

its blue water naval capability and a booming economy² along with Australia, South Africa, and on the other are the smaller island nations. Hence convergence of interests on security issues has not been readily forthcoming. Thus it is of little wonder that the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC) was formed in Mauritius as late as 5th March 1997. The mandate of this international body of littoral states was to boost economic cooperation amongst its member states and efforts to introduce the security agenda into it by states such as Australia have not been successful. While IOR accounts for just 8% of world GDP and 12% of its trade, there is room for considerable improvement. The issue of maritime cooperation has been totally ignored by this organisation. The charter of the association does not even mention maritime cooperation and only one of the projects of the works program examines the subject of development, upgradation and management of ports. Consequently, maritime issues get ignored in Indian Ocean Rim Business Forum (IORBF) and Indian Ocean Rim Academic Group (IORAG).³ Hence this forum is ill-equipped to handle any maritime challenges to security or any form of emerging asymmetric threats. Indeed it is essential that existing cold war military mindsets of 'preparing for war in order to ensure peace' be drastically altered to that of 'if you want peace prepare to cooperate' for both military, as well as non-military maritime interaction. It is only through this cooperation that the challenges to existing maritime order can be maintained.

In the South Asian context the BIMST-EC comprising Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand was launched in June 1997 with an economic charter. Accounting for less than 3% of global trade it has been currently overshadowed by a vigorous effort to vitalise the SAARC. In any case it is ill equipped to handle maritime challenges.

SLOC protection

The economic development of a state is closely linked to its trade and energy supply. Since most of the trade of the Indian Ocean littorals and the South Asian states is seaborne, they effectively form the lifelines for the concerned state. According to World Bank estimates, in 1999, the world seaborne trade was pegged at 21,480 billion ton-miles; it is expected to touch 35,000 billion ton-miles in 2010, and 41,800 billion ton-miles in 2014. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) Report, *Review of Maritime Transport 2000*, has noted that world sea-based trade recorded its fourteenth

consecutive annual increase and Asia's share of imports and exports was 26.1% and 18.8 % respectively. Thus the prospects of sea borne trade are set to rise dramatically.

Unfortunately along with this rise in traffic the variety and intensity of threats including piracy, maritime terrorism, drug trafficking, gun running, human smuggling, pollution, accidents and inter-state conflicts, are also expected to show proportional a rise.

While the best antidote to SLOC security obviously lies in extensive cooperation, the fact is that SLOCs arouse different response strategies amongst different people. While to a military analyst the SLOCs are related to the maritime instrument of power and maritime geography becomes the pivot on which the forces must be deployed, to a politician on the other hand, it signifies the state of relations with countries located along the sea route being traversed, while for an economist it is just the shortest/most economical travel distance between two destinations. Similarly for nations SLOC, security on a multilateral level of cooperation may mean a perceptual intrusion into aspects of sovereignty. Thus security of such lanes requires comprehensive strategies in congruence with differing perceptions and differing national interests of the concerned states.

The Indian Ocean is home to important SLOCs and maritime choke points. A large volume of international long haul maritime cargo from the Persian Gulf, Africa and Europe transits through this ocean. One of the primary items that is transported is energy products - mainly oil and gas.

The possibilities of disruption in energy lifelines can also arise from patterns of trade flows. Imports to South Asia from West Asia utilise the Straits of Hormuz. As per EIA estimates the Strait recorded a transit volume of 15.4 million barrels of oil per day in 1998. Closure of the Straits of Hormuz practically cuts off Gulf supplies to the East altogether and also affects the West considerably.

Similarly the closure of the Straits of Malacca, which account for nearly 9.4 million barrels per day can seriously threaten the economies of Southeast Asia and the energy intensive economies of China and Japan. This area incidentally has recently witnessed a rise in the levels of piracy. This could lead to some part of the future traffic being routed towards the Sunda and the Lombok Straits within the geographical ambit of Indonesia. However, political uncertainty and instability in Indonesia may prove to dampen the trend. Indeed as a corollary it must also be

added that due to the geo-strategic importance of the Malacca Straits to almost all the South and Southeast Asian countries, any maritime contingency in this traffic congested region, be it in form of piracy attack, accidents, drug/gun running or even environmental disasters, has the potential to turn into an event with global ramifications. Hence all this has a serious import on the security implications for all the maritime states of the region that use these waters.

The importance of energy to the 'demand heartland' (comprising mainly of India, China and Japan) is extensive. They view SLOCs as their very lifelines. After all, at current levels of consumption, the oil import dependence of India is expected to rise to 82.2% by 2010 and become 91.6% by 2020. In the case of China it will be 61% and 76.9% while for rest of South Asia it will be 95.1% and 96.1% respectively.⁴ Thus taking the case of India with nearly 89% of its oil imports coming by the sea route, it is but inevitable that the SLOCs be secure. This security angle is enhanced manifold since most of the oil originates from West Asia and the SLOCs pass through the areas of likely influence of the adversarial state of Pakistan. Added to this is the political turbulence of areas in the West Asian region that often makes the supply of oil from the region its hostage. In the past, supplies from this region have been disrupted at least on seven different occasions, all of which were due to political causes, and none were market driven.

Having realised the importance of SLOC, the suggested methodology of cooperation towards ensuring their protection through mutual cooperation is mentioned in response strategies later in this paper.

Piracy

Piracy has become the bane of the modern seafarer. The numerous cases of reported and unreported piracy has led to considerable concern and multi national efforts to control this violent menace which seems on the upsurge.

According to the International Maritime Organisation Annual Report 2002,⁵ the Malacca Straits, the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean have seen enhancement of incidents of piracy and are the areas that have been most affected by piracy. While, in empirical terms the number of incidents in these areas have decreased with respect to 2001 figures⁶ due to concentrated efforts of many states, the fact remains that the number is still alarmingly high and that it still makes the areas heavily infested with piracy.

This heavy infestation especially around the choke points has a lot to do with the geography of

the area but additionally the economic condition and the mindset of the coastal people staying in the hundreds of minor islands that lace the Malacca Straits and the South China Sea. In the recent past, piracy related incidents seem to have spilled over from these two areas into the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea and there is a strong likelihood of the centre of gravity of piracy shifting to the waters around India.

There also seems to be a distinct change in the type of piracy that has started to occur. Earlier acts were of so-called type termed 'Asian Piracy' that often involved mere stealing of valuables/articles from ships and their safes with a negligible amount of associated violence. However the recent cases in the region have displayed a dramatic increase in the content of brazen violence and the methodology has made them akin to the South American or West African type of piracy. In addition there is the important aspect of the involvement of organised crime in hijacking of ships, as was evident from the 1999 *MV Alonda Rainbow* case. But this case can also be cited as a modern example of various enforcement agencies acting together to fight this scourge.⁷

Similarly the case of *MV Cordiality* that was captured by Sri Lankan terrorists off the coast of Trincomalee are pointers towards this observation.

Unless serious efforts are made between law enforcement agencies of various states in cooperating to bring this piracy into control (as shown by the case of *MV Alonda Rainbow*), this phenomenon will not only increase dramatically but may spin out of control. The portents of this problem lie in the fact that the Asian operatives have become exceptionally well organised, with entrenched gangs and at times state sponsorship. Their links with other forms of 'maritime disorder and terrorism' like narco-terrorism, human smuggling etc are well established and form part of an organic extension of each other.

Maritime terrorism

The international war on terrorism has taken a new dimension in the post 9/11 era. The fight against this old and persistent issue has got a boost with the backing of the international community and the US-led coalition. While the search for terrorists and their personification in Al Qaeda continues on land, at sea, the international coalition is hunting for Bin Laden's terror ships termed as the 'phantom fleet' The main idea being to prevent Osama and Al Qaeda operatives from escaping or using the sea route.⁸

Maritime terrorism can manifest itself in many dimensions and forms - some of which are

becoming apparent. The linkages and the full import of 'container security' to maritime terrorism is only being realised now after it was reported in January 2002 that the search of a freighter by US naval forces nearly led to a group of Al Qaeda terrorists who had been hiding inside a well equipped shipping container. The group escaped from the container shortly before commencement of the search. This discovery prompted an increase in surveillance on ships as well as trucks carrying shipping containers leaving Afghanistan for Pakistani ports.⁹ In another case, a suspected Al Qaeda terrorist smuggled himself halfway around the world inside a shipping container that was well equipped with a bed and toilet. Apparently, he was carrying computers cameras, mobile phones, airport maps and airport security passes for Canada, Thailand and Egypt.

With a dramatic increase in large (more than 6000 TEU-Twenty Foot Equivalent Units capacity) and small container transport by sea¹⁰ the problem has become accentuated as these sealed containers often pass through ports without thorough checking¹¹ and are capable of containing anything from human terrorist cargo to arms and ammunition. It has been reported that one of Bin Laden's cargo freighters unloaded supplies in Kenya for the suicide cadres who subsequently bombed the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania.¹²

In this context the new Container Security Initiative (CSI) is a step in overcoming this challenge. However it does not cover any port in the Indian Ocean at present (Durban, South Africa and Colombo, Sri Lanka are expected to join soon, along with Kelang, Malaysia and Tanjung Priok, Indonesia).¹³ In addition the initiative has been viewed apprehensively by many smaller host nations that regard it as an impediment to normal trade and a method of re-enforcing trade barriers.

Several terrorist organisations in and around the Indian Ocean are known to possess merchant fleets of various types of ships. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) for example have an entire flotilla that is engaged in dubious maritime trade. Most of these are registered in Flags of Convenience (FoC) countries known as pan-ho-lib' ie Panama, Honduras and Liberia¹⁴ and are difficult to keep track as they routinely change names and registry. Lloyds of London lists 11 merchant ships belonging to Asian front companies that are in reality managed by Kumaran Pathmanathan of the LTTE.¹⁵

Thus FoCs pose another major challenge to maritime security. These ships flying the flag of a state other than the country of ownership enables

the owners to avoid high registration fees and taxes and to employ cheap labour operating under sub-standard conditions. It is estimated that there are about 30 such registries (some in private hands running on behalf of states) mainly run by small island or impoverished nations.¹⁶ Since the checks and balances introduced by these registries are undeniably lax, there is no guarantee as to the type of crew or the type of cargo that these ships carry and are considered the safest bet for carrying out terrorist related activities.

Maritime terrorism threatens cruise ships and warships alike. For example on 11 July 1988, the *City of Poros*, a Greek cruise ferry carrying 500 tourists was attacked by three terrorists of the Abu Nidal Organisation (ANO) during which at least nine people were killed and at least a hundred were injured. However, the seminal account of terrorists attacking cruise ship took place with the hijacking of the *Achille Lauro*, off Egypt by four heavily armed Palestine Liberation Front (PLF) terrorists. The hijackers demanded that Israel free 50 Palestinian prisoners and finally killed a disabled American tourist and threw his body overboard.¹⁷

The attack on the USS *Cole*, in Aden harbor Yemen, by terrorists on 12 October 2000, is the case in point on attack on warships. The *Cole* attack resulted in four US sailors dead and ten missing¹⁸ and created an enhanced sensitivity for defence of ships against small suicide boats laden with explosives. However, these types of attacks on warships, have been debated for being termed as 'terrorist attacks' and could well be called as 'maritime guerrilla attacks' by smaller states/non-state actors against the military might of a larger state.

It has often been said that the free access and relative difficulty in enforcement of stringent measures for maritime order makes the sea serve as an easy highway for maritime terrorism. A quick look at the geography of the Indian Ocean region and South Asia reveals that many terrorist hubs are located in the littorals: LTTE in Jaffna, Sri Lanka; Al Qaeda in Yemen, Somalia, Singapore and Pakistan; the Abu Sayyaf Group in the Philippines, the Free Aceh Movement in Indonesia. These hubs are nodes from where these groups can undertake/launch their terrorist activity with impunity to a geographical region that may be far removed.

It can thus be argued that even though attacks against sea borne targets constitute about 2% of all international incidents,¹⁹ the current increase in trends reflects a definite accentuation towards the use of sea for terrorism. While the centre of gravity of terrorism still lies in land, its roots are

fast extending seawards with impunity.

The rise of the narco-terrorism/terror crime nexus

An important adjunct to maritime terrorism is drug trafficking. The nexus is admittedly so deep that they are often analysed under the same parameters. With profit margins running into hundreds of percentages depending on the procurement and dispersion level of the shipment, drug trafficking is by far the most lucrative way of generating funds to fuel the ever growing terrorist activities and insurgencies around the region.

Additionally, terrorist groups are often hand in hand with drug cartels. While this symbiotic relation provides established routes for drug and arms smuggling, it also provides the terrorists with the logistical infrastructure to move people, arms and material according to their desires.²⁰

It has also been found that this relationship has other benefits like most powerful syndicates have access to politicians and their aim is to weaken or influence them rather than destroy them. This aspect can be used by terrorist groups to coerce a 'weak government' to look the other way while the crime syndicates benefit from the power vacuum that follows instability due to terrorist action.

Considering the geo-political set up of the Indian Ocean region, two of its littorals, Iran and Pakistan form a major portion of the Golden Crescent while another two, Myanmar and Thailand constitute the major part of the Golden Triangle, notorious for its illegal drug production.²¹ As all these states are in the IOR it is but natural that narco-terrorism is a major security concern for many littoral states like India that has seen its own emergence as a transit point for a majority of the drugs that emanate from these two rings.

The well-organised LTTE is deeply involved in drug trafficking with their 'phantom fleet'. These ships, besides transporting various commercial goods like timber, sugar and other commercial items also transport drugs from Myanmar to Turkey. In addition they also provide protection and courier services to the sea borne drug shipments from Myanmar to countries around the world, mainly Europe and the US. The drug money is channelled into arms purchases for continuing the insurgency.

Gun running

The symbiotic relationship between gun running and trafficking of drugs is well known and established as one feeds on the other. It is extremely difficult to control one without controlling the other. Gun running by sea is by far

the safest bet for transferring arms and ammunition around the world, while drug trafficking is the most lucrative. Insurgent movements around the world, like the Karens of Myanmar, depend to a very large extent on drug money to fuel their movement and equip their forces.

The LTTE has a vast and well-established network for gunrunning with its tentacles often extending to Japan. However, their arms mostly originate in Cambodia, after which they are loaded into small fishing trawlers from the port of Ranong in southern Thailand. Later the arms cargo is transferred to bigger ships (often in mid ocean), which transport the consignment to Sri Lanka. The latest seizure of an incomplete submersible in a boat yard in Singapore meant for the LTTE displays the extent of arms that are being transported illegally. In one incident in 1999, an armed trawler carrying arms worth an estimated \$10m destined for the LTTE was sunk.

Capture of several small fishing craft laden with arms by the Bangladeshis during the last few years has led to the establishment of the fact that a lot of these arms also make their way to Cox Bazaar in Bangladesh, from Thailand. Similarly the seizure of arms meant for the People's Liberation Army (Manipur) by the Royal Thai Navy off the port of Ranong in 1997 clearly indicated the close nexus between arms trafficking and insurgent groups. The other major pipeline for Cambodian weapons is through Southern Thailand and from there across the Malacca Straits to Aceh.²²

Thus it must also be emphasised that there are clear links between narcotics and illegal light weapons trade that include shared supply and transit routes; use of weapons for protection amongst drug traffickers themselves and funding of gun running through drug trade and vice versa.²³

Maritime pollution

Oil related disasters at sea are the bane of not only environmentalists but mariners and security specialists equally. They create havoc with the ecology in the maritime environment and additionally have the potential to effect maritime security. The environmental effects are of long term or short time duration, but their consequential effects in related maritime spheres can continue for a longer period. It is interesting to note that many of the consequential effects of these disasters are yet to be understood as is the disasters concerning LPG tankers.²⁴

Regional governments are presently deeply concerned with major oil spills or wrecks of oil

tankers at narrow approaches to harbours and choke points, since they can seriously affect the flow of merchant shipping traffic. Theoretically the traffic can be directed to other similar ports or routes but practical difficulties of jetties, storage capacity and longer routing leads to a compounding of economic losses.

The Indian Ocean is home to many choke points like Straits of Hormuz, Malacca Lombok and Sunda Straits and any disruption in traffic flow through them can have disastrous consequences.

In the same vein, environmental disasters such as the recent forest fires in Indonesia, apart from greatly affecting the daily lives of people in nearby Malaysia and Singapore also effected the shipping traffic through the Malacca Straits, leading to at least one reported accident caused by the poor visibility conditions. Hence it is of importance that such disasters be guarded against.

Security against mining

Mining is one of the cheapest forms of carrying out maritime warfare. Mines can be laid by both warships or by airborne means. Civilian aircraft or civilian vessels can also be used to carry out mining operations, which can even be carried out to a limited extent by non-state actors. There are 48 navies in the world that possesses the capability to carry out detailed mining operations.²⁵ In reality, it is not even necessary to carry out actual mining operations. The mere threat or a well-calculated disinformation campaign about the laying of a mine field can very well serve the purpose of deterring any merchant ship from entering any 'affected' channel or strait.

For many years after World War II mines had not been considered a serious threat to naval operations despite their known existence (that had been partially mapped). However the extensive laying of mines by the Iranians during their war with Iraq in the 1980s, brought a new awareness of this danger. On 14 April 1988 the USS *Samuel B. Roberts* (FFG-58) hit a mine in the Persian Gulf and suffered extensive damage.

Mines laid in the Persian Gulf in 1987 and the Red Sea in 1984 clearly demonstrated the destructive power of mines as it left a trail of damaged ships. A concentrated international effort was required to undertake minesweeping operations to clean up the area. Hence mining effort in a restricted area like the Malacca Straits has the potential to create havoc on international merchant shipping. The consequences are further aggravated since the 960km long strait gives access to important ports like Kelang, Penang,

Lumut, and Singapore; and in addition has vital naval bases of different states along both its shores. Thus closure of this vital area would also directly affect the operational deployment pattern of navies along the straits. Added to this is that most of the regional navies have poor minesweeping capabilities, incapable of undertaking large or even medium mine sweeping efforts.

Response strategies

Any response strategy towards tackling maritime threats of a transnational nature revolves around cooperation between nation states. Now maritime cooperation broadly involves two aspects, one of military cooperation and the other of non-military interaction. Indeed while regional cooperation between navies must take over the centre stage in the emerging order, maritime non-military cooperation is equally important. Navies must reorient themselves from the existing mindset of 'preparing for war in order to ensure peace' to that of 'if you want peace and stability prepare to cooperate'.

Any multinational agency designed to deal with the earlier mentioned maritime challenges of the region will intrinsically suffer from a hierarchy of relevance. This would mean that based on the requirement of the overall objectives, individual components of the multi-agency and multinational security cooperation would require to adapt itself to different needs and pace of operations as well as the degree of force applied. This is because the relevant forces (military or non-military) are likely to be drawn into missions related to transnational security based on a hierarchy of relevance of the concerned challenge and that of the individual state. Money laundering would probably not elicit a military response on its own by most states, whereas biological terrorism would entail assistance from naval forces as may disaster relief, drought assistance etc. Tracking of smugglers and gunrunners would lead to greater military involvement and possibly interdiction and arrest as well. However, of the various transnational security threats, maritime piracy and terrorism may involve the navies most directly²⁶

The Indian perspective

Strategically speaking India, due to its geography, sits astride commercial routes and energy lifelines passing from the Indian Ocean to Southeast Asia. It could, with its maritime strength, contribute towards providing a positive influence in securing the movement of shipping along SLOCs and choke points in the Indian Ocean with the help of

other countries. Thus joint efforts by the Indian Navy (IN) along with other capable IOR navies and navies of Southeast Asian countries in forming SLOC patrols would help in ensuring the free flow of unhindered traffic through SLOCs and choke points. The recent Indian efforts of providing SLOC protection in the Malacca region along with US Navy has left a sour taste in the mouth as it had been opposed vehemently by the Indonesians who regarded it as an affront to their sovereignty. Some other smaller nations also regarded the issue with apprehension overriding the positive benefits of the move. Hence this episode has unfolded an important lesson for the participant states - security is indeed essential but for any transnational security enforcing agency/opportunity to work successfully, a multilateral approach with near unanimity is essential. While this may not always be a very pragmatic approach for 'sovereignty conscious' states with disparate capabilities, it is essential for success in any endeavour.

The problem is especially acute amongst the Indian Ocean littorals wherein not only are the capabilities widely disparate, but due to differing national interests, a common platform for security

based maritime issues is difficult to achieve.

Military cooperation

In military terms, the IN is one of the largest maritime forces in the region playing a crucial role in increasing maritime bonding by initiating numerous confidence building measures. It conducts regular naval exercises with IOR and Southeast Asian navies and its recent second exercise with the People's Liberation Army Navy was unique in more ways than one.²⁷ It not only provided an opportunity to the two Asian giants with understated adversarial relations to assess each other but also to extend a hand of 'rapprochement' in the face of the existing circumstances that make the Chinese feel encircled by US friends and allies. Further it enabled the Chinese to become more appreciative of Indian sensitivities in their (Chinese) attempts to gain a foothold in the Indian Ocean - a move that had made many of the littorals (especially India) wary and apprehensive.

In addition, the IN has been carrying out flag showing visits to important ports in the IOR as an annual feature. Naval training establishments in India under Southern Naval Command at Kochi,



HMAS *Stuart* boarding party conducting maritime interception operations in the Northern Arabian Gulf, May 2004 (RAN)

regularly accepts naval officers/men from Southeast Asian and IOR countries for training, a feature that must continue if Indians are to build stronger and more influential relationships with friendly navies around.

In addition to the surveillance of its vast maritime zones, the IN, in association with the Indian Coast Guard, is specifically involved in surveillance over the Palk Straits, the Gulf of Mannar, the coasts of Maharashtra and Gujarat and off the island territories to curb the influx of refugees, Tamil terrorists, poaching, gun running, etc.

India has been spearheading a multilateral naval exercise designated MILAN since the mid-1990s. This involves a series of exercises, which includes participation from the Bay of Bengal rim states and is conducted every year off the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The MILAN series was institutionalised with the objective of achieving interoperability with ASEAN navies, allaying fears about the IN's growing influence in the Andaman Sea and promoting goodwill between India and ASEAN countries. MILAN 2003, held in February 2003, further highlighted India's commitment to this end. Since then it has become widely represented by the navies from Myanmar, Singapore, Indonesia, Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia and Australia.²⁸ In addition bilateral and multilateral exercises involving search-and-rescue drills, exchange of information, anti submarine warfare, advanced mine-counter measures and some anti-terror tactics have been held between navies from time to time. Bilateral goodwill visits with ASEAN countries, China, Japan and the US are a regular feature in addition to extensive cooperation as regards training of personnel, hydrography etc. Singapore is set to share intelligence with India as part of a comprehensive anti-terrorism agreement.²⁹ Unfortunately, no such desirable institutionalised set up exists for the IOR navies where there is extensive sharing of operational expertise and intelligence regarding transnational crime (except piracy that is covered by the pirate reporting centres).

The silver lining to the above has been in the MALBAR series of exercises that the US Navy and IN have revived. The exercise held in December 2002 involved ships from Sri Lanka, Maldives and Mauritius. The latest and sixth in the series was held in 2003.³⁰

It is obvious from the above that smaller regional navies have a lot to gain from interaction with the IN and from the experience it has in dealing with transnational crime and terrorism.

The US maintains a considerable and

continuous naval presence in the politically volatile Gulf region mainly for its strategic interests in seeing that the energy lifelines are not unduly threatened. Thus, it may be prudent to form a multilateral alliance to include the powerful US Navy in any arrangement that seeks to ensure maritime order in the region, for example SLOC patrols around all the choke points. This would not only lower the vulnerability threshold of the SLOCs and the choke points but also ensure that they remain stable and free from threat of closure.

What can be done

From the Indian perspective it is obvious that the various challenges can be countered on a multi-layered basis. Some of these that are predominantly around the Indian coast require a unilateral approach (policing and constabulary functions). The other challenges require a bilateral approach as they are predominantly with military exercises involving US Navy and other navies. But the most required and desired format is the multi lateral approach in solving transnational crime and for maintenance of maritime order.

In this context, the problem plaguing the Indian Ocean and the Southern Asian region is the lack of channelised efforts towards the maritime challenges that are faced by all littorals. The previous efforts to combat these problems have been mostly bilateral and at best, trilateral arrangements. There is a near total absence of a multilateral approach to combat maritime disorder. Track II arrangements like the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific (CSCAP) and Western Pacific Naval Symposium (WPNS) have been active in hosting seminars and discussions, but most states are yet to incorporate their suggestions in their national policies. This calls for an accentuated belief and importance towards Track II recommendations, on this issue that has sadly been lacking.

Setting up joint centres

In view of the above, the following framework/measures for regional maritime cooperation are suggested. The formation of interlinked Joint Maritime Centres (JMCs) at important ports near choke points for rapid responses to smuggling, piracy disaster relief, environmental surveillance for protection and SAR (Search and Rescue), with an amalgamation of 'Oil Spill Response Centres' to combat the hazards of oil spills must be looked into since these are crucial areas which require cooperation.

Oil spills are an ever-increasing problem with serious consequences for marine ecological

systems. For example, in the Malacca Straits alone there were five oil spills totalling 3.5 million tons of oil in 1994. Hence, regional navies/coast guards need to structure 'spill response centres' with mandatory powers to inspect oil tankers such as has been implemented by Turkey, Italy and France in some of their ports. These response centres could be amalgamated with the JMCs for better coordination and management.

The Indian Coast Guard (whose charter includes combating such contingencies as oil spills along with policing of the maritime borders), with the help of similar agencies of IOR and Southeast Asian countries could cooperate in formation of such centres.

The setting up of such centres around important areas in the region would require cooperation in the following fields:

- Multilateral efforts/force to counter narco-terrorism (gun running, drug smuggling) and illegal migration
- Multilateral approaches towards SAR operations in addition to the existing global system
- Multilateral SLOC protection force
- Anti-piracy patrols in pirate infested regions
- De mining efforts where/when required by capable states
- Sharing of intelligence

In addition to the above security related concerns there is an urgent requirement to develop marine technology and a joint strategy to ensure safety of ports and harbours, and congruent efforts towards utilisation and management of all viable marine resources in the Exclusive Economic Zone - both living and mineral in nature.

Conclusion

Transnational threats encompassing narco-terrorism, gun running, sea piracy, immigration control and assistance during natural disasters such as cyclones, famines etc have spawned a multitude of additional 'out of area operation' roles for the navies and have dramatically increased the maritime security challenges of this region. The countering of these threats/challenges requires consistent cooperation between the states and the associated maritime agencies.

Admittedly, the above-cited areas of desired cooperation seem like a wish list in contrast to divergent ground realities that expose incongruent views on many aspects. However, a cynical assessment of the situation is a regressive step and not necessarily a pragmatic one. To begin with, the littoral states in the region should be encouraged to look towards the regional power

centers in this area for their capacity and capability to assist them in maintenance of maritime order and during natural calamities or disasters. Countries like the US, India, South Africa and Australia with enhanced maritime capabilities can help in the situation by not only cooperating amongst themselves, but by taking other littoral states on board as part of multilateral efforts towards maintenance of 'maritime order'.

Some 'progress' in the context of increasing maritime cooperation seems to have been made in the conduct of joint anti-piracy patrols for the Malacca Straits by the Malaysian, Indonesian and Singaporean navies that have recently reached an agreement on this issue. Additionally India has also been asked to help in this task of patrolling.³¹

The establishment of Joint Maritime Centers (JMCs) at important ports and near choke points of the ocean, for rapid responses to natural calamities, search and rescue (SAR), to monitor smuggling, poaching, and the ever increasing piracy at sea would prove to be a milestone towards this type of maritime cooperation.

After all, an oceanic environment spawns maritime strategy of nations. The sea brings together like-minded countries that in turn influence the regions strategic, economic and industrial perceptions thus enlarging the brotherhood of the seas. To quote a saying '*the seas unite while the land divides.*'

¹ Rahul Roy Chowdhury, *India's Maritime Security*, Knowledge World, New Delhi, June 2000, p. 30.

² India's economy grew by 8.4% in the second quarter of 2003-04 and a phenomenal 10.4% in its third quarter. It has a FE reserve of about \$119b (as at 3 Jul 2004) in comparison to \$1b in 1991. Its stock sensenx crossed an all time high of 6000 points in early 2004 showing tremendous investor confidence. In the first quarter of 2004 the Indian economy grew by about 8.2%. However some estimates for entire 2004 predict a steady growth of + 7%.

³ P.K. Ghosh, 'Let Indian Ocean Unite the Rim' *The Financial Express*, December 12 2000 also see Chowdhury, pp. 33-35.

⁴ P.K. Ghosh, 'The Maritime Dimension' in Jasjit Singh (ed) *Oil and Gas in India's Security*, Knowledge World, New Delhi, July 2001.

⁵ International Maritime Organisation, *Reports on Acts of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships- Annual Report 2002* dated 17 April 2003 available at <http://www.imi.org>.

⁶ According to the IMO report, incidents of Piracy in the Indian Ocean and the Malacca Straits has decreased from 86 to 66 and 58 to 34 respectively over 2001 figures. However in the South China Seas they have increased from 120 to 140.

⁷ MV *Alondra Rainbow*, a 7000 ton Panama registered vessel, belonging to Japanese owners was hijacked. The vessel was en route from Kuala Tanjung, Indonesia to Milke in Japan. The Piracy Reporting Center of the International Maritime Bureau had announced through a worldwide broadcast that pirates had captured the vessel. After a high speed chase and drama it was finally captured by Indian Naval ship INS *Prahar*.

⁸ See 'Hunt for 20 terror ships' *The Observer International*, London, 23 December 2001.

⁹ See 'Inside the Ring',

<http://www.gertzfile.com/ring010402.html>

¹⁰ See 'Containerisation',

www.choicegroup.co.in/html/cntrznation.htm. From vessels that used to carry 226 TEU's (Twenty-Foot Equivalent Units) in 1957, there are today vessels that can carry 6600 TEUs. Maersk Sealand alone has approximately 21 vessels that can carry over 6000 TEUs. Their 'S' class Post-Panamax vessels can carry 6600 TEU's. Other lines having over 6000 TEU vessels in their fleet are MSC, P&ONL Hanjin, Hyundai Merchant Marine, and CMA-CGM. The world fleet at present consists of 32 vessels of 6000 TEUs and above, with another 40 in the order books and many more to follow.

¹¹ According to US custom authorities, only 2% of the cargo containers that enter seaports each day are inspected as cited in 'Port of Entry Now Means Point of Anxiety' *The New York Times*, 23 December 2001.

¹² 'U.S. Ports Represent Weakness in Nation's Defenses, Analyses Shows',

http://www.military.com/Content/MoreContent/1,12044,FL_ports_103001,00.html

¹³ For details see 'Container Security Initiative' at US

Customs and Border Protection website

http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/enforcement/international_activities/csi/

¹⁴ 'Killing Of Sea Bird Not A Big Blow to LTTE Shipping Operations' *The Sunday Times*, February 1996.

¹⁵ *ibid*

¹⁶ 'What are FOCs: A brief guide to flags of convenience' www.itf.org.uk/seafarers/foc/Body_foc.html.

¹⁷ For details of the entire account see: www.specialoperations.com/Images/Folder/library2/achille.html.

¹⁸ See 'US Navy destroyer attacked in Yemen, 4 killed, 10 missing', *The Hindustan Times*, New Delhi, 13 October 2000. Six attackers, believed to be Al Qaeda operatives were however caught and recently (as at 07 Jul 2004) charged by a Yemeni court of the attack. See 'Yemen Charges Qaeda Suspects for USS Cole Attack' at Reuters on line News Jul 7, 2004 03:41 AM ET at www.reuters.com.

¹⁹ Ed Blanche, 'Terror Attacks threaten Gulf Oil Routes' *Defence Intelligence Review*, 01 December 2002.

²⁰ For a detailed treatment see B Raman 'Control of Transnational Crime and war against Terrorism' *Indian Defence Review*, Apr- Jun 2002, Vol 17(2)

²¹ P.K Ghosh 'Let Indian Ocean Unite the Rim'. Also see UN Report on 'Trafficking scene in South and South West Asia', Chapter 4 available at

<http://www.unodc.org/pdf/india/ccch4.pdf> and Dr. Nihar Ranjan Das 'Narco -Politics and Islamic Society: A Case Study of Pakistan' 08 January 2004, available at <http://www.defenceindia.com/defenceind/research.html>

²² David Capie 'Small Arms Production Transfers in South East Asia' Canberra Papers on Strategy and Defence, No. 146, 2002, p. 20.

²³ Research Report on 'Combating Illicit Light Weapons Trafficking: Developments and Opportunities', British American Security Information Council, London, January 1998.

²⁴ The effects of a LPG tanker blast by terrorist activity or otherwise is yet to be fully understood and is still understudy. See Jerry Havens 'Ready to Blow' *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, July/August 2003, pp. 16-18

²⁵ Henry J. Kenny *An Analysis of Possible Threats to Shipping in Key South-East Asian Sea Lanes*, Centre for Naval Analysis, p. 22.

²⁶ Paul J Smith and Don Berlin, 'Transnational Security Threats in Asia' Conference Report, Asia Pacific Centre

²⁷ For a more detailed perspective on the strategic and other implications of Sino Indian naval exercises see P K Ghosh, 'Indo China Exercises: Unlikely Mates' at *Asia Times Online*, 19 Nov 2003 available at <http://www.atimes.com>

²⁸ See Vijay Sakhuja 'Naval Diplomacy: Indian Initiatives' *BHARAT RAKSHAK MONITOR*, Volume 6(1) Jul-Aug 2003

²⁹ Intelligence Pointers, *Janes' Intelligence Digest*, 12 April 2002.

³⁰ R.K. Radhakrishnan, 'Indo-U.S. joint naval exercises conclude' *The Hindu*, Saturday 12 July 2003.

³¹ Earlier a joint anti piracy, anti narco-terrorism patrol of the Indian Ocean had been agreed to in principle between Singapore, Australia, Thailand and Philippines to which India was also 'invited'. (See Shisir Gupta 'Delhi gets Indian Ocean coalition to guard the seas' *Indian Express* 16 March 2004). However latest reports suggest that Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore have presumably signed an accord to implement anti piracy patrols in the Malacca Straits. (see 'South East Asian Navies to Patrol Malacca Straits' *The Strait Times* 29 June 2004) India was again invited to join this group at the ARF meeting held in Jul 04.

SEMAPHORE

A loss more symbolic than material?

(Issue 5, May 2004)

In 1921 US President Harding called a conference between the USA, Britain, Japan, France and Italy to advocate mutual naval arms limitation. Faced with massive post-war debts all parties agreed on limitations. The immediate result of the ensuing 1922 Washington Five Power Naval Treaty was that Britain, America and Japan scrapped a number of unfinished capital ships and older dreadnoughts. For Australia, the casualty of the Washington Treaty closest to the heart of the nation was the *Indefatigable* class battlecruiser HMAS *Australia* - flagship of the Australian fleet, pride of the nation and the first and only capital ship of the Royal Australian Navy (RAN). When she was scuttled off Sydney Heads on 12 April 1924 as part of the British quota *Australia* had been in full commission for less than nine years.

Two schools of opinion surround the loss of the battlecruiser. The first believed that it was a mistake that removed an important Australian naval asset, a sentiment typified in the words of Captain Feakes at her scuttling in 1924: 'Strong men were wet-eyed. Many cursed. It was a tragic blunder.'¹ The second school, prevalent at the time and since, claimed that the vessel was obsolete and of no great loss to the RAN. Most recently the centenary history of the RAN stated that 'the loss was more symbolic than material'² largely predicated on the fact that the 12" ammunition required for the main armament was no longer in production. The questions then are whether *Australia* was obsolete, whether the vessel's retention was possible, and whether it would have had any significant impact on inter-war deterrence.

When *Australia* was scuttled in 1924, the burden of the nation's naval defence fell on four 1906 designed 6" gun light cruisers. The Royal Navy (RN) possessed no armoured cruisers, and based only light cruisers in Asia. Japan and America possessed 8"-10" gun armoured cruisers, many of which were based in the Asia Pacific region. Imperial relations with the two nations fluctuated in the 1920s, and the possibility of conflict could not be entirely ruled out. Positioned at the end of long Imperial sea lines of communication, and dependent on foreign trade, Australia was particularly vulnerable to commerce war in the event of conflict with Japan or America. A RN squadron would take at least a

month to arrive in the Pacific from Europe. During this time Australia would be isolated and largely dependent on the RAN to defend its maritime interests. The presence of *Australia* alone in 1914 had deterred the German East Asiatic Squadron, comprised of two armoured cruisers and four light cruisers from conducting commerce war close to Australia.

Battlecruisers were designed with high speed, long range and heavy guns primarily to hunt down and destroy commerce raiding armoured cruisers and to interdict enemy commerce. Accompanied by a cruiser escort, a battlecruiser was capable of deterring a weaker enemy raiding force, destroying commerce raiding cruisers preying on imperial shipping, and overpowering enemy cruisers escorting convoys, and it required a disproportionate response to counter. In the vastness of the Pacific, prior to the advent of large aircraft carriers and long-range high performance aircraft, a battlecruiser and escorts were relatively safe from air attack. As such, the battlecruiser provided considerable strategic reach for a navy with extensive sea lines to control. Between the wars *Australia* and the light cruisers could have provided a force suitable to deter any military threats against Australian interests in the Pacific, particularly the mandated territories, from Japan or the USA. It would also have provided an overt threat to Japan's mandated territories and America's external territories should economic or military pressure have been brought to bear on the Australian government.

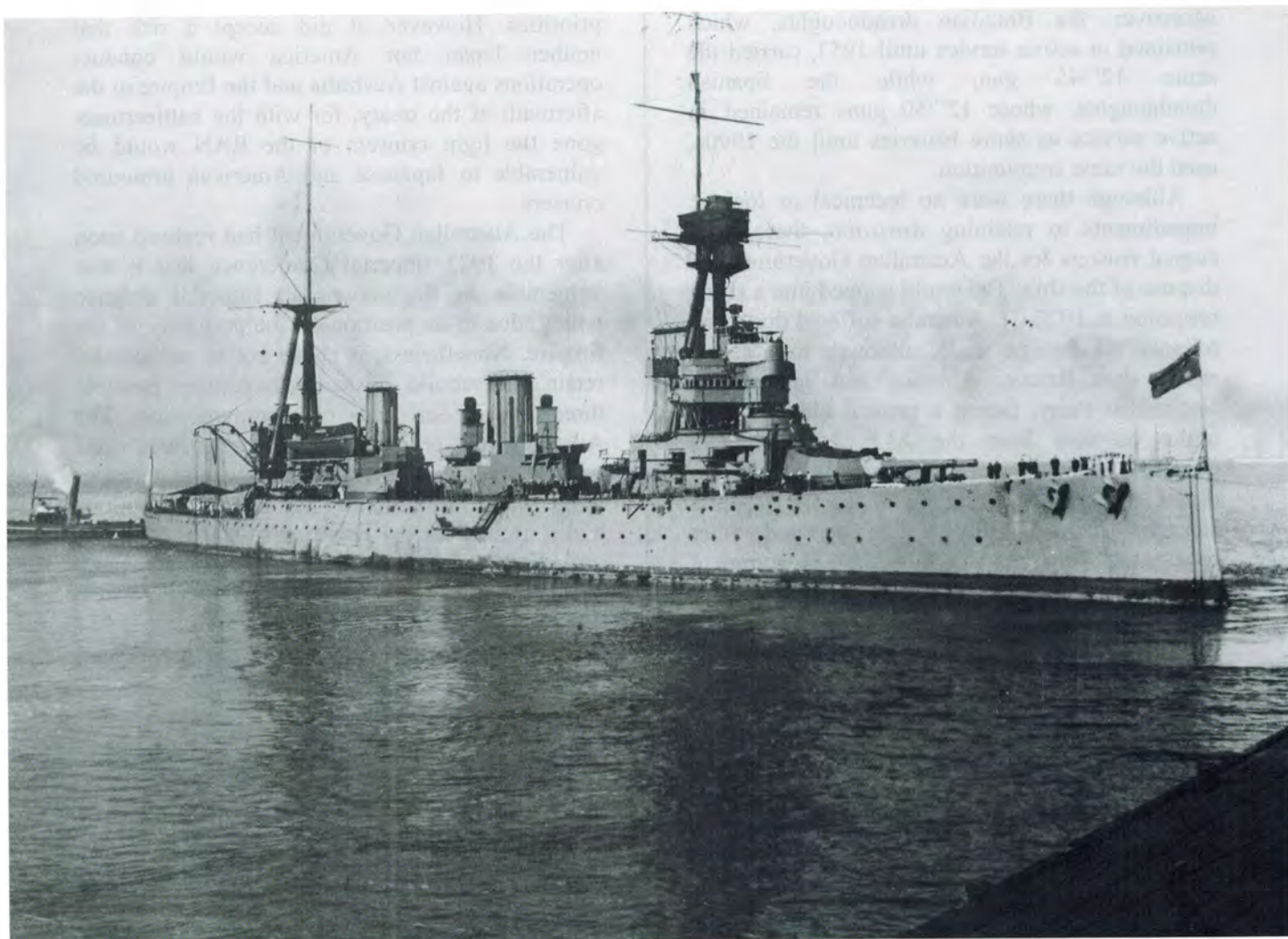
Australia would have required modernisation, involving at the minimum: new turbines and boilers to increase her speed and reduce weight, improved fire control systems, increased armour protection, main armament modification, increased secondary and anti-aircraft armament, and other minor work. In the mid 1920s this would have cost around the same as the construction of a new 8" gun *County* class heavy cruiser, but provided a more powerful capability. With only minor improvements to her armament, *Australia* could have delivered up to 45% greater weight of fire than a *County* class cruiser. Even as late as 1942, a modernised *Australia* would have had no less than 19% greater weight of fire than the best-armed Japanese heavy cruisers and up to 69% greater weight of fire than a Japanese light cruiser.

The Five Power Treaty contained several areas of ambiguity that would have allowed the

Australian Government to mount an argument to retain the battlecruiser. Firstly, the treaty definition of a capital ship, as one armed with greater than 8" guns, only applied to ships built after the signing of the treaty. The definition for existing ships was simply agreement that they were a capital ship by virtue of an ability to take their place in the line of battle. By 1922 the capital ship standard was 14"-15" guns, with new 16"-18" armed vessels under development. *Australia* was not fit to take its place in the line of battle, and it could validly be argued that 12" armed vessels such as *Australia* should be reclassified as armoured cruisers and therefore exempted from the treaty tonnage limitations. The treaty provisions did not preclude retaining old cruisers with larger than 8" guns. The United States Navy retained its 1906 vintage 10" gun *Tennessee* class armoured cruisers after 1922, with USS *Seattle* remaining in full commission as a heavy cruiser until 1941. This could have provided grounds to argue for the retention of *Australia* along similar lines.

Secondly, Commonwealth naval vessels were paid for, manned and maintained at Commonwealth expense. They were under the control of the Commonwealth at all times, unless transferred to RN control in wartime by agreement of the Commonwealth. Section 51 of the Defence Act 1903 gave the Commonwealth power in all respects for the defence of Australia, without any legal need for agreement by Britain in making defence policy. Accordingly, Britain could not include *Australia* in its quota for the purposes of the Washington Treaty without the agreement of the Australian Government. Had the Australian Government not agreed to the inclusion of *Australia* in the quota, it could have voiced its opposition in the Imperial discussions, and refused to countersign the treaty. Australia would then have been able to put a strong case that, while bound by the strictures of the treaty with regard to tonnage limitations on the British empire, it was not required to sacrifice its own ship as part of that total.

Thirdly, the Australian Commonwealth did not



receive the legal power to enter into extra-territorial treaties that might be against the interests of Britain until the Statute of Westminster in 1931. However, the Constitutional Conventions provided that treaties entered into on Australia's behalf by Britain could not be self-executing, and had to be entered into Australian domestic law by the Commonwealth Parliament.³ In short, if the Australian Parliament did not agree with a treaty imposed by Britain, it could refuse to enact the treaty in Australian law, and would thus not be bound by the treaty.

The argument that ceasing production of 12" ammunition was sufficient reason for the disposal of *Australia* (under the provisions of the Five Power Treaty) is difficult to support. By 1912 13.5"-15" guns were superseding the 12" gun in new RN capital ships. From 1922 the treaty removed from service all other RN capital ships carrying the 12"/45 Mk X gun. Existing stocks of barrels and ammunition could have been transferred to the RAN, thereby providing many years of support. Research indicates there were at least 95 barrels and 40,000 rounds of 12" ammunition available in the early 1920s. Moreover, the Brazilian dreadnoughts, which remained in active service until 1953, carried the same 12"/45 gun, while the Spanish dreadnoughts, whose 12"/50 guns remained in active service as shore batteries until the 1990s, used the same ammunition.

Although there were no technical or logistic impediments to retaining *Australia*, there were cogent reasons for the Australian Government to dispose of the ship. The world slipped into a sharp recession in 1920-21. Australia suffered due to its reliance on foreign trade, although to a lesser extent than Britain, America and Japan. The Nationalist Party, facing a general election, was under pressure from the ALP, backed by a powerful militant working-class movement, to divert additional funding into social benefits schemes such as soldier housing and other repatriation benefits. The Australian Government was paying off war-related loans of £262.5m, or 68% of GDP, including a debt to the United Kingdom of £43.4m. Maintaining *Australia* in operational status took the largest slice of the RAN's budget and personnel. Even before the Washington Conference *Australia* had been laid up in reserve to reduce expenses. Accordingly, there was little support in early 1922 to retain the vessel. Defence was no longer a key portfolio and funding was being progressively reduced. The disposal of the battlecruiser allowed for a major reduction in defence expenditure, providing funds for redirection to more pressing social benefits

schemes. Prime Minister Hughes understood that the naval limitations did not represent a permanent solution to Japanese expansion, but that they would buy peace in the Pacific for ten years.⁴ In this heated economic and social climate, many governments refocussed public expenditure from arms to economic rehabilitation.

Despite opinions to the contrary, *Australia* was not obsolete in 1924. Notwithstanding the vessel's known weaknesses, it was still fit for the purpose for which it was designed, specifically the destruction of enemy armoured cruisers. Indeed, the restrictions placed on new cruiser construction in the Five Power Treaty ensured that *Australia* would have remained effective for some time, by limiting the armament of new cruisers to 8" guns. The disposal of *Australia* under the terms of the Washington Five Power Treaty was by no means a given. There were a number of loopholes that could have allowed the Australian Government sufficient room to bargain for retention of the vessel, had it so desired. The Australian Government made a conscious decision to allow the ship to be listed for disposal to free up funds for dispersal on higher Government spending priorities. However, it did accept a risk that neither Japan nor America would conduct operations against Australia and the Empire in the aftermath of the treaty, for with the battlecruiser gone the light cruisers of the RAN would be vulnerable to Japanese and American armoured cruisers.

The Australian Government had realised soon after the 1923 Imperial Conference that it was vulnerable to fluctuations in Imperial defence policy, due to its position on the periphery of the Empire. Nonetheless, it chose not to unilaterally retain and rebuild *Australia* to counter possible threats to its sea lines of communication. The Australian Government could have provided itself with a greater deterrent capability and a wider range of maritime security and diplomatic options had it argued for the retention of *Australia* as an armoured cruiser under the Five Power Treaty provisions.

Afloat support: a significant force multiplier

(Issue 3, May 2004)

One of the least glamorous aspects of maritime warfare involves the underway replenishment of warships at sea and the logistic support of forces deployed ashore. It is also one of the most important. Even a short conflict can rapidly use up missiles, ammunition, fuel and stores at a prodigious rate. This is where afloat support

becomes so vital.

Replenishment at sea is a significant force multiplier that extends the range and sustainment of both surface combatants and amphibious vessels with land forces embarked. Afloat support ships provide greater reach and endurance and allow self-reliant and sustained operations to be conducted away from a shore support base. This is particularly important when friendly countries might be disinclined to offer port facilities or, for force protection or political reasons, we would wish to reduce our footprint ashore. This afloat support capability, which enables warships to provide an ongoing presence and an immediate response to a developing situation, is vital for Australia, given our enduring geo-strategic circumstances and the fact that practically every conceivable operation must be conducted and sustained at considerable distances from Australian shore support.

For these reasons, and as noted in *Australian Maritime Doctrine*, a credible surface task group will always include an afloat support ship to provide logistic support. Without an afloat support ship to replenish fuel and other essential consumable stores ships are restricted to operating at distances no greater than their half-range from support. When constrained to this half-range, surface combatants are unable to conduct operations or remain on station for protracted periods before having to return for resupply. To achieve extended periods at sea, surface combatants must either have access to closer shore support or be accompanied by a replenishment ship. Given Australia's long coastlines, neighbouring archipelagic and island nations, sparse infrastructure, and minimal options for forward operating bases, afloat support empowers the Australian Defence Force (ADF) to conduct a range of independent operations that would otherwise not be possible. Even when shore support facilities or a forward operating base might be available within our region, their use would be subject to host nation agreement, which may well be denied in some circumstances. Furthermore, extended operations using surface combatants in areas where shore support is not available, such as the Heard and McDonald Islands fisheries zone, are not possible without a replenishment ship.

With suitable replenishment ships and the ability to resupply at sea, fighting units can remain on station for weeks at a time. As a general indication, a surface combatant supported by a replenishment ship is limited only by crew rest considerations. Replenishment ships are not, however, just tankers. They are a 'one-stop

logistic shop' and must carry several different cargoes concurrently in order to provide the full range of afloat support to surface combatants and task groups in order to increase both their range and sustainability. This not only includes diesel fuel, aviation fuel, oil and lubricants, but also dry stores including food, refrigerated and frozen stores, general stores and spare parts, water, and ammunition. Furthermore, a balanced and efficient onboard storage capability provides greater effectiveness, reducing the time required to replenish warships and increasing the time before the replenishment vessel itself must return to port to restock.

In addition to their primary role of supporting maritime task groups in both open water and littoral operations, replenishment ships are also critical *joint* logistic assets necessary to sustain forces operating throughout the littoral in operations ranging from humanitarian support to warfighting missions. The latter operations will depend on the ability of naval forces to contribute to the protection of the joint force, provide and safeguard sustainment from the sea and protect the logistic bridge from the home base across the open sea and through potentially hostile littoral waters. Afloat support for these operations includes supporting land forces, forward operating bases, and any forward land-based resupply points. This capability was convincingly demonstrated during operations in East Timor in 1999. With their ability to carry large amounts of stores and to operate helicopters, replenishment ships are also well suited to provide humanitarian aid.

Despite technological advances, replenishment at sea, whether ship-to-ship or by helicopter, remains a routine but potentially dangerous and personnel intensive evolution. This complex task is carried out by the replenishment ship and receiving warship steaming side-by-side in close proximity, linked by fuel hoses and wires rigged between the two vessels, whilst simultaneously transferring stores by helicopter. It demands great skill and the highest standards of seamanship, especially in rough weather and at night. However, the ultimate test in replenishment at sea, for both supplying ship and customer, is for a usually difficult exercise in peacetime to be carried out in time of tension or war, with ships faced with simultaneously carrying out replenishment while at a heightened state of readiness for action. In an *Anzac* class frigate for example, up to 20 of its complement of 165 are required as line-handlers at the receiving station to haul over the highline or spanwire and connect up to the replenishment at sea system. In addition, a

significant number of people (up to 75% of the crew) are needed to close-up at various specialist stations and to manage and strike-down the ammunition and stores embarked, whether from another ship or by helicopter.

The RAN's current afloat support capability is provided by the underway replenishment ships HMAS *Success* and HMAS *Westralia*. The locally-built *Success*, which entered service in 1986, is a multi-purpose replenishment ship (AOR), which effectively combines the functions of a fleet oiler and stores ship. This very versatile ship is equipped with a flight deck and helicopter hangar. *Success* is capable of simultaneously replenishing two ships, one on each side, and concurrently by the embarked helicopter to both the receiving ships and other ships in company. Four main replenishment at sea stations are fitted, two of which have dual functions and can be used to transfer either fuels or solids, including ammunition. The less capable auxiliary fleet oiler (AO) *Westralia* was designed and built as a commercial petroleum tanker and modified by the British Royal Fleet Auxiliary for underway replenishment in 1979. Originally leased by the RAN in 1989, *Westralia* was purchased outright in 1994. Although it can carry some food and stores, its principal cargo is diesel and aviation fuel to refuel warships at sea. *Westralia* has transfer points for fuel, water and stores and is capable of replenishing up to two ships at a time. Both ships saw active service in the Gulf War in 1991 as part of the Multi-National Naval Force conducting operations in support of Kuwait, and more recently also provided valuable logistic support to INTERFET operations in East Timor.

Although the acquisition of new surface combatants and amphibious ships is important, being able to support them as part of the RAN's capability to deploy locally, regionally and worldwide, is also of crucial importance. A key issue in determining the number and capabilities of future replenishment vessels, is the issue of concurrent operations, often in geographically dispersed locations. A replenishment vessel used to support the deployment, projection and sustainment of land forces would invariably be unavailable to replenish other, geographically dispersed vessels at sea. This is an important point because in addition to projecting and sustaining land forces, an operation in the littoral will often require surface combatants to conduct operations over a wide geographical area. These units will be required to undertake such diverse activities as shaping operations, patrolling choke points and escorting merchant vessels. In addition, surface combatants may also be required to concurrently

conduct border protection operations, or even to participate in wider multinational and coalition operations in support of Australian national interests, all of which will also require replenishment at sea.

As part of the 2003 Defence Capability Review, the ageing and single-hulled *Westralia* will be replaced by a more modern, but similar, double-hulled commercial tanker. This will be purchased in 2004 and converted locally to an auxiliary fleet oiler, entering service in 2006. It is, however, envisaged that *Success* will be replaced by a multi-purpose afloat support and sustainment capability next decade. In addition, it is expected that the major amphibious ships to be acquired will also be capable of providing limited afloat support to accompanying ships, in addition to their primary role of landing and supporting a force ashore.

Rather than landing all logistic support for land forces on arrival in theatre, it is expected that the ADF will embrace a joint 'seabasing' concept in the future, tailored to our specific requirements but on a more modest scale than that envisaged by the US. This would see the retention of material such as ammunition and fuel onboard ships until such time that it was required ashore. This would reduce the footprint ashore and as a result, the vulnerability of stores dumps ashore, reduce reliance on host-nation support, streamline logistics resupply and provide flexibility for rapid redeployment or manoeuvre operations in the littoral. Afloat support and amphibious ships, supported by strategic sealift capabilities, will have a key role to play in providing sea-based logistic support to forces deployed at sea and ashore in the littoral.

Given the realities of Australia's geostrategic situation and recent Government priorities, an afloat support capability is essential. This capability will provide flexible response options to ensure that surface combatants and joint task groups are able to successfully conduct operations from and at sea for the protection, projection and sustainment of ADF land and air elements, as well as for the conduct of broader maritime operations in support of Australia's national interests.

ADF amphibious capability: implications for Navy

(Issue 8, August 2004)

The Government's announcement in November 2003 that the Australian Defence Force (ADF) will acquire major amphibious and sealift ships should not be underestimated in the challenge it represents to the RAN and the ADF. Strategic

concepts, joint doctrine and tactics, and individual and collective training will all require development in order to maximise the potential advantages that an amphibious capability can provide. This applies not just to the amphibious fleet units, but to the entire RAN, as sea control is both a central tenet of a maritime strategy and a prerequisite to successful power projection and expeditionary operations using amphibious forces.

The Chief of Defence Force's (CDF's) direction to reinvigorate the Joint Amphibious Warfare Capability and to develop an Amphibious Ready Group, based on a high readiness Amphibious Ready Element, highlights the growing appreciation of the utility that a true Amphibious Warfare capability offers to Australia's strategic circumstances. Australia lies within an archipelagic region in which over 95% of cities and the population are in the littoral. The littoral may be defined as that area of the sea susceptible to influence or support from the land, and that area of the land susceptible to influence or support from the sea. Many strategists and historians have noted that the principal purpose of sea power is to *'determine or influence, and sometimes decide issues upon the land'*,⁵ for as the maritime theorist Corbett pointed out, because *'people live on land, decisive results can only be concluded on land'*.⁶ Liddell-Hart described an amphibious force as *'the best kind of fire-extinguisher because of its flexibility, reliability, logistic simplicity and relative economy.'*⁷

The Australian experience of amphibious operations is extensive, ranging from World War I to the present day. Our first national land operations were landings conducted in Rabaul and Gallipoli in 1914-15. Australian forces participated in raids and amphibious assaults in the Persian Gulf, Mediterranean and Pacific in World War II. RAN ships supported the Inchon landing in the Korean War, the INTERFET and UNTAET operations in East Timor, and riverine operations and the Royal Marines assault on the Al Faw Peninsula during the 2003 Iraq War. Most recently, Australian forces conducted a limited entry operation in the Solomon Islands.

Naval forces have a vital strategic ability to be used for political and diplomatic purposes, by being able to poise in international waters without appearing to directly interfere in another nation's affairs, yet able to act quickly when required.⁸ Freedom of navigation is enshrined in the Law of the Sea. Amphibious warfare provides a unique capability to exploit the maritime environment and achieve freedom of manoeuvre. Unlike land and air based forces, maritime forces can use the sea as an open medium by which to choose the

time and place of landing. They are not reliant on forward operating bases, permissive entry or host-nation support, making them highly responsive to changing circumstances. Such forces can directly influence the critical vulnerabilities of an adversary.

In terms of amphibious capability, a small, dedicated, high readiness force, trained and embarked, can threaten a vast area of the battlespace, achieving disproportionate effect for its size by representing a dilemma of uncertainty to an adversary. Such potential was most recently demonstrated in the 1991 Gulf War when an embarked US Marine Corps force diverted Iraqi units to defending the Kuwait shore, weakening the opposition to the real assault across the border of Saudi Arabia. Given the small scale of the ADF, it is crucial to achieve this kind of disproportionate strategic or operational effect, using a mobile tactical manoeuvre force, able to strike at will in time and space.

Sea Control, the freedom of action to use an area of sea for one's own purposes for a period of time or, if required, deny its use to an opponent,⁹ is central to amphibious operations. Sea Control must be obtained to reduce the risk to the embarked force and the high-cost amphibious assets. At the same time, amphibious operations can assist in gaining Sea Control, for instance by denying land areas adjoining strategic straits and waterways to hostile elements.

CDF has reiterated the requirement for the ADF to have a Navy capable of Sea Control and Power Projection and an Army that is smart, hard, trained and ready to be projected in this complex environment.¹⁰

The ADF must shift from a 'lift and lodge' philosophy, where Army units are deposited on a foreign shore for autonomous land operations, to a true manoeuvre warfare philosophy, using joint forces to exert influence in an uncertain littoral security environment.¹¹ The ADF must think of operations as a continuum, flowing seamlessly from initial deployment and lodgement, through redeployments, to the military end state, in order to achieve the operational and strategic effects articulated by Government. Single Service and joint doctrine and capabilities must reflect these shifts.

The Army must adopt a key role in our national maritime strategy.¹² As the Army continues to define its Amphibious Battlegroup and Combat Team concepts,¹³ a shift is required to a view that a sea-based amphibious landing force can exploit littoral manoeuvre to achieve a decisive effect. This idea is being explored in emerging Army concepts and may be linked to a

coordinated and concurrent airborne assault to achieve an overwhelming 'system shock' on an adversary.

The Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) will also have an integral role in the national maritime strategy, providing support to the ADF amphibious warfare capability, both during the sea movement and land-based phases. RAAF assets will provide essential functions including: Combat Air Patrols; a contribution to the maritime situational awareness through Airborne Early Warning and Control Aircraft; anti-submarine and anti-surface operations via Strike and Maritime Patrol Aircraft; and offensive support to land forces employing strike capable aircraft.

All elements of the RAN will have a role in maximising the utility of an amphibious warfare capability. The new specialist amphibious ships and their landing craft will need to operate with a large force of personnel, helicopters, armoured and other vehicles, as well as medical and headquarters capabilities. They will need to extend and maintain skills in multiple-aircraft flight deck operations while conducting concurrent landing craft well-dock operations, in all weathers and conditions, and in all threat environments. The future sealift capability, while not purpose built for amphibious warfare, will contribute to the amphibious mission by ferrying troops and equipment.

Surface combatants and submarines have a critical role in establishing Sea Control around an amphibious task force and assisting in projecting force ashore. Future combatants like the Air Warfare Destroyer will be crucial to this task and their weapon, sensor and combat data systems must be optimised for littoral operations. Naval fire support systems, potentially including enhanced range gun munitions and land attack missiles, will be essential to both shaping operations and the early phases of the landing while land-based fire support systems are deploying. While the ADF does not plan to operate against defended entry points, experience on South Georgia Island in the 1982 Falklands War demonstrated the threat that even an infantry section armed with light support weapons can pose to a landing force, and the utility of naval fire support in its neutralisation. Surface combatants must be able to protect the task force they are escorting from land, air and maritime threats, be they missile, torpedo, electronic or direct-fire attacks. Submarines will contribute essential reconnaissance and surveillance information as well as interdicting hostile maritime forces sent to interfere with operations.

Mine warfare and clearance diving forces will

have a vital role in ensuring freedom of manoeuvre, from conducting clandestine beach reconnaissance to the clearance of mines and obstacles in the beach approaches. Hydrographic forces are also redeveloping the tactical application of their skills in providing 'rapid environmental assessment' of the hydrography, oceanography and meteorology of the littoral zone. Patrol boats may also have a role in assisting the protection of amphibious forces in the inshore littoral, including riverine operations as demonstrated by coalition forces during the recent Iraq War. None of these skills are new to the RAN. Our hydrographic, mine warfare and patrol boat forces earned a high reputation in World War II in the South-West Pacific for their support to Allied amphibious operations against Japanese forces. RAN surface combatants provided essential anti-aircraft defence and naval gunfire support to most of these operations. These hard earned skills were allowed to decline post-war as the focus on littoral warfare shifted to a focus on Cold War anti-submarine warfare as a result of the growing Soviet submarine threat in the Pacific.

In terms of doctrine, the RAN needs to continue to develop an understanding of what it means to wield a landing force as a maritime weapon. A broad understanding of how Army conducts land warfare will be crucial to developing joint concepts, tactics and doctrine. RAN amphibious doctrine must be developed in coordination with Army, RAAF and joint concepts such as Manoeuvre Operations in the Littoral Environment, Expeditionary Air Warfare and Ship to Objective Manoeuvre. Developing the intimate understanding of each other's domains, between the Commander of each other's domains, the Commander of the Amphibious Task Force and the Commander of the Landing Force and their staffs, is an essential factor in the command and control of amphibious operations and training. Exercising and habitual working relationships are the keys to achieving this.

Individual training will embrace amphibious warfare skillsets, flowing through warfare officer, logistic and staff training, and introducing Amphibious Warfare elements into many individual RAN sailor and officer courses. Collective training will also evolve. A revised approach to managing joint and single Service training is being developed. In order to provide the directed Amphibious Ready Element at short notice, and ultimately the Amphibious Ready Group, a much greater degree of lower tactical level, integrated training is required. This will ensure personnel in the ships, landing craft, land force, helicopters and headquarters have the

intimate understanding of each other's requirements to be able to deploy to meet short notice contingencies such as evacuations and interventions in non-permissive or hostile environments.

The enhancement of Australia's Amphibious Warfare capability, as part of a balanced force, is a very significant one for the ADF and the RAN. New thinking, new and relearnt skills, and a degree of joint cooperation, never seen before and reflecting the ADF's vision of a seamless force, will be required.

90 years on: Rabaul and Sydney/Emden, 1914

(Issue 10, September 2004)

This year marks the 90th anniversary of the RAN's baptism of fire both at sea and ashore during the period September-November 1914. Just three years after the new fleet unit arrived in Australia the RAN made a substantial and significant contribution to Imperial security in the Pacific region. The diverse events that took place during this short period, although now largely forgotten in the annals of Australia's military history, formed the cornerstone on which the RAN's enduring tradition of achievement has since been built.

At the outbreak of war in August 1914 the Australian fleet consisted of the battlecruiser HMAS *Australia*, the light cruisers HMAS *Melbourne*, HMAS *Sydney* and HMAS *Encounter*, the small cruiser HMAS *Pioneer*, the destroyers HMAS *Parramatta*, HMAS *Yarra* and HMAS *Warrego*, and the submarines HMAS *AE1* and HMAS *AE2*. The Commonwealth also possessed some old gunboats and torpedo boats from the colonial navies. The permanent strength of the RAN in August 1914 comprised 3800 personnel, of whom some 850 were on loan from the Royal Navy. The naval reserve forces provided another 1646 personnel.

The first task of the RAN following the declaration of war was to seize or neutralise German territories in the Pacific stretching from the Caroline and Marshall Islands in the north to New Britain and German New Guinea in the south. The British War Office considered it essential that Vice Admiral von Spee's East Asiatic Squadron of the Imperial German Navy should be denied the use of German facilities and, if possible, brought to battle. Based in Tsingtao in China, the squadron comprised the armoured cruisers SMS *Scharnhorst* and SMS *Gneisenau* and the light cruisers SMS *Emden*, SMS *Nürnberg* and SMS *Leipzig*. The German possessions

represented a formidable network capable of providing intelligence and logistic support to Spee.

On 30 August 1914, in Australia's first coalition operation, *Australia* and *Melbourne*, in company with HMS *Psyche*, HMS *Philomel*, HMS *Pyramus* and the French cruiser *Montcalm*, escorted a force of 1400 New Zealand troops to occupy German Samoa. Faced with this force the colony surrendered without a fight. *Melbourne* was then ordered to the German territory of Nauru to destroy its wireless station. On 9 September *Melbourne* landed 25 personnel without opposition, arrested the German administrator and destroyed the already disabled wireless equipment. This lack of opposition, however, was not to last.

Australia's major effort was now directed at seizing German interests in New Guinea, particularly New Britain. To achieve this, during August a volunteer force known as the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force (ANMEF), consisting of a battalion of 500 naval reservists and time-expired Royal Navy seamen and a battalion of 1000 infantry, was hastily raised and trained. As the whereabouts of Spee's squadron was still unknown, strict orders were given that the expedition was not to proceed without a strong naval escort. On 7 September the force, consisting of *Australia*, *Sydney*, *Encounter*, *Parramatta*, *Warrego*, and *Yarra*, *AE1*, *AE2*, a store-ship, three colliers, and the transport *Berrima* (with the ANMEF embarked), sailed for Rabaul and Australia's first joint operation. Intelligence indicated that two enemy wireless stations were operating in the area, one inland from Kabakaul at Bitapaka and the other at Herbertshöhe.¹⁴ Consequently, two parties of naval reservists were ordered to capture them. The initial landings took place at dawn on 11 September 1914.

Under the command of Lieutenant Bowen, RAN, 25 sailors landed at Kabakaul to seize Bitapaka. They immediately struck inland to secure their objective and a scouting party, having deviated from the main road, soon found itself directly in the rear of the German first line of defence. The German in charge was shot and wounded and, after a short skirmish, ordered his natives to surrender. The captive was then directed to march ahead of the main force and announce in German that 800 troops had landed and that his comrades should surrender. Bowen's deception was rewarded, for word filtered back to the commander of the German defences that a superior force had landed. Believing himself outnumbered, he consequently ordered a

withdrawal of his forces inland, resulting in the break down of the entire scheme of German coastal defence. This left only Bitapaka's defenders offering active resistance.

Bowen called for reinforcements but continued to push on towards his objective. His party encountered a series of enemy trenches and came under fire from snipers positioned in the trees. It was here that Australia suffered its first casualties of the war.¹⁵ At 1000 reinforcements arrived under the command of Lieutenant Hill, RNR of *Yarra*. Hill's group comprised 59 men drawn from the crews of the Australian destroyers, variously armed with rifles, pistols and cutlasses. Bowen and Hill swiftly agreed on the next phase of the operation and began outflanking the enemy. However, as the new advance began Bowen was wounded by a sniper, leaving Hill to take command, whilst at the same time calling for additional reinforcements. At 1300 a company of naval reinforcements arrived under the command of Lieutenant Commander Elwell, RN who immediately took command, ordering Hill to take charge of the flanking movement on the left whilst he took charge on the right. Elwell was killed leading a bayonet charge on the German defences, leaving Hill to continue the attack with Lieutenant Gillam, RANR, whose timely arrival with a small band of reinforcements carried the day.

The now overwhelmed defenders reluctantly agreed to the unconditional surrender both of the German forces and the wireless station. Lieutenant Bond, RANR, was ordered to advance and secure the wireless station. Following several small skirmishes, during which more casualties were incurred, the last German resistance was quelled.¹⁶ For his efforts Bond became the first Australian decorated during World War I, receiving the Distinguished Service Order.

The following day Herbertshöhe and Rabaul were secured without opposition, following a bombardment by *Encounter*, and the remaining German forces in the field subsequently surrendered. Within a few weeks most of the German territories in the area, including Bougainville and the Admiralty Islands, had been occupied without further opposition, at a cost of six dead and four wounded.¹⁷ The success of the operation was marred by the disappearance of *AEI* on 14 September while patrolling the narrow St George's Strait between New Britain and New Ireland - the first RAN unit lost in wartime. No trace of the submarine or its 35 crew has ever been found.

The next major challenge for the RAN was the apparent disappearance of Spee's squadron into the vastness of the Pacific. This, coupled with

news that the German raiders *Königsberg* and *Emden* were at large in the Indian Ocean, caused grave concern for the safety of the troop transports assembling in Australian and New Zealand ports to convey the ANZAC expedition to Europe. Tensions eased on 30 September when news was received that Spee's cruisers had raided Tahiti on 22 September, thus placing them well to the east. This allowed the Australian and New Zealand troops to commence embarkation and proceed to their convoy assembly point at Albany, Western Australia.

During this period other vessels of the RAN were steadily engaged in capturing or detaining German merchant shipping in the Bismarck Archipelago, home waters and in Australian ports. Whilst this important work was taking place a decision was made to dispatch *Melbourne* and *Sydney* to Western Australia to counter the threat building in the Indian Ocean, and form part of the escort for the first ANZAC convoy assembling at Albany.

Of particular concern was the light cruiser *Emden* under the command of Captain von Müller. In just six weeks Müller had captured or sunk almost 100,000 tons of merchant shipping, destroyed oil tanks at Madras and, in a daring raid on Penang, sunk the Russian light cruiser *Zemtchug* and the French torpedo-boat destroyer *Mosquet*. With *Emden* at large in the Indian Ocean the scene was now set for the RAN's first epic sea engagement.

On 1 November 1914 the first ANZAC convoy, comprising *Melbourne*, *Sydney*, HMS *Minotaur*, the Japanese battlecruiser *Ibuki*, and 38 transports, sailed from Albany for the Middle East. On the morning of 9 November the convoy was in the vicinity of the Cocos Islands when it intercepted distress signals indicating that a 'strange warship' was approaching the islands. *Sydney*, under the command of Captain Glossop, RN, was immediately detached to investigate and within a few hours sighted *Emden* close to Cocos Island. Müller soon realised that he would have to fight and, leaving behind the shore party that had landed to destroy the international cable and wireless station, steamed out to meet the enemy.

Sydney was faster than *Emden* and possessed superior firepower, but Müller opened the engagement with rapid and accurate long-range fire, attempting to inflict as much damage as possible at the outset. All of *Sydney*'s casualties occurred in the opening stages of the battle, from hits to the control platform and the range finder located on the upper bridge. Using his ship's superior speed and armament, Glossop soon caused hits to be scored on *Emden*. After forty

minutes *Emden's* fire control positions, forward funnel and foremast were gone, and the ship was holed all over and burning fiercely fore and aft. Realising that *Emden* was at *Sydney's* mercy, Müller ran his ship onto the reef at North Keeling Island in order to save the lives of his surviving crew. Glossop then broke off the engagement to pursue and overhaul the *Emden's* collier *Buresk*, which had appeared during the action, but the crew scuttled their ship before it could be seized.

On returning to North Keeling Island Glossop observed that *Emden* had not struck its ensign to indicate capitulation. Confused signals were exchanged between the two vessels, but the ensign remained flying until after *Sydney* fired a further two salvos at the wreck. The ensign was consequently struck, heralding the end of Australia's first and decisive naval engagement. As a result of the destruction of *Emden* the Indian Ocean was freed from the threat of *Spee's* squadron.¹⁸

Ninety years after the events of late 1914 the RAN is still participating in joint and coalition maritime operations, in the Pacific and further afield. As in 1914, the RAN is a comparatively small force, yet it is now acknowledged as a world class medium-power navy and a diverse force multiplier whose presence is welcomed in the pursuit of world-wide maritime security. While the threat of enemy cruisers preying on Imperial merchant shipping and troop convoys is now only a dim memory, the RAN remains a significant contributor to security in the Pacific region.

¹ H Feakes, *White Ensign, Southern Cross: A history of the Navy in Australia*, Ure Smith, Sydney, 1951, p. 214.

² D Stevens (ed) *The Australian Centenary History of Defence - Volume III: The Royal Australian Navy*, Oxford University Press, South Melbourne, 2001, p. 65.

³ A Twomey, *Federal Parliament's changing role in treaty making and external affairs*, Research Paper 15 1999-2000, Parliament of Australia, 2000, p. 8.

⁴ J McCarthy, *Australia and Imperial Defence, 1918-39: A study in air and sea power*, University of Queensland Press, 1976, p. 12.

⁵ Edward L Beach, quoted in Clark G Reynolds, *Command of the Sea*, London, 1976, p. 1.

⁶ J.D. Gibson, 'Sir Julian Corbett on Amphibious Operations', *Marine Corps Gazette*, March 1998, p. 69.

⁷ Sir Basil Liddell-Hart, quoted in ADDP3.2 - *Amphibious Operations*, Defence Publishing Service, Canberra, 2003, pp. 3-6.

⁸ Royal Australian Navy, *Australian Maritime Doctrine*, Canberra 2000, p. 43.

⁹ *ibid*, p. 39.

¹⁰ General Peter Cosgrove, Transcript of Speech to Senior Leadership Recall Day, 31 July 2003.

¹¹ Sea Power Centre - Australia, 'The New Maritime Security Environment', *Semaphore*, Issue 13, November 2003.

¹² Department of Defence, *Defence 2000: Our Future Defence Force*, Canberra, 2000, Section 6.7.

¹³ Director General Future Land Warfare, Army Development Concept for Entry from the Air and Sea, 24 July 2002.

¹⁴ It was subsequently discovered that both were located at Bitapaka - one was the primary station and the other a secondary station.

¹⁵ Able Seaman C.V. Williams and Captain B.C.A. Pockley (Australian Army Medical Corps) were mortally wounded and died later that day. Williams has the distinction of being the first Australian wounded in action in WWI.

¹⁶ For reasons now unclear, apart from a single machine-gun section, the ANMEF infantry company took no part in the fighting in Rabaul.

¹⁷ Able Seaman J. Walker (enlisted as Courtney but re-buried under his real name by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission) and Able Seaman H.W. Street were killed in action. Able Seaman R. Moffatt was mortally wounded and died the next day. Lieutenant R.G. Bowen, Able Seaman D. Skillen, Able Seaman T. Sullivan and Able Seaman J.H. Tonks were wounded but subsequently recovered.

¹⁸ *Königsberg* had withdrawn into the Rufigi River in East Africa in late September 1914 to repair serious engine defects, and was blockaded by Allied cruisers, including HMAS *Pioneer*, until destroyed by the monitors HMS *Severn* and HMS *Mersey* on 11 July 1915.

BOOK REVIEWS

Spies for Nimitz: Joint Military Intelligence in the Pacific War

Jeffrey M Moore

Naval Institute Press, 2004

Hardcover, xxvii, 300pp

RRP US\$29.95

Swift, Silent and Deadly: Marine Amphibious Reconnaissance in the Pacific, 1942-45

Bruce F Myers

Naval Institute Press, 2004

Hardcover, xix, 167pp

RRP US\$24.26

Both of these publications deal with intelligence in the Pacific theatre during the Second World War. The title of the first book however is somewhat misleading, for it is not a book about spies. *Spies for Nimitz: Joint Military Intelligence in the Pacific War* tells the story of the establishment and functioning of the Joint Intelligence Centre Pacific Oceans Area (JICPOA). In particular it examines five Pacific amphibious operations and how intelligence supported and impacted on the planning and conduct of these operations. The five operations were the Marshalls, the Marianas, Peleliu, Iwo Jima and Okinawa. *Spies for Nimitz* also touches on the planned invasion of Japan, but unfortunately this is a fairly short section.

The subject chosen by Jeffrey Moore is an important one both from an historical and contemporary perspective. Public examinations on the performance of intelligence organisations are by their very nature historical. Governments are loath to expose the inner workings and external sources of their intelligence agencies in anything but a historical context and even then this is done reluctantly.

Prior to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour, American intelligence was single service focused and at best dysfunctional. Following the Japanese attack came the realisation that the existing organisations were insufficient to support the planned trans-Pacific amphibious advance. What was needed was an organisation which could collect, interpret and analyse information from all sources: aerial photography, signals intelligence, hydrographic information, topographic information, captured documents, POW interrogations and open sources, and present that information to the operational planners in time for

it to be incorporated into the proposed plans. In essence this is what JICPOA did.

In examining the role of JICPOA in the Pacific War, with each campaign the author presents a strategic background to the operation, and then examines the intelligence operation which supported the assault and how the intelligence assisted both the strategic planning of the operation and the actual conduct of the assault. Finally the author draws a number of conclusions about the success or shortcomings of the intelligence provided for these operations. In addition to these case studies the author provides a glimpse of a further operation. This final case study briefly covers the operations associated with the planned invasion of Japan.

The second book, *Swift, Silent and Deadly: Marine Amphibious Reconnaissance in the Pacific, 1942-45*, deals with a related subject: the collection of beach intelligence in support of amphibious operations. In particular it examines the establishment and development of US Marine reconnaissance units. These units were first formed in December 1941 at Quantico in Virginia. The primary mission of these Marines was to collect intelligence on potential landing sites.

Bruce Myers tells the story of the development of these units, the equipment they used and the various operations undertaken. Not only did they make landings on more than two hundred enemy-held beaches but their superior combat skills and training were also used to take difficult or important positions or conduct independent operations - functions not originally envisaged.

As with *Spies for Nimitz*, *Swift, Silent and Deadly* examines a number of amphibious operations. In this the two books complement each other very well. Whilst *Spies for Nimitz* examines these operations at a strategic level, *Swift, Silent and Deadly* tends to concentrate on the operations, describing the missions and associated events. In this way readers see not only how the information was collected but also how it was applied.

Jeffrey Moore finished off his study on JICPOA with a number of conclusions. Some of these are blindingly obvious, such as 'intelligence operations are subject to the hazards of war just as combat operations are'. One of the more interesting conclusions is that JICPOA 'never provided worthless intelligence for any campaign, just insufficient intelligence or half the picture'. In part the author appears to be saying that JICPOA

was not wrong, but not always right. What is clear however is that JICPOA did perform a valuable function and generally satisfied the demands and expectations of its consumers.

Both books are very readable and well researched. They make an important contribution to the historiography of the Pacific War as they deal with significant subjects not previously covered. Both *Spies for Nimitz* and *Swift, Silent and Deadly* will be of interest and use not only to military and intelligence historians but also to contemporary practitioners for their insights into what intelligence can and can't do, for many of the lessons learnt so painfully in the Pacific from 1941 to 1945 are being re-learned today.

*Reviewed by Lieutenant Commander Joe Straczek
RANR*

A Furnace Afloat

Joe Jackson
Cassell Military, London, 2003
Hardcover, 269pp
RRP \$49.95

Reading one's first story of a ship sinking and the crew's subsequent ordeal in the boats is at once fascinating and awful. To go through the counting of the assets, the attempts at navigation, the ordeals of hunger and thirst means that one is gripped by a sort of vicarious interest, at once glad not to be going through it but analysing oneself as to how one would cope. But it must be admitted that these stories are much the same. Will they win through or won't they? Who will be the first to go mad and plunge over the side to the ubiquitous monsters waiting below? And at what point will a seaman start looking with a little anticipation at the larger people in the boat? And so if one is familiar with these harrowing tales, does yet another have anything to offer?

A Furnace Afloat is a little different, at least for its statistics. In 1866, after a voyage from New York to the Pacific, three boats escaped from the burning clipper *Hornet*, and subsequently set out for Hawaii. Of the 31 crew and passengers who saw the graceful sailing ship go down, only 15 made it to land. In the two quarterboats and the longboat - the latter being the only one to survive - they were to endure 43 days at sea, travel 4,300 miles, and in that time exist on only 10 days of full rations and what they could gather from the ocean. Their hunger drove them to devour flying fish raw, their clothes and what leather fittings the boats possessed, and of course, brought them to the edge of that custom of the sea which has been the subject of many a wry quip - cannibalism.

They survived water spouts, the sun, and each other, but only just: another day might well have seen their end.

Author Joe Jackson has chosen to create a semi-fictional account of the tale. He puts words into the characters' mouths and thoughts into their heads. At the same time he injects some 20th century observations which go a little far: would the subject of class differences have been made so much of then, especially amongst an American crew? There is some scientific analysis of their hunger, and some psychological study of their thoughts. Nevertheless his approach is both capable and insightful: we experience the full detail of the ordeal and get plenty of time to ponder both the depths and the shallowness of human beings under intense stress. Seventeen illustrations provide further detail. The voyage - longer than Bligh's epic effort - was, Jackson tells us, to become a famous and much discussed case when the survivors eventually made land. They were to become the object of considerable interest and speculation, and with the arrival of Samuel Langhorne Clemens, in his early days of using the penname Mark Twain, they were to be much read about in newspapers both in America and abroad.

For those who even sometimes go down to the sea in ships, such a tale is at least once essential reading. Captain Bligh's story involves more skill in survival and, for me, the character of that great sailor is much more fascinating than the men of the *Hornet*, a much more obscure story that deservedly now sees the light.

Reviewed by Lieutenant Tom Lewis, OAM RAN

Bismarck: The Story behind the Destruction of the Pride of Hitler's Navy

David J Bercuson and Holger H Herwig
Pimlico, London, 2003
Softcover, viii, 385pp
RRP \$42.00

The *Bismarck's* sortie into the Atlantic in May 1941 was an occasion of high drama to which has been devoted many books, articles, documentaries, a film and a hit record. This book has arisen from the collaboration of the authors with documentary-maker James Cameron. I had looked forward to reading a new account by these two scholars, using a wide range of primary and secondary sources. I was to be disappointed.

The book tells the story of Operation *Rheinübung* in some detail. It gives background on the major players and discusses the design of the ships as well giving the details of the sortie, the dispositions made to counter it and the

resulting battles.

But it is a most irritating book to read. The gaffes are many and unnecessary. On one occasion we are told that *Bismarck* is nearly three football fields long and a football field wide. Apart from the inadequacy of the football field as a standard of naval measurement, a battleship with 3:1 length to beam ratio would be an innovative design indeed, but hardly a successful one.

The authors are confused about radar. We are informed that *Bismarck's* FuMo23 sets 'could only detect radar emissions, they could not locate enemy ships whose radar was turned off'. The FuMo23 or Seetakt had considerable limitations but was a transmitting radar set, not just an emission detector. In one place the British Type 284 is referred to as a search radar, elsewhere, correctly, as a fire control set.

They are also confused about intelligence - that a report rated B3 was 'about as unreliable as could be' is just plain wrong. When they try to explain how the system worked they not only refute this statement but get the explanation completely wrong stating that the intelligence reports were given a letter grading from 'A (completely reliable) to E (reliability unknown) and given numbers from 1 (completely reliable) to 5 (reliability unknown) as well.' Actually, the letters graded reliability of the report when measured against other intelligence, while the numbers graded the reliability of the source. But by any standard a B3 rated report can hardly be dismissed as unreliable.

The flaunting of conventions grates. Words usually capitalised are treated cavalierly: *imperial* Japanese Navy, *county-class*, *short* Sunderland. I wonder what a long Sunderland looks like. Gun calibres normally measured in millimetres are given in inches: 20mm becomes .75-inch and 37mm becomes 1.5-inch. Ship dimensions are eventually refined from football fields to yards, rather than the standard feet or metres.

Nor is there a shortage of hyperbole. We are told that two storms, one of the natural kind and the other of the soon to sortie *Bismarck*, 'would determine the fate of the Battle of the Atlantic' (p. 11). That was determined by a complex permutation of factors over a period of years, not the sortie of a single surface combatant. The Denmark Strait action is elevated grandly to the 'The Battle of Iceland'. But my favourite is the observation that, when on neutrality patrol, the battleship USS *New York* reached a position 100 miles from where *Bismarck* had been four days previously: 'those four days had been the margin of the *New York's* survival. They also allowed the United States seven more months of peace.' In

other words *Bismarck* had been nowhere near *New York*. This is just the silliest of a number of attempts to bring the United States into the story, presumably with an eye to sales in that country.

One is left wondering whether anyone read the manuscript after the first draft. Discussing Lancelot Holland's handling of the British cruisers at the Cape Spartivento action, in one paragraph Somerville is referred to as in command of Force H (which the authors refer to as the Mediterranean Fleet); in the next it is Cunningham. Five lines later the command has reverted to Somerville and eight lines further Cunningham has the job. On another occasion *Prince of Wales* is mentioned as leaving Scapa Flow when she was already well to the north with *Hood*.

The photographs are adequate but an image of *Repulse* and *Renown* at firing practice in the 1920s is of doubtful relevance. The four maps are inadequate and, with one exception, are taken from Robert J Winklareth's *The Bismarck Chase: New Light on a Famous Engagement*.

This book is a retelling of a well known story, and not very well. There are far better accounts of the *Bismarck* drama. It is not recommended.

Reviewed by Ric Pelvin

Canada without Armed Forces?

Douglas L Bland (Ed)

Claxton Paper No. 4

SPS, Queen's University, 2003

Softcover, viii, 127pp

C\$20 plus P&H

Comparisons are often made between Australia and Canada and in the case of the armed forces it is for good reason. Of a similar size, with similar equipment and sharing a strong alliance with the United States, Australia and Canada can learn much from each other in the defence area. Canada is still trying to make the transition from the Cold War model and the belief that there will be a new era of peace and stability. This was emphasised by the Canadian Government's response to the Senate Committee on National Security and Defence in 2002 that 'the key principles of the 1994 Defence White Paper continue to be relevant in today's uncertain international security environment'.

Canada without Armed Forces? was published in late 2003 and edited by Douglas Bland, Chair of Defence Management Studies in the School of Policy Studies at Queen's University. The book deals well with what could easily be quite a dry subject. As with other books of this kind there are

a number of motherhood statements but there are also a number of concrete examples that can be applied directly to the Australian experience. Like a teenager always obsessed with the latest fad, Canada has made a number of 'interesting' choices over the years, not all of which have worked but from which a number of lessons have been learned. Not the least of these was the unification of the Canadian Forces into a 'seamless' force, an idea that has been floated for the ADF. So while it might be easy to dismiss the Canadian experience and focus more on our great and powerful friends there is much that we can learn from a culture and economy that is more similar to ours than it is different. The book's five chapters examine a raft of issues including personnel, equipment, and strategic policy and includes a summary of major findings as well as a look at an alternate future. From the outset the authors acknowledge that it is easy to fall into the trap of thinking of capabilities only as equipment, a problem that they successfully avoid throughout.

In 'The Fundamentals of National Defence are Not Sound', Douglas Bland makes the very relevant point that only the US has the means and the will to hold ready a full range of military might on the scale required for global warfare. Other states are making more limited choices and those choices are conditioned by the assumptions that their armed forces will most often be called to join stabilisation campaigns in support of international order. There a number of other relevant points made throughout, particularly the pressure on Canadian forces to provide niche capabilities. Just to prove that no one is immune from buzzwords, the author rightly points out that Canadian forces are already niche forces with just enough diverse capability to meet the Government's basic responsibilities for defending Canada and cooperating with the US. What this can mean is that niche roles based on one Service can have negative effects on domestic security. While peacekeeping is the most common form of military deployment for Canada and Australia it is important to keep in mind that this provides no credible guide to defence policy, force development or military doctrine.

The book also examines the Canadian military's personnel crisis and as with a number of small to medium countries, Canada faces a personnel imbalance between old and young. Christopher Ankerson rightly points out that today one soldier properly equipped can do what 3 soldiers did 10 years ago but one soldier can't be in three places at once. A good point is made and one that is worth considering here is that *'the portion of Canadian Society traditionally*

expected to be available for military service holds different values than earlier generations.' Attitudes towards military service and career paths are changing, fewer people want the cradle to grave career.

In 'Capital and the Future Force Crisis', there is an examination of Canada's physical and technological rust-out. Like Australia, Canadian Forces are facing bloc obsolescence but on a far greater scale. The increased cost of maintaining aging equipment is similar to the Australian experience with the F-111. The examples used in the book are the Canadian C-130 and Sea King helicopter fleets. While the figures are not so exciting they do paint an interesting picture and there are lessons to be learned from them, particularly when the equation includes factors such as the total replacement costs including simulators, spare parts and training as well as considering inflation and exchange rates when replacing or enhancing capabilities.

The 'Gathering Defence Policy Crisis' looks at the possible collapse of the future force due to 'borrowing' from it to support current contingencies. Like Australia, Canada is also due for a defence review sometime in 2004-05. *Canada without armed forces?* recommends a targeted review, rather than a lot of motherhood statements, something Australia might want to think about. The final chapter is a summary of major findings and starts with a quote from the Prime Minister: 'We treat the military very well. They are very well equipped', giving an indication of the divide between the government and the military. Alternative futures are also examined in this book: not the usual fantasy of what the world will look like in 2050, more like how some prudent decisions could halt the imminent decline of the Canadian Forces (simple measures like channelling money back into the operational end).

While the actual examples are not always relevant to the Australian experience there are valuable lessons that can be learned. The book takes the system of systems approach and examines some of the deficiencies in the fundamental systems. If nothing else this book makes one realise that while Australia is not the biggest and the best in terms of defence policy and funding we are in better shape than Canada. So while we should be looking to the future we should be doing it with the realisation that our cup is half full.

This is a well thought out book that in the main avoids pointing out the obvious and provides figures to go with its facts while offering alternatives. Perhaps this is an exercise that the Australian Strategic Policy Institute should be

thinking about.

Available from the School of Policy Studies, Queen's University, Kingston Ontario K7L 3N6, Canada

Reviewed by Cos Cameron

West Coast Support Group: Task Group 96.8 Korea 1950-1953

By M.P. Cocker

Whittles Publishing, 2003

Softcover, xvi, 163pp

RRP US\$27.50

Task Group 96.8, also known as the West Coast Support Group (WCSG), consisted of the ships of the nations (other than the United States) that contributed to the United Nations effort to liberate South Korea. Initially the number of Commonwealth vessels assigned to the Task Group outnumbered US vessels, as the twenty-two ships of the Far Eastern Fleet were committed to the conflict. Operational areas were divided between the US fleet, which operated to the east of the Korean isthmus, and Task Group 96.8 to the west.

Eventually ships from the Royal Navy, Royal Australian Navy, Royal Canadian Navy, Royal New Zealand Navy, Royal Netherlands Navy, Royal Thai Navy, Republic of France Navy and Republic of Colombia Navy contributed to operations in the Korean Theatre as part of the WCSG. Reference to the Danish East Asiatic Company illustrates the detail that Cocker has achieved in his research. The passenger ship *Jutlandi*, converted for use as a hospital ship, was operated by the Danish Red Cross and served three tours, treating more than 15,000 patients.

The Task Group was largely employed in providing support to land forces through air strikes and combat air patrols by embarked aircraft and naval gunfire from the various escorts. Patrol of inshore areas to prevent infiltration by North Korean forces was also a prime role.

Cocker maintains that the North Korean naval force did not pose a significant threat and that as a result the Korean War was largely a non-maritime war. However, the contributions of naval forces and the amphibious assault at Inchon show that although this was not a war fought at sea, significant support was provided from the sea. This certainly provides a number of important lessons about the influence a maritime force can have, particularly in our region.

The book consists of a profile of each class and a picture of each ship. Cocker has attempted where possible to ensure that the picture is from

the Korean War period. The profile consists of a concise operational summary of what the ship (or ships of that class) achieved in its service. I would not recommend this book as a work of general interest, but I would recommend it highly as a well researched reference piece for the naval enthusiast and historian alike.

Reviewed by Lieutenant Stewart Müller, RAN



The Australian Naval Institute

ABN: 45 988 480 239

www.navalinstitute.com.au

PO Box 29, Red Hill ACT 2603, AUSTRALIA

Phone: +61 2 6295 0056, Fax: +61 2 6295 3367, email: a_n_i@bigpond.com

BECOME A FRIEND/SUPPORTER OF THE ANI

The companies listed below have demonstrated their support for the aims of the Australian Naval Institute by becoming Friends or Supporters of the ANI. The Institute is grateful for their continued assistance.

Raytheon Australia

**LOPAC, SAAB Systems Australia, Australian Defence Credit Union
Thales Underwater Systems, P&O Maritime Services, Jacobs Sverdrup**

The Institute is also grateful to the Sea Power Centre-Australia for its corporate subscription, allowing the *Journal* to be sent to all RAN ships, establishments and cadet units. For more details on how to become a friend/supporter of the Australian Naval Institute, please contact Captain Gerry Christian, RAN, telephone (02) 62652941 (bh), gerry.christian@defence.gov.au.

MEMBERSHIP/SUBSCRIPTION RATES

	1 Year	2 Years	3 Years
Individual			
Undergraduate student rate*	\$30		
Australian/New Zealand*	\$45	\$85	\$125
Asia†	\$60	\$115	\$170
Rest of World†	\$67	\$129	\$191
Institutional			
Australian/New Zealand*	\$60	\$110	\$160
Asia†	\$75	\$140	\$205
Rest of World†	\$82	\$154	\$226

* Please note that no GST is payable in relation to ANI membership

† Includes air mail postage

Journal of the Australian Naval Institute on CDROM

The Australian Naval Institute is pleased to announce that a complete set of the *Journal* (1975-2003) is now available on CD ROM for \$99. Sets can be ordered using the membership application form below.

Tax Invoice

I apply for membership of the ANI in the category of student/individual/institutional (select one).

Name: _____

Address: _____

Post Code: _____

1. A cheque made out to the Australian Naval Institute is enclosed, OR
2. Please debit my Bankcard/Mastercard/Visa for \$AUD _____ for a _____ year subscription
AND/OR \$AUD _____ for _____ sets of the *Journal of the Australian Naval Institute* on CD ROM.
No. _____

Name of cardholder (PLEASE PRINT): _____

Expiry date: _____

Receipt Required: Yes/No

I agree to abide by the Constitution and by-laws of the Institute.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Forward to: The Business Manager, Australian Naval Institute, PO Box 29, Red Hill ACT 2603, AUSTRALIA

