex interrelationship between family, tribal and political loyalties was a significant undertaking. Even in a small province such as Uruzgan, simply forming some appreciation of the scope of the problem took many months.

> … reconstruction operations … must be intelligence-led …

From the onset of pre-deployment preparations and throughout the actual conduct of these operations, the development and updating of a 'human map' of the province was the highest intelligence priority. This 'map' provided a view of the key people in the province, their relationships and interactions. Possessing this 'human map', continually updated using complex adaptive systems theory, equipped the commanders and staff with insights into the dynamics of the province and the ability to assess the impact of RTF projects on the various local actors.

Human intelligence operations are *the* force multiplier for these types of missions. Human intelligence had to be employed effectively to enable the RTF to undertake the right project at the right place and time and to ensure robust force protection measures. The RTF's most important human intelligence asset comprised the eyes and ears of its members, who interacted constantly with local people in villages, on worksites in the provincial capital Tarin Kowt, at the Trade Training School and in meetings. This interaction provided invaluable opportunities to gain insights into the local situation and, importantly, also to convey messages from ISAF and the Government of Afghanistan.

The fusion of all of the information collected was a major undertaking and allowed the RTF to overlay all its sources and build an informed picture of the area. This fused product shaped operations by providing insights into the needs of the local population and the intentions of the Taliban and other adversary elements in the province.

Intelligence-led reconstruction was the most effective method of conducting an operation of this nature. Above all, it ensured that all projects were conducted where and when they were needed. It ensured that deployments to small villages supported the right people and were aimed directly at stealing support from the Taliban. Intelligence was gleaned from the lowest levels, but also disseminated through the chain of command. Ultimately, if the conduct of counterinsurgency operations—and reconstruction operations—relies on strategic corporals and privates, then those corporals and privates must have access to accurate and timely intelligence on which to base their decisions.

> … corporals and privates must have access to accurate and timely intelligence …

A CONCEPTUAL MODEL FOR RTF OPERATIONS

As its concept of operations unfolded, it became apparent that the RTF required a concept of what to achieve. The RTF conduct of operations evolved into a very simple conceptual model. This model had two separate but mutually supporting binary approaches, and overlaid them in a single concept. The first of these binary approaches was the two-tiered, *top down, bottom up* approach. This meant that the RTF conducted concurrent operations to rebuild government institutions and infrastructure (top down) based on the priorities of provincial officials, as well as conducting small-scale missions to assist the people in individual villages (bottom up) based on their community priorities.

The second part of this conceptual model involved sustaining a dual focus of physical and intellectual (capacity-building) reconstruction.[6] As impressive as new hospitals, clinics, schools, bridges and other infrastructure may be, it is the capacity of local people to staff this infrastructure and maintain it in the long term that is of overwhelming importance. Consequently, the RTF also conducted extensive trade training and developed an education infrastructure.[7] This ensured that reconstruction projects not only had an immediate effect, but that the capacity-building element incorporated into each project ensured its longevity through the training of local men in maintenance and the development of project management skills in provincial government officials.

PROVINCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT AND RAPID RECONSTRUCTION

Consultation with local officials and other interested parties was a critical aspect in prioritising the RTF's construction projects. A weekly engineer forum for all provincial and Coalition engineer organisations was established early in the deployment to separate the various engineer projects and provide a forum for
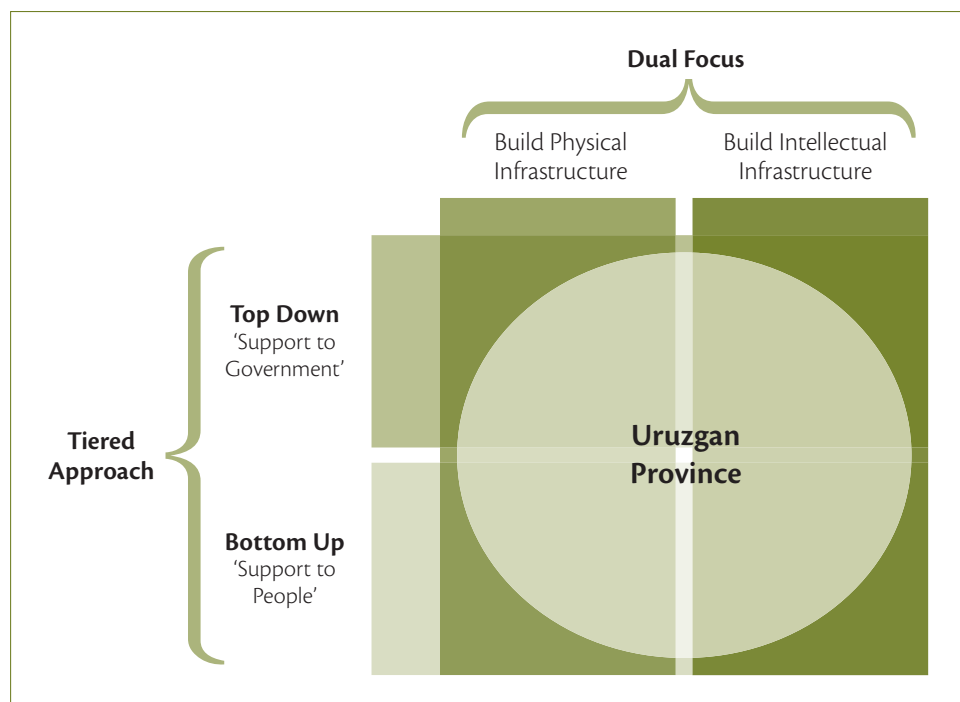

Figure 1. Conceptual model of RTF operations

professional debate. This was supplemented by regular meetings with provincial officials to discuss the details of individual projects and ensure that what was needed would be matched by what was delivered.

The 1st RTF deployed with a strong planning capability that integrated engineer, security, intelligence and information operations (IO) planning in a single entity. From within the Task Force Headquarters, the plans section reached out to the PRT and provincial officials to prioritise works that accorded with provincial and ISAF developmental requirements. These priorities were then used to develop a monthly works plan that determined the location of projects and RTF deployments, as well as dictating budget planning.

> … regular meetings … ensure[d] that what was needed would be matched by what was delivered.

The capability provided by the works section was integral to this. Embedded within the S3 (Operations) cell, this small yet highly capable element provided civil engineers, works supervisors, drafting and surveying capacity. As components of the operations section, security and information operations planning were incorporated into engineer planning for projects from their inception, providing significant flexibility in the execution of reconstruction tasks. The works section was able to design and manage projects for both integral engineer elements and contractors. Further, the works section was able to use its ability to confer with other Army engineer units in Australia to secure additional advice on technical engineer issues.

> … security and information operations planning were incorporated into engineer planning …

This hybrid planning process also allowed greater flexibility in project execution. Integral assets from the RTF engineer squadron could be employed, as could local contractors. At times, the nature of the project—such as the renovation of the provincial hospital—required a mix of both. This meant that the RTF was effectively able to undertake *top down* projects and *bottom up* projects concurrently. *Top down* projects saw the plans section conducting reconnaissance, design and the project or contract management required to oversee civilian contractors on these lengthy, large-scale tasks. *Bottom up* projects initially involved the plans section; however, execution occurred via a task-organised combat team with an engineer organisation tailored to each task. These *bottom up* tasks were conducted in small villages in the vicinity of Tarin Kowt and, consequently, a blend of security and engineering was required for

each, supplied by the integral engineer squadron and security company of the RTF. Generally, each of these tasks comprised a specific operation on which the PRT also deployed one of its mission teams for local liaison.

In one initiative, the RTF developed tailored *village packages*—literally 'one-stop shops' for village reconstruction projects. Traditionally, engineers conduct reconnaissance, retire to prepare for the task and then redeploy to complete the work. It became clear very early in the deployment that, while *efficient*, this would not be *effective* due to a potential loss of credibility with the local people. Instead, taking village 'packages', consisting of pre-fabricated mosque renovation kits and water storage tanks or tank stands, were taken on the mission. These rapid reconstruction tasks (colloquially known among the troops as 'backyard blitzes'[8]) constituted, quite literally, an adaptation driven by local requirements. Identifying credibility as a cornerstone, the RTF developed its operations

> … pre-fabricated mosque renovation kits and water storage tanks … were taken on the mission.

around these rapid reconstruction tasks that would commence as soon as consultation with village *maliks* was completed.[9] While the scope of these 'backyard blitz' tasks was small, the return in good will and improvement in the lives of those assisted was considerable.

The immediacy of this action had an enormous impact on local villagers. Coalition forces were seen to be delivering on their promises, lending ISAF operations significant credibility. The lives of the local people were also immediately and substantially improved and the mosque renovation kits sent the additional message that the Coalition forces respected Islam. This had instant information operations benefits as it clearly countered Taliban propaganda to the contrary. In a tribal society such as Afghanistan, winning over the villagers is critical. These villages constitute the key terrain in such a counterinsurgency campaign, and must be won over—one at a time if necessary.[10]

> Flexibility and adaptability were key concepts in the conduct of RTF operations.

These rapid reconstruction tasks were underpinned by a significant intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) effort that included engineer reconnaissance from previous operations. Given the nature of these operations, the construction element of the activity was initially planned and the enabling security concept then 'wrapped' around the construction. Flexibility and adaptability were key concepts in the conduct of RTF operations.

The RTF also enjoyed significant flexibility through the availability of adequate funding at short notice. A large budget for reconstruction projects was approved prior to deployment, with key personnel given the appropriate delegations to approve the expenditure. Works section staff were also trained in complex procurement methodologies. A financial advisor was included in the headquarters, ensuring rapid feedback on the availability of funds prior to the approval of expenditure. The combination of this allocation of money with appropriate delegations and complex procurement skills ensured that the RTF had the flexibility to expend large amounts of money on major projects without constant reference to Australia.

BUILDING CAPACITY

Capacity-building is a consistent theme in the approach of various government and non-government organisations to nation-building operations. While the organisation of the 1st RTF incorporated a trade training capacity from its inception, this area was notably under-appreciated prior to deployment. The first trade training courses—each of one month's duration—were very successful both in increasing the basic skills of the local youth and in striking a blow in the infor-mation operations campaign. News of the RTF Trade Training School spread rapidly by word of mouth, and RTF personnel on operations around Tarin Kowt were constantly asked by local people to include their young men in the courses. Eventually the curriculum was also expanded to include a small engine maintenance course. As an additional incentive for young men to apply for these courses, a training wage was paid to all trainees. At the end of the course, graduates received formal qualifications in their trade (in Pashtu) and a tool kit. The RTF then assisted graduates to find employment, with some graduates subsequently working as trainee instructors at the Trade Training School. By the latter stages of the deployment, all courses had at least one Afghan instructor who was a graduate of the school. This was a deliberate strategy to ensure that once RTF rotations in Tarin Kowt ceased, there would be an indigenous capacity to continue vocational training in the area.

> … the 1st RTF incorporated a trade training capacity from its inception …

Another area of capacity-building led by the RTF involved the training of Afghan National Army engineers. While this task was not anticipated prior to deployment, an opportunity arose early in the tour to have Afghan Army engineers attached to the Task Force. The RTF adopted a 'train and partner' approach based on a monthly rotation in which Afghan Army engineers would receive a week of

formal instruction in combat engineering, followed by two weeks of deployment on RTF operations and a week's leave. The partnering of the Afghan engineers with their embedded US Army trainers allowed the RTF to conduct village tasks using Afghan soldiers. This not only gave the RTF greater credibility in the eyes of the villagers, but created the perception in local Afghans that their army was a credible and constructive part of society.

A further aspect of RTF capacity-building involved mentoring provincial officials. The RTF developed links with key personnel within the Ministry of Reconstruction and Rural Develop-

> RTF capacity-building involved mentoring provincial officials.

ment, as well as with the office of the local mayor. Senior RTF personnel formed close bonds with the leadership of these two provincial entities, fostering a more informed process for prioritising RTF projects and developing trade-training capacity.

KICKING THE TALIBAN WHERE IT HURTS

Working with and for the local people is a key element of successful counterinsurgency operations. For the RTF, this involved meeting with local people and listening as they detailed their needs at provincial and village level. It also entailed more subtle elements that impacted on the way the RTF operated.

Building a sound knowledge of local culture took time before and during the deployment, but was critical to interacting with local people. Gaining an understanding of the human or social elements in the area of operations was a high priority throughout the RTF's tour in Uruzgan. To achieve this, the RTF started slowly, gradually gaining a more detailed picture. The first projects did not start until the unit had been in the area for some time so as to allow the RTF sufficient time to ensure that these projects met local requirements.

RTF staff worked hard to ensure that every facet of the relationship with local people was based on respect. Every RTF member undertook substantial cultural training prior to deployment, especially in the local *Pashtunwali* code of conduct, so as to provide a solid foundation for dealing with the people of the Tarin Kowt area. The first standing operating procedure of the 1st RTF was the code of conduct for its soldiers. This code were issued to every soldier prior to deployment and constantly reinforced throughout. It included guidance on dealing with the various elements of Tarin Kowt (Pashtun) society, as well as local norms and practices.

This initial interaction and the delay in initiating projects also ensured that the RTF was not making promises it could not keep. Through detailed discussions with local people, the RTF carefully managed expectations and promised only what it

could deliver. This was a reaction to the constant complaint by local people that government and Coalition forces would promise projects, but not deliver. From this initial interaction grew the 'backyard blitz' approach to village reconstruction missions described earlier. The enduring theme of RTF operations became 'promise only what can be delivered and deliver on everything that is promised'. This was translated by RTF soldiers into the classically Australian line: 'we don't make promises, we just build stuff.'

> … 'we don't make promises, we just build stuff.'

The RTF also maintained a minimum level of local labour for every contract signed with local construction companies. The aim of this policy was to keep local men employed in constructive endeavours, foster the transfer of work skills and inject money into the local economy. Local companies often tended to employ labourers from outside the province. To enhance employment opportunities for local people, the RTF set a benchmark of 70 per cent local labour for each of its projects. This became a contractual obligation for contractors, some of whom were penalised for non-compliance by being locked out of the worksite. During the tendering process, any contractors who identified that the technical nature of a project would prevent them reaching this minimum level of local labour would be engaged in contract negotiations and a compromise effected.

Constant negotiation was a feature of the relationship between the RTF and local officials. Throughout the scoping and design phases of RTF projects, there was extensive consultation and negotiation with local officials. However, even when agreement was reached and contracts had been signed (and even when construction was underway), local officials would often seek to re-negotiate contracts. RTF staff listened to the concerns of these officials and endeavoured to reach a compromise that was agreeable to both sides. RTF staff quickly learned that they could not assume that changes would not be sought simply because construction had commenced. The RTF accepted that this was the 'Afghan way' and ensured that neither side lost face during the ongoing negotiations.

CONVEYING THE MESSAGE

Many members of the task force augmented their cultural knowledge by learning the local language, Pashtu. Many soldiers also undertook regular refresher training while deployed. While they rarely became fluent, the local people responded very positively to soldiers who were seen to be making an effort to interact and understand local norms. The effect of Australian soldiers who were able to say 'g'day' in the local language was often quite pronounced, especially in the smaller, more remote villages.

Interaction between the local people and the RTF was enhanced by the use of interpreters who played an essential role in RTF operations. The interpreters, employed by the RTF, were contractors and citizens of other nations, and yet were treated as full members of the RTF. This facilitated their use in detailed technical discussions with provincial officials on complex project-related issues. Importantly, the interpreters were able to translate nuances in conversations that were crucial to gaining an overall understanding of the local people. Without these interpreters the RTF would not have been able to effectively assess local needs and requirements and then transform this into physical construction and capacity-building projects.

Every effort was made to give credit to the local people and agencies for projects undertaken by the RTF so as to lend credibility to local government institutions and to endow local people with ownership of projects. This approach also worked to minimise adversary targeting of RTF projects.[11]

The 1940 United States Marine Corps publication, the *Small Wars Manual*, noted that 'tolerance, sympathy and kindness should be the keynote of our relationship with the mass of the population.'[12] Working effectively with and for the local population was a central tenet of RTF operations. Developing a sound familiarity with local culture was crucial to this interaction and made a significant contribution to the operational capability of the task force.

> … effort was made to give credit to the local people and agencies for projects …

An integral part of RTF operations was devoted to ensuring that information concerning infrastructure development and capacity-building was conveyed to the local population as well as to Coalition partners and the Australian people. This was achieved by employing standard doctrine, which states that: 'The relationship between security forces and the local population must be based on mutual respect and confidence which, in turn, is based on accurate information and understanding.'[13] Consequently, a strong information operations plan emphasising strategic communications was integral to every RTF activity.

Information operations were a dominant consideration from the very outset of each planning process. There were many target audiences at different levels and informing these different audiences was a time-consuming and laborious process, but an absolutely essential element of operations. Considerable effort went into ensuring consistency of RTF message to deny the adversary the ability to exploit seams in the Coalition's public information campaigns. As the penetration of electronic media in the province was relatively limited (with the exception of radio), the principal means to convey information to the local people involved printed matter and word of mouth. Every RTF mission employed these methods to 'tell the Coalition's side of the story' as a central tenet of operational practice.

Coalition forces in southern Afghanistan are locked in a constant IO battle with the adversary. The Taliban has the 'home ground' advantage in its ability to shape the information environment. Coalition forces use the truth to maintain their legitimacy while the Taliban frequently makes outrageous claims concerning the actions of the Coalition forces and the Afghan Government. The Taliban has a simple yet effective IO approach that seeks to separate the population from the Coalition forces by informing media and United Nations organisations of any instances (true or otherwise) of Coalition involvement in civilian casualties. They have amply demonstrated their effective understanding of how to exploit modern media (especially the Internet) as well as age-old methods such as night letters.

> The Taliban has the 'home ground' advantage in its ability to shape the information environment.

CONSTANT ADAPTATION

The RTF focussed considerable energy and resources on winning the adaptation battle. This meant that the unit had to be a learning organisation at every level. John Kiszley recently wrote that 'adapting to counter-insurgency presents particular challenges to militaries, and many of these challenges have at their root issues of organizational culture.'[14] The need to constantly adapt was driven by the continually evolving security situation in Uruzgan, as well as the fact that RTF staff learned more each day about the strengths and weaknesses of their new organisation.

The Taliban demonstrated an ability to observe Coalition forces and adapt their own operations accordingly. They constantly exchanged information with other insurgents, some in distant areas, concerning observed vulnerabilities. RTF operations aimed to disguise patterns and limit the adversary's ability to understand the Task Force and adapt. Put simply, the RTF conducted a counter-adaptation battle. This equates to the counter-reconnaissance battle of conventional operations and sought to enhance the RTF's capacity to adapt to a situation while denying the adversary this same adaptation. The unique organisation of the RTF, which combined security and construction capacity in a single unit, may also have posed more dilemmas for the adversary than that of a traditional unit.

After-action reviews were key features of RTF operations and were used to assess whether objectives had been met and whether tactics, techniques and procedures were appropriate to that operation and those foreshadowed. RTF

> … the RTF conducted a counter-adaptation battle.

members also attended the after-action reviews of other units in Task Force Uruzgan and analysed their patrol reports to add to the information store of the RTF. The outcomes were widely disseminated and used to plan subsequent operations. The commander of each mission also briefed staff members following each operation so as to enhance their situational awareness and highlight areas for improvement in planning. At the soldier and non-commissioned officer level, weekly formal training was conducted throughout the deployment on issues related to the conduct of the mission and lessons learnt during RTF operations.

The RTF also sought to learn from the experiences of others. Prior to deployment, lessons on previous operations in Afghanistan and other counterinsurgency operations were analysed and discussed within the Task Force. These lessons were incorporated into the concept of operations and standing operating procedures for the RTF. Throughout the deployment, these lessons were revised based on the experiences of the members of the Task Force to ensure they remained relevant to the situation and the operations being conducted. The work of the Defence Science and Technology Organisation on adaptive approaches in military operations was also utilised extensively.[15]

> … transfer of institutional knowledge was accomplished through frequent contact with follow-on units …

Those lessons that provided impetus for adaptation were documented so as to ensure that they would be passed on to subsequent deployments. This transfer of institutional knowledge was accomplished through frequent contact with follow-on units well prior to their deployment and the development of a web page with all RTF operational documentation made available to subsequent task forces. In addition, the staff of the 1st RTF assisted with preparations for the second and third RTF rotations.

The fact that the RTF saw 'winning the adaptation battle' as an absolute necessity was vital in ensuring that the unit possessed an ethos that allowed its members to identify weaknesses or problematic patterns and change these before they attracted unwanted attention. This systemic and formal approach to adaptation—reinforcing the informal approach prevalent in military units—was an important part of the RTF's operational philosophy.

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

While the RTF has been successful in taking the first tentative steps in the rebuilding of Uruzgan, there is still much to be done. Based on the lessons of the past eight months, the RTF needs to build on its initial successes and broaden its reconstruction

operations. Areas such as the development of indigenous capacity—including further technical training for engineers, works supervisors, surveyors and draftspersons for the Ministry of Reconstruction and Rural Development—require additional focus to ensure that they enhance the ability of Afghans to undertake their own reconstruction. Initiatives such as the offering of technical and educational scholarships to Australia or other countries would contribute significantly to the ability of Afghans to move beyond the reconstruction of their local villages to that of their nation.

The mentoring of local officials should also be expanded. Selective recruiting or contracting of experienced town planners and other experts in town maintenance and administration to provide local mentoring would significantly improve the capacity of the Afghan people to plan and build their own civil infrastructure. The involvement of Australian government and non-government aid agencies as part of a synchronised whole-of-government approach to reconstruction would substantially increase the capacity of the RTF and enhance the conduct of civil affairs in the province.

> The mentoring of local officials should also be expanded.

There is a critical need to increase support to capacity-building enablers. A logical next step is to combine physical construction with indigenous capacity-building through the development of education infrastructure. This infrastructure must include participation in initiatives such as the Education Quality Improvement Program that, among other objectives, seeks to develop teacher training schools and vocational training schools throughout Afghanistan. The construction of schools to train healthcare professionals and the provision of more police training centres must also be effected as a priority.

From an institutional perspective, the Army needs to further refine the conceptual model for reconstruction operations to achieve the most appropriate balance of resources allocated to physical and intellectual reconstruction activities. While this balance is likely to be different for every operation, a model for use as a start-state for the conduct of future operations would constitute a valuable addition to the current process.

CONCLUSION

The conduct of RTF operations has offered insights into the contribution of civil affairs activities to a holistic counterinsurgency campaign. While every insurgency is unique, the 'cognitive realm' focus of the RTF operation provides the counterinsurgent with a powerful tool to shift popular sympathy away from the insurgent. The type of operations conducted by the RTF and the manner in which they were

conducted offer a highly capable, complementary function to the array of kinetic means currently deployed in Afghanistan, Iraq and other troubled areas. The mix of construction and security is a powerful combination and directly supports the conduct of kinetic activities in counterinsurgency operations. One 1st RTF officer commented dryly, 'You can't go around killing people and not promise them something.'[16]

Western nations are likely to face the challenges of counterinsurgency operations for some time to come. As David Galula noted in his book *Counterinsurgency Warfare*:

> [W]ith so many successful insurgencies … the temptation will always be great for a discontented group, anywhere, to start operations. Above all, they may gamble on the effectiveness of an insurgency-warfare doctrine so easy to grasp, so widely disseminated today that almost anybody can enter the business.[17]

If the forces of the West are to succeed in the conduct of counterinsurgency operations, they must have the ability to play a constructive role in those disrupted societies that will be the target of such operations in the future.

The conduct of reconstruction operations offers the affected population an alternative view of how they may live their

… the 'cognitive realm' focus of the RTF operation provides the counterinsurgent with a powerful tool …

lives, devoid of what Michael O'Hanlon terms the 'ruthless and nihilistic character' of contemporary insurgencies.[18] Possessing the ability to not only kill the enemy, but to make him irrelevant to the populace must become a key tenet in the counterinsurgency fight waged by contemporary Western militaries. This certainly deserves more attention than it currently receives.

ENDNOTES

1   M. O'Hanlon, 'A Ruthless Foe', *The Washington Times*, 24 April 2007.

2   General D. Petraeus, 'Learning Counterinsurgency: Observations from Soldiering in Iraq', *Military Review*, Vol. 86, No. 1, January–February 2006, p. 2.

3   Commonwealth of Australia, LWD 3-8-4, *Counterinsurgency*, Australian Army, Puckapunyal, 1999, p. 1–10.

4   ISAF is a NATO-led coalition of thirty-seven countries.

5   *Pashtunwali* is an ancient code of conduct that governs the behaviour of Afghan people of Pashtun ethnicity. Its principal components are: hospitality, revenge, bravery, defence of honour and of tribal females.

6   Capacity-building is a consistent theme in the approach of various government and non-government aid organisations. One such organisation is AusAID, whose approach is described at <http://www.ausaid.gov.au/keyaid/people.cfm>. Andrew Natsios also lists capacity building as one of the nine principles of reconstruction in 'Nine Principles of Reconstruction and Development', *Parameters*, Vol. XXXV, No. 3, Autumn 2005, pp. 4–20.

7   This involved the development of educational infrastructure based on consultation with the provincial Director of Education and interaction with the PRT Development Advisor under the auspices of the Afghanistan National Education Quality Improvement Program (EQUIP).

8   This title is a reference to an Australian television program of the same name in which a team of builders and landscapers would transform a suburban backyard in a matter of hours.

9   *Malik* is an Arabic word meaning 'king'. In this context it refers to the tribal leader or chieftain.

10   Key terrain is defined as any locality or area, the seizure, retention, or control of which, affords a marked advantage. Key terrain is often selected for battle positions or objectives. It is evaluated by assessing the impact of its seizure by either force on the results of battle. Commonwealth of Australia, LWP–G 0-1-4, *The Military Appreciation Process*, Australian Army, Puckapunyal, 2001, pp. 3–16.

11   There was no adversary targeting of RTF projects during the tour of the 1st RTF.

12   United States Marine Corps, *Small Wars Manual*, 1940, pp. 1–17.

13   *Counterinsurgency Operations,* Australian Army, pp. 2–10.

14   J. Kiszley, 'Learning about Counter-Insurgency', *RUSI Journal*, Vol. 151, Issue 6, December 2006, p. 16.

15   In particular, the work of Dr Anne-Marie Grisogono and her team was a significant influence in the approach adopted by the RTF. Grisogono, A, 'The State of the Art and the State of the Practice: The Implications of Complex Adaptive Systems Theory for C2', paper for the 2006 CCRTS; Grisogono, A, 'Success and Failure in Adaptation', International Conference on Complex Systems 2006.

16   Quoted in P. McGeough, 'Winning hearts and minds is keeping the Taliban at bay', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 22 February 2007.

17   D. Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice*, Frederick A. Praeger Publishers, New York, 1964, p. 143.

18   O'Hanlon, 'A Ruthless Foe'.

THE AUTHOR

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RETROSPECT

I n this edition's Retrospect we reprint an article by Colonel E.G. Keogh regarding the study of military history. While much of the contemporary Army's focus is on the future, military history remains an enduring and important facet of professional development and expertise. Military history is also growing as an interest for wider society, as a glance at the bestsellers lists demonstrates. However, we must always be careful to approach history with an ability to question what is before us, rather than a blind faith in the accepted wisdom of the day. As Keogh was pointing out in 1965, Australians have long been celebrating Anzac Day without bothering to analyse what actually happened at Gallipoli. Not much has changed.

As Dr Peter Stanley reminds us in the 2006 Australian War Memorial Anniversary Oration, featured in this edition of the *AAJ*, how we use military history to shape both perceptions of the military and Australian history are important issues that need further exploration. While there is a push in many quarters to return to a golden-age of history that is 'facts' based—a learning of concrete, indisputable information—the truth is that history has always been a study based on subjective, rather than objective, capital. Military history is not exempt from this situation. In fact, it may be more liable to subjectivity than many other history disciplines. Thus, both scholars and those who practice the profession

of arms must never forget that all history is viewed through a prism, whether it be one of political expediency, a victor who writes the final narrative, or even that most mis-used of terms, post-modernism. As Keogh himself wrote, it is better to use the term *military experience* than *military history*. It is the study of not just the actions but also the thoughts, prejudices and learning of those who came before us. As Murray and Sinnreich write in the introduction to *The Past as Prologue: The Importance of History to the Military Profession* 'only history records the reactions of real people to real events in the context of the real pressures that policy making and war making inevitably impose'.

In his article, Keogh commends those who are interested in military history not to forget the novel. While biographies and official histories will always be important reading materials in the exploration of military history, the importance of fiction is often overlooked. It is through the medium of fiction that great writers can explain the human condition, which is always the real basis of any conflict—the true nature of war is that it is something carried out by humans, inflicted on other humans. Studying strategy and tactics is important, but as Keogh states in his article 'if you really want to understand … read novels … [r]ead poetry … and plays'. Such a recommendation remains valid today, with the list of classic military fiction being continually added to each year. Militaries around the world include fiction on their professional reading programs, and fiction titles will be an important element of the Chief of Army's Reading List when it is released later in the year.

An enquiring and questioning attitude to military history is as important today as ever before. As the Australian Army continues to be deployed, we repeatedly encounter attempts to draw parallels with past conflicts, most notably to liken the current situation in Iraq with Vietnam. While it is important to learn from historical situations, facile comparisons do nothing further than show a lack of understanding of each unique context or laziness on the part of writers who can not bring themselves to develop new frames of reference for analysing current events. Fortunately, it is not often the military that fall victim to this practice, but rather the media who attempt to report on them. As Antony Beevor recently pointed out in a series of speeches he delivered in Australia, the media feels it must explain things in terms its readers and viewers will know, and therefore draw parallels with what has come before. The media is not alone in this technique, with politicians harking back to former military conflicts to explain the rationale for decisions made today.

As the example of the importance of the Anzac 'legend' in Australian society shows—and the way the nation regards itself—military history has significance beyond the sphere of the profession of arms. However, for members of the Australian Army, military history holds a special if not vital meaning. The history of the organisation is the basis of everything we do today—how we do things, why we do things, when we do things. Beyond an organisational importance, studying military history

is of benefit to the individual in that it develops analytical ability and gives a greater understanding of situations that they may one day themselves be forced to face. Lastly, the study of military history reveals that while it may be folly to attempt to draw parallels between individual events, some issues are timeless. This is proved by Keogh's article itself—first printed in January 1965, and then re-printed in 1976; it remains a timely contribution to today's profession of arms.

THE STUDY OF MILITARY HISTORY*

COLONEL E.G. KEOGH, MBE, ED

How do you study military history? How often have I been asked that question, and how often have I found that all the enquirer wanted to learn was how to pass an examination? If that is all you want to do don't bother to read any further, for I am afraid that I don't know any short cuts, I don't know of any substitute for work. But if you want to enrich your mind with the military experience of the ages, if you want to broaden your professional knowledge and enhance your capacity to command, if you want to really understand the nature and climate of war, the following paragraphs may be of some interest to you.

> … enrich your mind with the military experience of the ages …

There are, of course, plenty of people who can see no value in history—any sort of history. Well, one of the outstanding characteristics of most of the great men [sic] of our age is their awareness of the historical context in which they stand. Would Winston Churchill have reached the pinnacle on which he stood without this awareness? Would Charles de Gaulle have been able to set France once more on the road to power and influence without it?

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*   This article was first published in the journal in January 1965 and again in 1976. It is again reprinted because of its continuing relevance as a guide to all those who undertake a study of military history.

We cannot escape our past. Our whole culture—the way we think, the way we look at ourselves and others, our institutions, are the product of our national experience.

Military history is the story of the profession of arms, of the influence that profession has had on the general course of events, of the contribution it has made to our national life. We need to know something of the history of our army, of its exploits, for that history conditions our professional outlook. It explains why we find it best to do things in our own particular way, and it constitutes the basis of our form of discipline.

MILITARY EXPERIENCE

So far we have talked in general terms. Can military history do more for us than that? To begin with, let us forget the expression *military history* and think in terms of *military experience*.

> … military history [is] the study of military experience.

Now the knowledge that every professional person has is not built up entirely from his own experience. Far from it. Law, particularly Common Law, is a code which has been built up from centuries of experience of many men. Medical knowledge is a compendium of the things that have been found out about human anatomy by all the doctors of all the ages. Doctors don't wait to find out everything from their own experiences. When a doctor, or a group of doctors, engaged in research make a discovery they usually publish the result. All other good doctors accept this finding and apply it to their patients.

In other words, the doctors are learning from the experience of others. Should the soldier do less? As a rule a bad doctor kills only one patient at a time, but a bad soldier can get a great many men killed for nothing.

> If we did not use [experience] our ideas on many things would never advance.

So let us think of military history as *the study of military experience*.

Actually, whether we know it or not we are continually using this experience. If we did not use it our ideas on many things would never advance.

For example, before and during World War I British doctrine held night attacks to be more or less impossible. It was held that control was too difficult and direction too hard to maintain. Few night attacks were undertaken by the British on the Western Front. After the war this doctrine was maintained.

Then when the war histories came out an officer named Liddell Hart noticed the frequency with which the early stages at least of the most successful attacks had taken place in fog. Liddell Hart pursued this idea, and found that nearly all the big and successful British and French attacks had taken place under foggy conditions. On the German side the phenomenon was even more striking. Of their six attempts to effect a major breakthrough in 1918, only three were successful and they were shrouded in fog.

Liddell Hart then asked, 'If the most successful attacks were those which took place in fog, an accident of the weather which had not been planned for, would not night attacks be equally successful?'

The War Office nibbled at the idea cautiously and more attention began to be paid to night operations.

When Brigadier Pile (later General Sir Frederick Pile), who was at that time commanding the troops in the Canal Zone in Egypt, heard about Liddell Hart's finding he said, 'If troops can attack in dense fog when they are *not* expecting it, they ought to be able to attack at night when they *are* expecting darkness.' He then proceeded to prove that it was all a matter of thorough training, and night attacks became accepted.

This change in tactical doctrine resulted directly from the study of experience in World War I.

But the results did not stop there. If night operations became fairly general, there would be plenty of occasions on which one would want some light, perhaps temporarily. Perhaps one would want darkness up to a certain moment and then have the light switched on.

The tacticians stated their requirement and the engineers turned up with the answer—artificial moonlight.

So, from a study of the experiences of World War I there evolved two things—a new tactical concept and artificial moonlight.

> … nearly all the big and successful British and French attacks [of the Great War] had taken place under foggy conditions.

> 'If troops can attack in dense fog when they are not expecting it, they ought to be able to attack at night when they are expecting darkness.'

That, I think, is a fair example of the practical application of military history. Of course, those are not the only things we can learn from World War I. The students picked out a few other useful tactical ideas, and they learned a lot about administering very large armies in the field.

We need to look at the failures as well as the successes. We need to find out the real cause of all the useless butchery, the real cause of all the shockingly bad generalship that characterized most of the operations on the Western Front.

Why were most of the generals such poor, pedestrian soldiers? What had happened to the heirs of Wellington, Frederick, Napoleon? Was it their training or the lack of it? Was it the prevailing professional outlook? Was it because too much emphasis was placed on the wrong values? For example, was there too much emphasis on sport and social activities and not enough on serious work and study? Or was it because they had failed to learn from military experience?

> We need to look at the failures as well as the successes.

It was probably a combination of all these things, but it is at least certain that they had failed to read correctly the lessons of the American Civil War and the South African War.

They were still seeking victory in terms of the Napoleonic concept as expounded by Clausewitz. This formula postulated the massive assault as the essential ingredient in the recipe for victory. But they failed to take into account the principal lessons of the American Civil War, namely:

- The breech-loading rifle and the spade, used in combination, had made the defence too strong to be overthrown by Napoleonic methods.
- And since the American Civil War the machine-gun had enormously increased the strength of the defence.
- They ascribed the American failure to employ cavalry in shock action to amateur leadership instead of to the real causes—the breech-loading rifle and the carbine, and *trenches*.

> [First World War generals] were still seeking victory in terms of the Napoleonic concept as expounded by Clausewitz.

The result of this failure to learn from the experience of the employment of these new weapons and methods was the terrible battles on the Somme and in Flanders. The effects on Great Britain's man-power and national economy were enormous and far-reaching. It was on these stricken fields that Britain's decline as a front-rank world power began, though the full effects were not felt until later.

And all this because her officer corps had failed to read the lessons of recent wars and to see therein the changes demanded by the introduction of new weapons. They did not have to speculate. The things experience had demonstrated had actually happened. Actual experience had demonstrated what would certainly happen in the future unless counter-measures were devised.

> [The] officer corps had failed to read the lessons of recent wars and to see therein the changes demanded …

Let us take an Australian example of the misreading of experience. In the Palestine campaign of World War I the Australian Light Horse Regiments were mounted infantry armed with the rifle and bayonet. They were not armed with the sword or lance. They were not trained or armed for the mounted charge. But at Beersheba one brigade did undertake a most successful mounted charge. And at a couple of other places the British Yeomanry, who were armed with the sword, successfully charged the enemy.

After the war, on the strength of these isolated actions, we arrived at the conclusion that despite the fire-power of modern weapons, trenches and barbed wire, the mounted charge was still a feasible proposition. The argument that led to this conclusion violated the rules of simple logic because:

- It failed to take into account the special conditions obtaining at the time of the successful charges.
- It failed to take into account the negative side of the question—all those occasions when a mounted charge would certainly have failed, and even the occasions when charges actually did fail.

This superficial examination of the available evidence, plus unsound logic, led us to arm our Light Horse Regiments with the sword. They were still carrying the things right up to the outbreak of World War II. Worse still, they were thinking about trying to use them.

From these examples it follows that close study of experience in the sphere of weapons and devices—new weapons, new machines, new means of transport, etc.—can help us very much in the development of tactical doctrine, organization and administrative methods.

> This superficial examination of the available evidence … led us to arm our Light Horse Regiments with the sword.

What about the art of war, of strategy, of tactical insight, of leadership? It is in these fields, perhaps, that we can extract the most value from military history. It is in these fields

that we really do need experience, and it is just these fields that first hand experience is so hard to get in peace. We can get this experience only by the study of military history.

If we become involved in a great war the army is going to expand very rapidly. Promotion is going to be correspondingly rapid. Some of our officers are going to find themselves in positions of great responsibility in the field, or writing staff papers which may influence governmental decisions. We need not find ourselves in those positions entirely devoid of experience. By the constant study of military history we can acquire the experience which we shall need very badly.

> … close study of experience … can help us … in the development of tactical doctrine …

I hope to show presently that the acquisition of this experience need not be all hard work, in fact a good deal of it can be a recreational pursuit.

HOW DO WE STUDY MILITARY HISTORY?

Now, how do we study military history? Two things are essential, namely:

1. The wise choice of study material. I should like to leave that till later and go on to the second essential.
2. The development of a critical approach.

When you begin any piece of serious study, as distinct from the recreational reading which I shall mention presently, first think yourself into a highly critical frame of mind. Challenge everything; accept nothing without thinking about it.

For example, an Official History says something like this—'The Divisional Commander ordered—etc., etc.' Before you go any further think about that order. Think it out for yourself. Was it a sound plan? Did it take all the essentials of the situation into account? If you had been in his place, what plan would you have worked out?

> Challenge everything; accept nothing without thinking about it.

Another example of challenge, of the refusal to accept statements at their face value, is to be found in the Australian offensives on Bougainville and in the Aitape-Wewak area. The necessity of these offensives was queried in Parliament, and one of the arguments put forward to justify them was: 'To commit any troops to a passive role of defence … is to destroy quickly their morale, create discontent, and decrease their resistance to sickness and disease.' From this are we to assume that troops committed to an arduous offensive under severe climatic conditions are

bound to have a higher morale and to be healthier than troops engaged in defence? It is true, as a generalization, that the offensive generates higher morale than the defensive. But is it true in particular cases? And do you have to mount a full-scale offensive to maintain morale, or would a modified form of the offensive be sufficient? The formation on New Britain did not undertake a big offensive; it seems to have successfully maintained morale and the offensive spirit by aggressive patrolling.

Morale is an attitude of mind. In defence the correct attitude can be fostered by means short of full-scale attack. Take the 9th Australian Division for example. Besieged in Tobruk, the division maintained morale and the offensive spirit by 'giving away' the deep and commodious Italian dugout in favour of fighting trenches, by deep patrolling, and by establishing their dominance over no-man's-land—'Our front line is the enemy's wire, no-man's-land belongs to us.' After being shut up in the fortress for months on inadequate rations, the troops might have been a bit on the lean side, but they were still full of fight. And their health was surprisingly good—until, on relief, they got in amongst the fleshpots of Egypt.

> 'Our front line is the enemy's wire, no-man's-land belongs to us.'

Beware of generalizations. Ask yourself, always, is this statement true of this particular situation, of these particular conditions? Unless you cultivate the habit of asking yourself these questions you will degenerate into a mere mechanic, and a bad one at that.

In the beginning this takes up a fair amount of time. But as you gain in experience you will find that you do it almost subconsciously. One side of your mind is taking in the written facts, the other side is working on the problems. And that is just the sort of mind that successful commanders have and that all officers need.

Don't forget to apply the same critical approach to the administrative side of war.

Learn to read between the lines, particularly the lines of the official histories. Official historians expect their professional readers to be able to read between the lines. For example in speaking of Singapore, the War Office history says, 'Many stragglers were collected in the town and sent back to their units.'

> … that is just the sort of mind that successful commanders have …

What does this statement suggest?

In an advance stragglers are to be expected. Men become detached from their units for quite legitimate reasons. We provide for them by establishing stragglers' posts to collect them and direct them back towards their units.

But when we get large numbers of stragglers behind a defensive position, and a long way back at that, it suggests that units have been broken up or that there has been a breakdown of discipline somewhere. And that in turn suggests that the general situation had reached the stage when a lot of people had lost confidence, when morale was at least beginning to break down.

Once you have started to develop this critical, challenging approach you will be on your way to acquiring the habit of sorting out fact from fiction. Our history is full of great military myths, most of which we thoughtlessly accept at their face value.

Take, for example, the story of Dunkirk. This episode has so captured public imagination that authors are still making money writing about it. It has come to be generally regarded as a glorious page in our military history. And so it is so far as courage, fortitude and discipline are concerned. But is this picture good enough for the professional soldier? Ought he not to see Dunkirk as a military operation stripped of all the glory? Looked at with the cold eye of the critical student, Dunkirk is seen to be what it actually was—a shocking military defeat which came within a hair's breadth of bringing Britain to her knees.

> Our history is full of great military myths, most of which we thoughtlessly accept at their face value.

At the time Dunkirk was represented to be a glorious feat. This was fair enough because in it the British people found the spiritual strength to carry on the war. To that extent the soldier was justified in supporting the myth. But privately he needs to have a good hard look at the generalship—on both sides of course— which brought about this terrible disaster to British arms.

Each year in Australia we celebrate Anzac Day. How many of us look beyond the bands and the flags, and analyse the operations? If you want to ascertain how *not* to mount an amphibious operation, or any operation at all for that matter, you will find all you want to know in the real story of Gallipoli.

> … with the cold eye of the critical student, Dunkirk is seen to be what it actually was—a shocking military defeat …

Sometimes these myths grow after the event. Sometimes they are deliberately created at the time and ever afterwards are accepted as truth, too often even by soldiers.

Take for instance the myth of the 'Spanish Ulcer'. Wellington's campaign in Spain was imposing a tremendous strain on the British people. The Government explained that the campaign was imposing a still greater strain on Napoleon, that the 'Spanish Ulcer' was 'bleeding him white'.

In actual fact the campaign was having far more damaging effects on Britain than it was on France. It is extremely doubtful if Britain could have continued the war much longer for the long-suffering public had very nearly had enough when Napoleon abdicated and retired temporarily to Elba.

Sometimes these myths grow after the event.

We are often advised that the best way to study military history is to test the decisions, plans and actions by applying to them the principles of war. In my opinion this is a bad line of approach for the following reasons:

- It restricts the scope of our inquiries from the very beginning.
- It channels our thoughts along pre-determined lines, which is the thing to be avoided at all costs.
- In the world today there are several lists of principles, lists which differ from each other in substance and in emphasis. Which one do we take? Our own has been changed at least twice in my lifetime.

Suppose we reverse the process. Suppose we set out to test the validity of our list in the light of experience. I think that would be slightly better because it will at least half open our minds to some original thinking. However, the object of our study is not to test the validity of this or that principle, it is to cultivate our minds, to fill them with the wisdom of experience. I suggest that the best way to do this is to set out to discover some principles, some constantly recurring patterns for ourselves.

… the object of our study is … to cultivate our minds …

We know that throughout nature similar causes always produce similar effects. If we can discover in the military sphere some recurring chains of cause and effect, some constantly recurring patterns, we will have learned much from experience. We will also be struck by the frequency with which the rules or principles established by these recurring patterns are violated. And we will be struck by the fallacious arguments put forward in support of each violation.

One of the clearest patterns that emerges from military history is the one which demonstrates the evils of failure to concentrate upon the attainment of the aim. Time after time, war after war, large forces are sent on missions which cannot possibly further the attainment of the aim. At the worst they jeopardize, or even

prevent, the attainment of the aim because they weaken the main effort. At the best they are a wanton waste of human life. This pattern seems to apply at all levels of activity. In the field of strategy there is the example of the Mesopotamian Campaign in World War I. Closer to home we have our own Solomons and Aitape-Wewak campaigns in the later stages of World War II. The real war against Japan had moved 1000 miles to the north. The Japanese forces left behind in these areas were isolated and helpless. They could do absolutely nothing. Why on earth did we engage in costly offensive operations to clean them up when they could have been safely left to wither on the vine? We could have collected the lot with scarcely a battle casualty when the main Allied forces brought about the collapse of the Japanese main forces.

… engage in costly offensive operations to clean them up …

My own reading over the last few years leads me to believe that we ought to have another principle of war in our list—the Principle of Command. It seems clear enough that the organization and maintenance at all times of a proper system of command is vital. By system of command I mean not only the commander, but the means, staff, signals, etc., to enable him to exercise command. At any rate the evidence demonstrates that neglect or failure to organize a proper system of command has frequently been the primary cause of failure at all levels. We are all familiar with the arguments about the organization of the high command. It is astonishing how often we come across failures to adhere to this principle further down the scale. In World War II in the Middle East alone there were at least four major failures of this kind. The chaos which prevailed in the later stages of the withdrawal from Greece, and probably the loss of several thousand men, was directly caused by the failure of GHQ to establish a proper command in the Peloponnese. And they had available the means of doing it. In all probability the real cause of the loss of Crete was the failure to provide the commander with the means of exercising command. Here again the means were readily available. A corps headquarters was actually on the island. It was taken off and sent to Palestine where it remained unemployed while

My own reading … leads me to believe that we ought to have another principle of war in our list—the Principle of Command.

… Crete was being lost for want of some good staff work.

Crete was being lost for want of some good staff work. It remained unemployed while the first phase of the Syrian operations degenerated into a fiasco caused by a patently imperfect organization of command. After the battle of Gazala the whole structure of command in the Eighth Army was broken up, and remained broken up until Montgomery came along and promptly put it together again.

Throughout history we find time and time again a commander winning through the exploitation of the 'Line of Least Expectation'. That is to say, he found and used a line of approach which the defender had neglected to guard because he thought it to be an impossible one. We could produce a long list of examples of this. What would we learn from such a list? I think it suggests that we ought always to make sure that the impossible is in fact impossible—and then keep an eye on it.

> … we ought always to make sure that the impossible is in fact impossible—and then keep an eye on it.

METHODS OF STUDY

Methods of studying military history will vary to some extent with each individual, but I suggest that in all cases there are two essential requirements for success.

1. A critical, challenging approach.
2. A mind alert to discern recurring patterns, recurring chains of cause and effect.

Although method will vary with the individual, I think the following preliminary steps are necessary whatever method we pursue.

1. Be quite clear about the political aim of the war.
2. Be quite clear about the national strategy by means of which the political aim is to be secured.
3. Be quite clear about the aim of the campaign you are about to study:
   (a) How does it fit into the national strategy for the winning of the war as a whole?
   (b) How does it contribute to the overall aim?
4. Study the features of the theatre of operations, particularly:
   (a) The terrain.
   (b) The weather.
   (c) The people (friendly, hostile, or neutral).
   (d) The communications.
   (e) Resources, including foodstuffs, skilled and unskilled labour, etc.
   (f) Climate for effects on health. These four points constitute a firm base for our study of the campaign.

Now the actual method of study. Each individual must find the method that suits him best. One method I would suggest is to set about it as though you were preparing a series of lectures on the campaign. Actually write the lectures, remembering that each lecture has a time limit. This limit forces you to concentrate on essentials, to discard the irrelevant detail. When you have written a series of lectures which give an intelligible account of the campaign, and a running commentary, you will have learned a lot about it.

Now all this sounds like hard work and so it is. Unfortunately there is no substitute for work. However, there is another very important side of military history—the study of the human factor in war—which need not be so frightening.

> … this sounds like hard work and so it is.

The basic material which the soldier uses in his profession is human nature—men and women. He must know how people react to the stresses of war, and how they react to danger and adversity, to triumph and disaster.

WHERE DO WE FIND THE MATERIAL?

Where do we find the material for the study of the human factor in war, of the actions, emotions and thoughts of ordinary men and women and of the art of leadership? Fortunately this part of our study need not be hard work. It can indeed be a recreation. Nearly everyone reads for recreation. Why not systematise this recreation and turn it to good account by reading for pleasure books with a direct or indirect bearing on the subject?

> What sort of books should we read to give us an insight into the human factor?

What sort of books should we read to give us an insight into the human factor? Well, we can read the heavy tomes with the psychological slant but we can hardly call them recreational. I think we will get on far better, we will acquire a deeper and more lasting knowledge of human beings at war if, with our minds always alert to pick out the lessons, we read:

- Biographies.
- Appropriate novels.

It is unnecessary to labour the value of biographies, but it is desirable to add a word of caution. The author is sometimes apt to be carried away by his admiration of the person he is writing about, to make out he was always right, to make him into too much of a paragon of all the virtues. And the autobiographies, the books written by the actors themselves, very often suffer from the same defect. They seldom admit

they were wrong and, writing from hindsight, they are usually able to prove that they were right. So read these books with a critical eye. Don't let yourself be carried away by the author's plausibility or eloquence. With this proviso these books are a very valuable source of information, and are generally quite easy to read.

HISTORICAL AND WAR NOVELS

Now the novels. Don't despise the novelist, but make a distinction between the author who writes merely to spin a good yarn and the author, the serious novelist, who writes because he has something to say, some important comments to make. It is probably true to say that the novelist and the dramatist have done more to directly influence the development of thought and ideas than all the philosophers. While it is true that the philosophers and the thinkers produce the basic idea, it is the novelist and the dramatist who 'put it across' by translating it into terms which ordinary folk can understand and appreciate, into terms of universally experienced human emotions—love and hate, courage and cowardice, hope and despair. Consider, for instance, the tremendous influence of the novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Up to the time of its publication there was a chance that the issues which divided the Northern and Southern States of America could have been settled by wise statesmanship and public forbearance. Its publication made the Civil War virtually inevitable. It focused all the issues upon a single point— slavery. It enraged the South and it inflamed the North. In far away Europe, particularly in England and France, it created a public opinion which compelled the governments to drastically modify their policies of active sympathy towards the Southern cause.

> … the novelist and the dramatist have done more to directly influence the development of thought and ideas than all the philosophers.

World War I produced a crop of novels which profoundly influenced the course of events over the two following decades. With few exceptions all these books expressed the violent revulsion of the common man against the stupidity and futility of the dreadful blood-baths to which they had been subjected on the Western Front. You can learn all about the strategy and the tactics of the Western Front in half a dozen printed pages, for there was precious little of either to write about. But if you really want to understand, if you want to find out what the war was like from the point of view of

> World War I produced a crop of novels which profoundly influenced the course of events …

the fighting man, read novels like *All Quiet on the Western Front*, *Not So Quiet*, *Her Privates We*, *War by ex-Private X*, *Covenant With Death*, etc. Read the poetry of Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen, and plays like *Journey's End*. Above all, read C.E. Montague's *Disenchantment*. Every officer ought to have this little volume of beautifully-written essays. He ought to keep it by his bedside and read a few pages every night. That will keep his feet on the ground and his head out of the clouds.

From these books you will learn more about the real nature of World War I than from all the learned volumes of strategy and tactics put together. You will learn about the incredible imbecility of the worst vintage generals in all history, of the shocking staff work, of the sheer ineptitude of military leadership all the way down the chain of command. You will understand why the people who make and unmake governments in democratic countries cried out in revulsion 'To hell with brass hats and red tabs, to hell with generals, we shall have no more of that nonsense'. And when you have understood that you will understand the motive force behind the policies of disarmament and appeasement which led step by step to World War II.

'To hell with brass hats and red tabs, to hell with generals …'

In Service circles it is fashionable to blame the politicians for this disastrous disarmament policy. Anyone who has given thoughtful attention to the literature of World War I would know that this view fails to trace the chain of cause and effect back to its origin. The politicians were simply reflecting public opinion. That public opinion had been created by the war itself. It had been expressed, focused and consolidated by the literature of the war. Some of the writers, C.E. Montague for instance, went right to the heart of the matter—the downright ineptitude of the military leadership and the reasons for it—others saw only the result. If the soldiers had conducted their business more efficiently, as they did in World War II, the literature would have had quite a different tone. In the ultimate analysis of cause and effect the soldiers were responsible for the wave of pacifism which swept the democratic world after the war, not the writers or the politicians. They only expressed the public opinion which the soldier had created.

The novels of World War II reflect a totally different feeling because the field leadership at any rate was infinitely better. The value of these books lies in the presentation of the cold facts in a way which enables us to grasp the 'feel' of the thing in a very vivid manner. For example, we may read that the Allies sent to Russia by the Arctic route so many tanks, aeroplanes, trucks, so many millions

Those values [that comprise humanity] are your indispensable tools of trade.

of tons of shell, that so many ships were sunk, so many lives lost. All good stuff for a planner to know, but it leaves you stone cold, it raises no feeling at all. But if you read HMS *Ulysses* you will have a very good idea of what the cold statistics meant to the Allies in terms of human values—in terms of human courage, resolution and suffering. And if you read David Forrest's *The Last Blue Sea* you will learn more about the impact of the jungle on young troops than all the text books can give you. If in the pursuit of your profession in peace or war you forget those human values, all the rest of your knowledge will go for naught. Those values are your indispensable tools of trade.

THE DOCUMENTARY

There is another, though rarer, type of book which presents both the technical and the human aspects of war in an easily digested form. I don't know the literary term for this kind of work. It resembles a documentary film which presents the dry facts of some particular aspects of life, or some particular persons or events, by clothing them with human values, reactions and emotions without passing into the realm of true fiction. The characters, instead of being creatures of the writer's imagination, are real people, people who have actually lived and whose actions have influenced the course of history. Instead of simply giving us the bare, and often unimpressive facts, the writer brings them back to life, recreates the scenes and the scenes and the actions he wants to present to us. Treated in this way by a skilful writer, the facts we are seeking become more vividly impressive, more easily remembered and more easily read.

… the facts we are seeking become more vividly impressive …

This form of literary expression has been brought to near perfection by a school of American writers. In the sphere of military history perhaps the leading exponent is Bruce Catton, whose magnificent works on the American Civil War vividly depict its strategy and tactics, the personalities, and the varying degrees of abilities of its leaders, the reactions of the troops to the ebb and flow of victory and defeat. All the great lessons are there, timeless as time itself—the results of half measures, of indecisiveness, of bad staff work, the influence of selfishness and personal ambition, the little things that go wrong and cause great disasters, the over-riding importance of the human factor with all its strength and frailty. These things always have been and probably always will be, the factors which determine the issue of victory or defeat.

In his book *A Stillness at Appomattox*, Catton gives us an almost exact representation of one of the major problems of the atomic battlefield—the exploitation of the hole punched in the enemy's defences by a nuclear explosion. The Union army faced

the Confederates in strongly fortified lines at Petersburg. When several assaults had failed a Union engineer suggested driving a tunnel under a vital point in the Confederate works and blowing it up. That part of the programme was an immense success—what was probably the biggest explosion in any war up to that time blew a huge gap in the Confederate line. The rest was a pitiable fiasco. Through the neglect of elementary principles, through the failure to do simple things which could reasonably be expected of a junior subaltern, experienced generals failed completely to exploit the opportunity. It is remarkable how monotonously disasters occur through the failure to do simple, elementary things. History may not repeat itself, but by Heavens, the mistakes of history do. Are some of us going to make the same mistakes on an atomic battlefield?

> It is remarkable how monotonously disasters occur through the failure to do simple, elementary things.

Recently an Australian author, Raymond Paull, made a very creditable attempt to give us in this documentary form the story of the early stages of the war on our own northern approaches. His *Retreat From Kokoda* is, I think, the first military classic this country has produced. Despite certain attempts to discredit this book, it is chock full of lessons which are of the utmost importance to the Australian Army. More recently an Englishman has given us the story of the destruction of the Normandie Dock at St Nazaire in *The Greatest Raid of All*. While this book lacks something of the power and sweep of the other works referred to, it could almost be regarded as a text book on the organization and conduct of an amphibious raid.

Some years ago, during a wet spell on a holiday, I picked up a book with the unpromising title *Prepare Them for Caesar*. Up till then Julius Caesar had been for me a shadowy, academic figure. In the book he came alive, a very human figure. Reading it I found what Wavell tells us to seek. I began to understand why men followed Caesar, why his soldiers stuck to him when his cause seemed hopelessly lost.

The great merit of these books—the novels and the documentaries—lies in the fact that they do not require hard study, they are truly recreational. Nevertheless every one you read adds a little more to your knowledge of war. Subconsciously your trained mind will be at work criticising, evaluating, picking out the lessons great and small, lessons which are more likely to stick because they are expressed by living, human characters instead of cold, inanimate print in a text book. Subconsciously the climate of war, the vision of men and women in action from the cabinet room to the forward area, seeps into your soul and becomes a part of your being. A sympathetic understanding of human nature will be created in your mind, an appreciation of its

grandeur and its frailty, its varying motives, its hopes and ambitions and fears, its cruelty and its compassion. It is not sufficient for the soldier to be aware academically of the various facets of human nature. He must have a far deeper awareness than that. The best way to acquire that essential awareness is to read the works of good writers whose talent enables them to present human beings in a way which touches our hearts as well as our minds.

CONCLUSION

The officer who studies military history along the lines of recreational reading and analytical research will benefit in three ways:

> The climate of war will become an integral part of his subconscious being.

First, he will develop a mind rich in the experience of war in all its aspects. The climate of war will become an integral part of his subconscious being. Without consciously thinking about it he will have a cultivated awareness of the pitfalls which strew the path of the commander and the staff officer, and he will be able to see the possibilities and the dangers of any situation or any course of action.

Secondly, he will develop the power of analysis—the power of breaking up the problem into its component parts, balancing one against the other, and arriving at a sound solution.

Thirdly, it will fill his mind with knowledge of human beings in combat, and that is essential knowledge for the soldier.

I have recommended two types of literature. Each type complements the other. The official histories give you the bare facts, the skeleton. The biographies, novels and the documentaries clothe the bare bones with the flesh of human beings in action.

Finally, remember that unless your critical analysis of fact is not tempered with sympathy and compassion you will never learn anything about humanity.

THE AUTHOR

Colonel E.G. Keogh, Royal Australian Infantry (Retd), was the founding Editor of the *Australian Army Journal* in 1948. He is also the author of numerous articles and books, including *Suez to Aleppo* and *The River in the Desert*.

MILESTONES

IN MEMORIAM

GENERAL JOHN STUART BAKER AC, DSM
(1937–2007)

General Baker was born in Melbourne in 1936. He joined the Australian Army in 1954, and graduated from the Royal Military College, Duntroon into the Royal Australian Engineers.

General Baker was a highly intelligent and dedicated military officer. He saw operational service in Papua New Guinea and undertook two tours in Vietnam. For his work in Vietnam with the 1st Australian Civil Affairs Unit, he was Mentioned in Dispatches for his devotion to duty, professional skill and leadership qualities of the highest order.

His career, spanning over forty-four years saw him undertake a wide variety of command, staff and field appointments, including Director-General Joint Service Policy, Director Joint Intelligence Organisation and Vice Chief of the Defence Force. In 1995 General Baker was appointed Chief of the Defence Force.

During his tenure as Chief of the Defence Force, General Baker led significant structural change with the implementation of new and more effective higher command and control arrangements. He was also responsible for implementing the Defence Reform Program and integrating civilian and military staff into a cohesive Defence team. General Baker retired from the Australian Defence Force in 1998.

General John Baker was greatly admired throughout the entire Australian Defence Force. He garnered great respect for his compassion, determination and professional mastery.

Roger Lee
Army History Unit

PERSPECTIVES FROM THE COALFACE

THE BATTLE FOR FALLUJAH

ALBERT PALAZZO

John R. Ballard, *Fighting for Fallujah*, Praeger Security International, Westport, CT, 2006, 152 pp.

Bing West, *No True Glory: A Frontline Account of the Battle of Fallujah*, Bantam Book, New York, 2006, 378 pp.

Patrick K. O'Donnell, *We Were One: Shoulder to Shoulder with the Marines who took Fallujah*, Da Capo, Cambridge, MA, 2006, 244 pp.

For much of 2004 the most consistent problem spot for the American-led coalition in Iraq, after Baghdad, was the city of Fallujah. Due west of Baghdad, on the banks of the Euphrates River in Sunni-dominated Al Anbar Province, Fallujah was a safe haven for a volatile mix of al-Qaeda operatives, foreign jihadists, Saddam loyalists and Islamic fundamentalists, as well as gangs of smugglers, extortionists, kidnappers and murderers. The result was a city in which the rule of law had ceased to operate and its primary industry had become the organisation and export of terrorism and death.

In 2004 Fallujah was to see two major American offensives to eliminate its terrorists and criminal elements and to restore the nascent Iraqi Government's control over the city. The instigation for the April assault was the murdering, quartering, burning, and finally, hanging of four US contractors who had unwisely attempted to drive through the city. The first offensive was largely a Marine affair that was mounted on short notice and then stopped due to political pressure resulting from prejudicial and highly negative media coverage. The failure of the Bush Administration's resolve to clear out the city encouraged America's enemies. Fallujah became an even more important centre for those who opposed the US presence in the country, rejected the authority of the Shiite-dominated central

> … the rule of law had ceased to operate and [the] primary industry had become the organisation and export of terrorism and death.

government, sought to make money through criminal acts, or espoused a fundamentalist ideology. In November the Marines returned to Fallujah, with US Army and Iraqi Army support. This time political pressure failed to stop the attack and US troops pressed home their assault, clearing the city. However, ferocious fighting, reminiscent of the Battle of Hue in the Vietnam War, reduced much of the city to rubble.

Although all three authors treat the same subject, each brings a different focus and objective to his book. John R. Ballard's *Fighting for Fallujah: A New Dawn for Iraq*, looks at the higher levels of the operation's planning and conduct, and gives particular emphasis to its civil affairs aspects. Bing West in *No True Glory: A Frontline Account of the Battle for Fallujah* examines both assaults on the city from the perspective of a ground commander. Patrick K. O'Donnell's *We Were One: Shoulder to Shoulder with the Marines who took Fallujah*, tells the grunts' story through the lens of a rifle company.

> The failure of the Bush Administration's resolve to clear out the city encouraged America's enemies.

Ballard's book is the shortest of the three, which is unfortunate. In only 116 pages of narrative he covers both attacks on Fallujah as well as the American reconstruction effort. While he makes a correct and compelling case for the integration of civil affairs directly and early into an operation's planning, there is not enough space to cover his subjects in the needed depth. Moreover, as commander of 4th Civil Affairs Group, the unit tasked with Fallujah's

reconstruction, Ballard is a less capable writer when describing the fighting than when discussing the rebuilding. Consequently, his description of the combat lacks the passion that the other authors bring to their works. Instead of hard-edged battle writing, Ballard's narrative of combat carries the tone and pacing of an after-action report and his book compares poorly with the other works as a result.

Ballard's book also suffers from the author's closeness to his subject. While his direct involvement in the operation provides him with unique insights, he is unable to temper his optimism regarding the outcome of the Fallujah offensive, as well as other missions taking place elsewhere in Iraq. Ballard is correct that the November battle for Fallujah transformed the city from one of Iraq's most dangerous to one of its safest, but he overlooks the cost that the change required. The ongoing violence in Iraq would also suggest that Ballard's optimism is misplaced when applied to other operations. For example, his claim that the August 2004 battle for Najaf represented the beginning of the end for the Mahdi Militia and its charismatic leader Muqtada al-Sadr has been seen to be overly ambitious.

> Ballard's book …
> suffers from the author's
> closeness to his subject.

No True Glory is West's second book on the Iraq War, following *The March Up: Taking Baghdad With the 1st Marine Division* (with Major General Ray L. Smith). As a Marine and Vietnam War veteran, West understands his subject. While much of the book is seen from the perspective of the front-line soldier, West is also comfortable dealing with operational, strategic and political issues. This is a book that works well at all levels of war.

One of West's more troubling observations concerns the ongoing inability of the US Administration to recognise and consider the importance of strategy. Other recent books, for example Thomas E. Ricks's excellent *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq*, painfully reiterates the numerous strategic follies committed by the Bush Administration in its design for the Iraq War. In *No True Glory*, West extrapolates this tendency for routine planning malpractice down into the operational level of war. The United States organised the April attack in haste, reacting emotionally to the murder of the contractors. The Marines were ordered into Fallujah, against the objections of their commanders, with an ill-conceived plan for which there had not been time to define critical concepts such as a mission objective. Nor had steps been taken to warn the civilian population, consult with allies and Congress, or organise the re-establishment of civil government. Moreover, the Bush Administration, having launched the attack on the basis of emotion, ended it suddenly and for similar reasons in the face of the enemy's highly effective information campaign. When the United States concluded the April battle by handing

the city over to the questionable loyalty of the Fallujah Brigade—who soon joined the insurgency—it was symptomatic of an Administration that had not thought through what it hoped to accomplish when it ordered the attack.

O'Donnell's *We Were One* has the most singular focus of the three books. It delivers an in-your-face depiction of turbo-charged combat as experienced by the men of Lima Company, 3/1 Marine Battalion, in the November attack on Fallujah. O'Donnell depicts urban warfare on steroids and it is not a book for the faint-hearted, nor is it for readers who prefer the subtlety and complexity provided by the war and society school of historical methodology. Instead, *We Were One* is description of the use of controlled violence, through the application of overwhelming firepower and superior small-unit tactics, in the pursuit of a military objective in the urban setting. It should be mandatory reading for the Australian Army's junior leaders and, possibly, project managers involved in weapon design and acquisition.

… handing the city over [was] symptomatic of an Administration that had not thought through what it hoped to accomplish …

O'Donnell can write with such strength and veracity because he sought to have himself embedded with the Marines in Fallujah: he was with Lima Company for the operation's second half. The term 'embedded' covers many situations. Most of the reporters with American units assigned to Fallujah quickly made their way to the safety of rearward command posts from which they followed the contest for the city on computer screens. O'Donnell, by contrast, went out on patrols with the troops and dodged enemy fire on Fallujah's streets, slept rough in half-demolished buildings, experienced the terror and cacophony of battle, and came under such close attack that Marines were wounded and killed around him. He could never be a member of Lima Company—but he was its intimate witness.

We Were One … is not a book for the faint-hearted …

The historical community should commend O'Donnell for the realism of his research. However, there are a few points towards the end of *We Were One* where the objectivity of an author and the perspective of a participant become confused. This is where O'Donnell, in effect, interviews himself, and these brief parts should have been omitted as they take attention from the true centre of the story he tells: the Marines. However, this is a minor quibble and does not detract from what O'Donnell has accomplished.

The three authors all highlight similar tactical lessons in these books. While precision weaponry and enhanced situation awareness are essential force multipliers in modern warfare, it also remains true that if an army puts boots onto the ground in the urban environment, heavy is better than light. The Battles of Fallujah represented urban warfighting at its worst. Such was the intensity of the fighting that the Marines' effort to root out the insurgents resulted in the damage to or destruction of nearly half of the city's 39 000 structures. The city's subjugation also cost the lives of approximately 150 US personnel and at least 1200 insurgents. The Abrams tank was the key weapon system for the attacking Marine and Army soldiers, and they would have appreciated them in greater number. The example of Fallujah should lay to rest any further debate over the wisdom of the Government's decision to harden the Australian Army.

> The Battles of Fallujah represented urban warfighting at its worst.

The utility of artillery in urban warfare is less clear than that of armour, however. In both attacks, the operation's preliminary bombardment, including close air support, was relatively light compared to what the US forces could have brought to bear. The political need to fire only at clearly identified hostile targets constrained the amount of fire support that was available to the assaulting troops. Artillery and mortars do not presently have the ability to fire indirectly with the required degree of precision in the urban environment without the acceptance of an uncomfortable degree of risk of friendly or civilian casualties. When the Marines called on the guns they performed well, but Fallujah shows that artillery technology must improve if the arm is to play a decisive role on the contemporary urban battlefield.

> … the insurgents' decisive weapon was their ability to achieve a strategic effect by shaping their message through the media …

In the first battle of Fallujah, the insurgents' decisive weapon was their ability to achieve a strategic effect by shaping their message through the media. The Al Jazeera network and other broadcasters turned the international political environment against the United States and forced the Bush Administration to stand down the attack. Even worse was the failure by the United States either to counter the enemy's message or to develop one of their own. In the November assault, the US and Iraqi Governments were able to hinder Al Jazeera's access to the city and they also made sure to get out their own story. The result was that this time the pressure to end the battle prematurely did not achieve critical mass.

These works confirm that in modern conflict the media is more than just a vehicle through which to transmit morale-boosting stories to the home front. Rather, the media is now a weapon platform of decisive importance in its own right. Information operations are a critical feature of asymmetric warfare, and information and psychological warfare personnel must move closer to the forefront of US combat capabilities. This is an area of warfare that the United States, and its allies, must master.

West and O'Donnell also share a discomforting rationale for writing their books. Both authors perceived the need to seize the high ground in honouring the US personnel who fought in Iraq. They acted in reaction to one of the most shameful periods in US history, namely the aftermath of the Vietnam conflict when a war-disillusioned society disowned its returning heroes. West and O'Donnell are determined that a new generation of military men and women will receive the honour they deserve, and they have written these books as homages to America's front-line warriors. Worryingly, as the United States continues its slide towards a collective failure of will in Iraq, West's and O'Donnell's foresight has not yet, but may still, prove a necessity.

Beyond the treatment of its veterans, the destruction of Fallujah also challenges military strategists and planners to once again reconsider the nature of twenty-first century war. In an era where non-conventional warfare is meant to dominate the operational art, where the emphasis in warfighting is supposed to have shifted to asymmetric warfare, and where advanced weaponry and battlespace dominance is thought to have transformed the course of a conflict into a fast, precise and painless exercise, Fallujah stands out as an exception. Despite considerable US effort, 'Hearts and Minds' was never a viable strategy with which to cleanse Fallujah.

> … the destruction of Fallujah also challenges military strategists and planners to once again reconsider the nature of twenty-first century war.

Yet while Fallujah confirms the ongoing need for armies to be able to wage conventional operations, it would be a mistake to draw the conclusion that the principles of counterinsurgency operations are of lesser importance. *No True Glory* and *We Were One* are powerful, brilliantly written and constructed works that deserve to be read, but the most enduring lesson of this battle is to be found in *Fighting for Fallujah*. Even with his book's deficiencies, Ballard's illustration of combat and civil action as integral parts of the same mission objective points the way to the future of war. The message of the Battle of Fallujah is that the United States and its allies must strive for balance. The United States must retain its superiority in the application of violence, but it must

also master the gentler art of coercion by enhancing its force's capability to conduct information and psychological operations and civil action if it is to succeed in the coming conflicts of the twenty-first century.

THE AUTHOR

Dr. Albert Palazzo is a Senior Research Fellow at the Australian Army's Land Warfare Studies Centre in Canberra. His PhD is from The Ohio State University and his BA and MA are from New York University. He has written widely on warfare in the modern age and on the Australian Army in particular. His many publications include: *Seeking Victory on The Western Front: The British Army & Chemical Warfare in World War I; The Australian Army: A History of its Organisation, 1901–2001; Defenders of Australia: The Third Australian Division*; *Battle of Crete*; *The Royal Australian Corps of Transport*; and *Australian Military Operations in Vietnam*. His next project is a history of the Australian Army in the current war in Iraq.

BATTLING THE INEVITABLE

STRATEGIC TRENDS IN MYTH AND REALITY

NATALIA FORREST

ABSTRACT

Canadian author Gwynne Dyer was recently in Australia to promote his latest book *The Mess They Made: The Middle East After Iraq*, which is available from Scribe Publishing. In an interview with the *Australian Army Journal* he discussed the issues raised in his new book, as well as the strategic concerns facing Australia today.

Innumerable books have been written, pundits have held forth on what should and should not be done, and around the globe the television news each night brings the story of a fractured Middle East into homes everywhere. Throughout the stories, the drama, the wars and the intrigue, a vital question has been forgotten—why should we care about that part of the world? Brave is the author who takes on the task of analysing the situation in such a turbulent region and attempts to explain why things are the way they are. Braver still is the author who then tells readers that, despite claims there is a need to bring democracy to the Middle East, the fact of the matter is that the best thing that could happen to the region would be for the West to stop intervening in their affairs. One such author is Gwynne Dyer.

Dyer is best known as the creator of the monumental TV series 'War'. The accompanying book, which to some is as close to the definitive title on the subject as is possible, had a new, updated version released in 2005. Since then, Dyer has moved beyond military history, and in the recent past has released a range of works on topics relating to global strategy and geopolitics. His latest Australian release, *The Mess They Made: the Middle East after Iraq*, is the final book in a trilogy about the situation in Iraq—the first two were *Ignorant Armies* and *Future Tense*. In *The Mess They Made*, Dyer argues that the Middle East must change in the aftermath of the Iraq War, but that the rest of the world should not be overly concerned—'… the entire region is of little economic or strategic importance to the rest of the world'.[1]

Through logical analysis and a step-by-step walk through of the situation in the Middle East, Dyer explains that the rationale for invading Iraq has its basis in events long before 11 September 2001, and that the invasion was not about Weapons of Mass Destruction or al-Qaeda. In a struggle to understand how a country like the United States could make such a tremendous policy mistake, commentators and academics alike have made claims about the real basis for invading Iraq, such as securing oil[2] or Bush Jnr attempting to punish Saddam for attempting to assassinate Bush Snr.[3] In his books about the invasion of Iraq, Dyer looks at the ideological and policy mistakes that led to the invasion, and comes to a different conclusion, one based largely on a condemnation of US thinking that should have been left behind with the end of the Cold War. He also views these actions as rooted in hubris. Much of the blame is placed on a group of senior US Republicans who came together to form a group known as the Project for the New American Century, who were demanding an invasion of Iraq as far back as 1998, while Bill Clinton was still in power. Many members of this group went on to have leading positions in the Administration of George W Bush, and were therefore primed to push for invasion again in the aftermath of 11 September 2001. Dyer argues that the invasion of Iraq was about waging a war to safeguard both the US strategic position and its prestige.[4] He believes that the threat of Islamist terror is a minor one that the United States is forcing into a paradigm that conforms to a need to militarise any conflict they are involved in. As in the case of the Vietnam War, when it comes to the War on Terror 'the paradigm overwhelmed the reality'.[5] Dyer devotes a chapter, titled 'The Terrorist Bandwagon', to pulling apart how the realities of the terrorist threat are not the same as the threat used to justify the claims of many political and military leaders.

> … Dyer argues that the Middle East must change in the aftermath of the Iraq War, but that the rest of the world should not be overly concerned …

Much of *The Mess They Made* analyses the situation in the Middle East, recounting and analysing the history of the region to explain the current state of affairs. It also moves beyond the present situation, attempting to predict what the world will look like once the United States leaves Iraq, whether by its own choice or through necessity. Dyer argues that the Western obsession with the Middle East, and its subsequent over-importance in political and strategic thinking, may soon be coming to an end. Thus, if the Middle East is not really as important to geopolitics as we have been led to believe, what are the issues that Dyer thinks are of strategic importance to the rest of the world, and Australia specifically?

> As in the case of the Vietnam War, when it comes to the War on Terror 'the paradigm overwhelmed the reality'.

Dyer contends in his new book that the latest incursion into the Middle East was not about oil, and that we place too much importance on the Middle East precisely because we are concerned about a scarcity that will not be affected by a lack of democracy. He makes the point that no matter what type of regimes are in power in oil-producing countries—democracies, autocratic religious leaders, or something in between—they are still going to sell oil to the outside world because that is what their economies need to survive.[6] When asked if the predicted move away from fossil fuels and towards green power will make the Middle East even less important in geopolitical terms, Dyer agrees that this is the case. Current trends mean that fossil fuels (including coal in Australia) will be less important in the global economy in ten to twenty years' time, according to Dyer. This has impacts beyond economics, and oil-dependent states such as Saudi Arabia are already focussing on strategies for dealing with what this will mean to their international position and strategic needs. Many countries, including the oil producers, believe that with the growing calls for green technology, demand may actually fall more steeply than supply declines after the arrival of 'peak oil'.[7] While OPEC may be engaging in sabre-rattling over the issue,[8] Dyer is not alone in thinking the change is inevitable.

> [Dyer] makes the point that no matter what type of regimes are in power in oil-producing countries … they are still going to sell oil to the outside world because that is what their economies need to survive.

It is not only the oil-producing countries that are factoring environmental change into their strategic planning. Dyer contends that the geopolitics of climate change are here and that many countries are taking it seriously. In the United States, politicians from both sides of politics are saying that a National Intelligence Estimate

> is necessary to effectively compare and contrast the information gathered by different intelligence agencies and compile a comprehensive report on the possible geopolitical consequences of climate change … as well as funding additional research by the Department of Defense to examine the impact of climate change on military operations.[9]

A panel of eleven retired admirals and generals agreed, releasing a study this year stating that climate change was a serious security threat for the United States, with retired Marine Corps General Anthony Zinni, former commander of US forces in the Middle East, saying:

> We will pay to reduce greenhouse gas emissions today, and we'll have to take an economic hit of some kind. Or, we will pay the price later in military terms. And that will involve human lives. There will be a human toll.[10]

The United States' allies are also taking this issue seriously. The UK military is already working on scenario planning based in the 2050–2060 timeframe—considering how they would deal with a climate change catastrophe—and this focus has been going on for over eighteen months.[11] Here in Australia, the new Australian Defence Force (ADF) publication *Joint Operations for the 21st Century*[12] mentions that one of the new challenges to the ADF is climate change. Whether this is a concern over an increase in catastrophic natural events, unrest due to such things as displaced persons (due to loss of land with rising sea-levels) or a lack of water is yet to be detailed.

The localised effects of climate change are but one aspect of what Dyer calls Australia's 'interesting neighbourhood'. Previously, Dyer has written what could be perceived as a dismissive take on Australian military policy, both in his books and in his columns:

> The UK military is already … considering how they would deal with a climate change catastrophe …

> Australian defence policy consists primarily of sending Australian troops to every American war, in the hope that if one day Australia needs to have the favour returned, Americans will feel grateful enough to come and help. If the United States invaded Mars, Australia would send a battalion along.[13]

When asked directly about Australia, he is a much more complimentary. Dyer acknowledges that Australia is correct to think of itself as a 'smaller middle power' and that soon the ADF will be a bigger force, by numbers, than the Canadian Forces. He also concedes that we have to take our military strategy seriously because we have a much more 'interesting' neighbourhood than Canada, or even the United Kingdom. This means our need to work with the United States (and to be seen to be supporting the United States) is different—our area is a lot less safe than the 'neighbourhood' of Canada or the United Kingdom, and yet we do not have the ability to marshal a large, self-dependent force. He acknowledges that Australia's alliance with the United States is a sensible one, and will continue to be so with the current and future geopolitical trends.

So what are those future trends? Just as Dyer captures the current concerns with books such as *The Mess They Made*, he is continuing to analyse what will be the issues facing militaries and strategic planners in the years to come. His next book, due out in 2008, is about the geopolitical implications of climate change, another issue that is sure to require more analysis for Australia's defence thinkers. While Dyer's examination of the issues facing military forces today may not always be complimentary about his subjects, his thoughtful and provocative analysis results in books that provide a view of things anyone interested in today's strategic and geopolitical environment should take the time to read.

> The localised effects of climate change are but one aspect of what Dyer calls Australia's 'interesting neighbourhood'.

ENDNOTES

1   Gwynne Dyer, *The Mess They Made: The Middle East After Iraq*, Scribe, Carlton North 2007, p. 5.

2   For example, Labour politician and former UK environment minister Michael Meacher, when asked by Aljazeera whether the war in Iraq was about oil said: 'The connection is 100%. It is absolutely overwhelming … It was principally, totally and comprehensively to do with oil.' References to the interview can be found at <http://english.aljazeera.net/English/archive/archive?ArchiveId=12244>

3   For example, Toby Hardnen, 'Unfinished business for the Bush family - and, yes, it's personal' *Telegraph*, 17 March 2003, accessed from <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2003/03/18/wioil118.xml >

4   Dyer, *The Mess They Made: The Middle East After Iraq*, p. 55.

5   Ibid, p. 133.

6   Ibid, p. 3.

7 Gwynne Dyer in an interview with the author, Sydney, 31 May 2007.

8 OPEC has recently threatened to drive up the price of oil and cut back on investment in developing new oil sources, as a reaction to the growing development of biofuels.

9 Eli Clifton, 'Grasping the Geopolitics of Warming', Interpress Service News Agency, 9 April 2007, accessed from < http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=37280>.

10 — 'Military Panel: Climate Change Threatens U.S. National Security' *Environment News Service,* 16 April 2007, <http://www.ens-newswire.com/ens/apr2007/2007-04-16-05.asp>.

11 Gwynne Dyer interview with the author.

12 Commonwealth of Australia, *Joint Operations for the 21st Century,* Department of Defence, Canberra, 2007.

13 Gwynne Dyer, *Future Tense: The Coming World Order*, Scribe, Carlton North, 2006, p. 186.

THE AUTHOR

Natalia Forrest is a Research Editor with the Land Warfare Studies Centre. She holds a Master of International Studies from The University of Sydney and a Bachelor of Arts from The University of Queensland. Her current research projects include an investigation of non-state influences on military strategic-level decision making.

Greg Cashman and Leonard C. Robinson, *An Introduction to the Causes of War: Patterns of Interstate Conflict from World War I to Iraq*, Lanham, Maryland, Rowman & Littlefield, 2007, 423pp.

Reviewed by Dr Gregory P. Gilbert, Senior Research Officer, Sea Power Centre – Australia

The majority of people who contribute to Australia's defence are more involved with their day to day activities than with the international relations theory and practice that underpins their activities. For the military professional, however, it is important to understand conflict and its causes not just at the tactical or operational levels but also at the national and international strategic level. *An Introduction to the Causes of War* is a good guide for the understanding of international relations theory and the causes of interstate conflict.

Greg Cashman and Leonard C. Robinson are academics in the Department of Political Science at the Salisbury University in the United States. *An Introduction to the Causes of War* is a comprehensive update to Greg Cashman's 1993 work entitled *What Causes War?* Although designed as an undergraduate textbook, and a lengthy academic work, it has value for the international relations and military communities.

The introductory chapter, which sets out recent theories on the causes of war, is not for the faint-hearted. It provides detailed explanations of the causes of war at the individual, sub-state, nation-state and international levels, as well as considering multilevel analysis. The discussion ranges from the personalities, perceptions, beliefs and psychological makeup of leaders, to the international balance of power represented as unipolar, bipolar or multipolar systems, with many fundamental theories of interstate conflict in between. The

> For the military professional … it is important to understand conflict and its causes … at the national and international strategic level.

comprehensive glossary at the end of the book is useful for those who are unfamiliar with the terminology. Despite being a hard read, the introductory chapter provides the necessary background and sets the scene for the case studies that are the heart of the book. The reader is advised to read the introduction quickly at first, and then to return to it as needed to consolidate their theoretical knowledge.

> [T]he introductory chapter provides the necessary background and sets the scene for the case studies that are the heart of the book.

An Introduction to the Causes of War provides detailed analysis of six case studies on the causes of interstate war. An additional case study is available on the associated web site. Each case study provides invaluable insight into the complex multilevel processes that causes disputes to escalate into full-scale wars. The case studies are the essence of the book and are well focussed. However, the authors' tendency to apply scientific methodology to complex human processes associated with the causes present the reader with an unrealistic degree of authority. The authors' arguments are developed and portrayed in accompanying charts that are suggestive of the complex logic diagrams of systems engineering, with the implied concrete go/no-go associations between clearly defined functions. In reality, the causes of war are not as clear cut as suggested by these structuralist constructs.

The authors conclude that most wars are due to multiple factors interacting with one another. Interstate conflict is not the result of a single causal factor. Their case studies show that factors vary from case to case, and are found at different levels of analysis (from individual to international). The authors do, nevertheless, identify certain 'repeated dangerous patterns of interaction between causal factors'. In wars of rivalry between relatively equal states, the dangerous patterns identified include: conflict spirals, enduring rivalry, territorial disputes, domestic political environments, as well as perceptions and misconceptions. For wars of inequality, such as between the United States and Iraq before the Iraq War 2003, the authors suggest that the determining factors for the cause of war are found at the sub-state and individual level.

> The case studies are the essence of the book and are well focussed.

This is an interesting result, as it has strong similarities with the causes of other asymmetric wars (or major power–minor power wars) that lie outside the case studies set out in *An Introduction to the Causes of War*.

This leads to the main criticism of this book, being that by limiting the case studies to interstate conflicts it leaves the reader wanting to know how the latest international relations theories on the causes of war deal with other asymmetric conflicts between states and non-state actors. The authors of *An Introduction to the Causes of War* acknowledge that there are relatively few choices possible for 20th and 21st century interstate wars, whereas the number of recent asymmetric conflicts far outnumbers the interstate wars. A number of questions present themselves. Are the theories of interstate conflict applicable to asymmetric wars? What causes asymmetric wars, and how could we avoid them in future? While we cannot ignore the possibility of interstate war, a detailed study of the causes of asymmetric wars would perhaps be more relevant in today's environment. One can only hope that Cashman and Robinson will continue their case studies with another volume covering the patterns of asymmetric conflict from (for example) the North West Frontier War 1898 to the 'War on Terror'.

> [A] detailed study of the causes of asymmetric wars would perhaps be more relevant in today's environment.
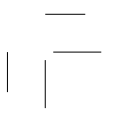
Max Boot, *War Made New: Technology, Warfare and the Course of History 1500 to Today*, Gotham Books, New York, 2006, 624 pp.

Reviewed by Antony Trentini, Visiting Fellow, Defence and Security Applications Research Centre.

While it would seem, on the strength of the book's title, that Max Boot would present an unbalanced and radical technological determinist argument with *War Made New: Technology, Warfare and the Course of History 1500 to Today*, he does not. Instead, Boot's analysis of the impact of technology on warfare and history over the last five centuries is balanced, reasoned and well argued. His conclusions centre on several major themes that are consistently demonstrated by the many and varied historical examples he fields.

The first of these themes is the *use* of technology. Boot argues convincingly that, in explaining the victories of history, it was not that one side or the other had superior technology, but rather they had better ways of exploiting it. For example, both the Swedish and Imperial armies at the Battle of Breitenfeld had muskets, but the superior Swedish tactics and organisation allowed them to maximise their firepower. Accordingly, the Swedes won a crushing victory over their once-imposing foe. Several hundred years later, the German panzer forces, equipped with tanks inferior to their Allied counterparts, soundly defeated the French and British armies by utilising superior tactical and operational concepts to devastating effect. Boot amply demonstrates that, throughout history, military technology has been only as good as the forces employing it.

Boot also shows that military technological advances must take place on a broad front; innovations must occur in more things than weapons themselves. The Japanese carrier-borne strike on Pearl Harbour, which may seem a regular operation today, was almost unheard of at the time. By taking available technologies, and

> … military technology [is] only as good as the forces employing it.

combining them in innovative ways, the Japanese were able to achieve total surprise and tactical success. Similarly, the innovative combination of heavy cannon, agile galleons and new tactical and operational techniques by the British fleet allowed them to confront the much stronger Spanish Armada. As Boot writes, 'a crucial element of the English success was their commander's ability to learn on the fly, make adjustments and attempt new tactics. The Spanish paid a heavy price for their lack of equal flexibility'.

Finally, Boot makes a critical point about 'Revolutions in Military Affairs', or RMAs: they are only revolutions when they cause a major change in society more generally, and not only the military. The gunpowder age forced states to adopt modern bureaucracies, standing armies and rational models of organisation. The first Industrial Revolution led states to raise mass armies, which necessitated the mobilisation of their entire populations and economies. The second Industrial Revolution required the systematic application of a state's intellectual resources, as well as their populations and economies, to the war effort: in the Second World War, the radio, radar, computer, and atomic bomb were all perfected or developed for war. This leaves the reader with an interesting question: does the current RMA actually qualify as a 'revolution'? After all, the modern RMA is the application of civilian information management technologies to military operations, and not military operations impacting upon society. Boot himself stops short of claiming that the Information Revolution is an RMA, but he states that the effects on the military are so profound that it is likely. Overall, Boot maintains that, given our proximity to the Information Revolution, it is simply too early to tell. He goes on to argue that, even if the Information Revolution does turn out to be an RMA, it may not necessarily be Western countries that will benefit from it. Boot lists many telling examples of countries that invent technology, only to be the least able to adapt it: the Chinese and firearms and the British and the tank are two particularly illustrative examples of this point.

> Boot lists many telling examples of countries that invent technology, only to be the least able to adapt it …

Boot has taken on the difficult task of compressing 500 years of history into 500-odd pages, and has done a good job. Boot's narrative flows well, and makes for easy reading. His conclusions are clearly drawn. This is an appealing work that, while not the final word, serves as a useful examination of the broad relationship between emerging technology and the course of war.

TITLES TO NOTE

Listed below is a selection from the review copies that have arrived at the *Australian Army Journal.* Reviews for many of these books can be found online in the relevant edition of the *Australian Army Journal* at: http://www.defence.gov.au/army/lwsc/Publications/journal/journal.htm

- *Barefoot Soldier,* Johnson Beharry, VC, Sphere, ISBN 9780751538793, 434pp.

- *A Devil's Triangle: Terrorism, Weapons of Mass Destructions and Rogue States,* Peter Brookes, Rowman & Littlefield, ISBN 0742549534, 272pp.

- *A Distant Grief,* Bart Ziino, University of Western Australia Press, ISBN 1920694897, 243pp.

- *Against Empire,* Zillah Eisenstein, Spinifex Press, ISBN 84277395X, 236pp.

- *An Incomplete History of World War I,* Edwin Kiester Jr., Murdoch Books, ISBN 9781740459709, 208pp.

- *An Introduction to the Causes of War,* Greg Cashman & Leonard Robinson, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, ISBN 0742555100, 400pp.

- *Creating Military Power: The Sources of Military Effectiveness,* Risa A. Brooks & Elizabeth A. Stanley (eds), Stanford University Press, ISBN 0804753997, 264pp.

- *Exit A: A Novel,* Anthony Swofford, Scribner, ISBN 978-0743270380, 304pp.

- *Expendable Warriors: The Battle of Khe Sanh and the Vietnam War,* Bruce B. G. Clarke, Praeger Security International, ISBN, 0275994805, 192pp.

- *Fighting Talk: Forty Maxims on War, Peace and Strategy,* Colin S. Gray, Praeger Security International, ISBN 0275991318, 208pp.

- *Gallipoli: The Western Australian Story,* Wes Olsen, University of Western Australia Press, ISBN 192069482X, 396pp.

- *Global Security Governance,* Emil J. Kirchner & James Sperling (eds), Routledge, ISBN 0415391628, 290pp.

- *He was my Father,* Harry Hill, Roseberg Publishing, ISBN 1877058556, 144pp.

- *Mutiny, Terrorism, Riots and Murder,* Kevin Baker, Rosenberg Publishing, ISBN 1877058491, 192pp.

- *Oil Wars,* Mary Kaldor, Terry Lynn Karl and Yahia Said (eds), Pluto Press, ISBN 0745324789, 294pp.

- *Prisoners of the Japanese,* Roger Bourke, University of Queensland Press, ISBN 0702235644, 208pp.

- *September 11, 2001 Feminist Perspectives,* Susan Hawthorne & Bronwyn Winter (eds), Spinifex Press, ISBN 1876756276, 500pp.

- *Taking on Tehran: Stratetgies for Confronting the Islamic Republic,* Ilan Berman (ed.), Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, ISBN 074255807X, 118pp.

- *The Anglosphere Challenge,* James C. Bennett, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, ISBN 0742533336, 352pp.

- *The Punishment of Virtue,* Sarah Chayes, University of Queensland Press, ISBN 0702235881, 416pp.

- *Well Done Those Men,* Barry Heard, Scribe Publications, ISBN 1921215364, 336pp.

- *Tehran Rising,* Ilan Berman (ed.), Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, ISBN 0742549054, 224pp.

- *The Cold War and After: Capitalism, Revolution and Superpower Politics,* Richard Saull, Pluto Press, ISBN 0745320945, 262pp.

Are you interested in writing a book review for the *Australian Army Journal*? Please contact the *AAJ* at army.journal@defence.gov.au, stating your areas of interest, and we can provide you of a list of the books available (you will be provided with a free copy that is yours to keep).

LETTERS AND COMMENTARY

TO THE EDITORS

In December of 2003, the *Australian Army Journal (AAJ)* editorialised that 'the place of intellectual mastery in preparing armies for warfighting is now well established and Western military journals have often played a key role in shaping change'. It posed a series of questions linked to army personnel, education, training, force structure and how best to meet the challenges of the complex battlefield of the 21st-century. The *AAJ* has proven itself to be 'the main forum for such an exchange of ideas' and has consistently delivered relevant articles that have stimulated written debate. This should be applauded.

But the question needs to be asked: how many officers and soldiers actually read and discuss the ideas presented in the *AAJ*? The day-to-day intellectual forums reside in the units where the soldiers and officers work together to put into practice ideas and doctrine that make for a better army. The *AAJ* loses its relevance if these men and women are not engaged by it. At present, the *AAJ* could do more to build a readership within the junior ranks. My observation is that the *AAJ* needs to lift its profile and restate its purpose to the junior officers and soldiers in the Army. My suggestion is that the *AAJ* Editorial team travel to messes and units throughout the Army and introduce themselves over a quiet beer or two, make a case for the journal and encourage those with ideas to speak up and put pen to paper. The *AAJ* needs to extend its influence beyond Canberra and out to the soldiers who work at the sharp end.

Andrew Hastie
Lieutenant
2nd Cavalry Regiment

NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

The editors of the *Australian Army Journal* welcome submissions from any source. Two prime criteria for publication are an article's standard of written English expression and its relevance to the Australian profession of arms. The journal will accept letters, feature articles, review essays, e-mails and contributions to the *Point Blank* and *Insights* sections. As a general guide on length, letters should not exceed 500 words; articles and review essays should be between 3000 and 6000 words, and contributions to the *Insights* section should be no more than 1500 words. The *Insights* section provides authors with the opportunity to write brief, specific essays relating to their own experiences of service. Readers should note that articles written in service essay format are discouraged, since they are not generally suitable for publication.

Each manuscript should be sent by e-mail to <army.journal@defence.gov.au>, or sent printed in duplicate together with a disk to the editors. Articles should be written in Microsoft Word, be one-and-a-half spaced, use 12-point font in Times New Roman and have a 2.5 cm margin on all sides. Submissions should include the author's full name and title; current posting, position or institutional affiliation; full address and contact information (preferably including an e-mail address); and a brief, one-paragraph biographical description.

The *Australian Army Journal* reserves the right to edit contributions in order to meet space limitations and to conform to the journal's style and format.

GENERAL STYLE

All sources cited as evidence should be fully and accurately referenced in endnotes (not footnotes). Books cited should contain the author's name, the title, the publisher, the place of publication, the year and the page reference. This issue of the journal contains examples of the appropriate style for referencing.

When using quotations, the punctuation, capitalisation and spelling of the source document should be followed. Single quotation marks should be used, with double quotation marks only for quotations within quotations. Quotations of thirty words or more should be indented as a separate block of text without quotation marks. Quotations should be cited in support of an argument, not as authoritative statements.

Numbers should be spelt out up to ninety-nine, except in the case of percentages, where arabic numerals should be used (and *per cent* should always be spelt out). All manuscripts should be paginated, and the use of abbreviations, acronyms and jargon kept to a minimum.

BIOGRAPHIES

Authors submitting articles for inclusion in the journal should also attach a current biography. This should be a brief, concise paragraph, whose length should not exceed eight lines. The biography is to include the contributor's full name and title, a brief summary of current or previous service history (if applicable) and details of educational qualifications. Contributors outside the services should identify the institution they represent. Any other information considered relevant—for example, source documentation for those articles reprinted from another publication—should also be included.