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AUSTRALIAN NAVAL INSTITUTE INC

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- a. To encourage and promote the advancement of knowledge related to the Navy and the maritime profession,
- b. to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas concerning subjects related to the Navy and the maritime profession, and
- c. to publish a journal.

The Institute is self-supporting and non-profit-making. All publications of the Institute will stress that the authors express their own views and opinions are not necessarily those of the Department of Defence, the Chief of Naval Staff or the Institute. The aim is to encourage discussion, dissemination of information, comment and opinion and the advancement of professional knowledge concerning naval and maritime matters.

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May 1991

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Cover Photograph:

*HMAS Success in the
Gulf, 1990.*

From the President

The Western Allies fought their war against Iraq using concepts and equipment developed for a war in Europe. If there was such a clash in prospect, the results achieved in the Gulf would be very encouraging. Western tactics and training proved themselves, Western weapon systems performed as the manufacturers said they would and Western command, control and intelligence systems ensured that General Schwartzkoff had a better view of his forces and those of the enemy than has ever been possible before.

Some might expect that the victory, the demise of the Warsaw Pact and the decline of the Soviet Union as a super power would simplify Western military planning. It hasn't. While governments accept that they must continue to be prepared to use their armed forces they no longer are clear about who, where, why and with whom they might have to fight.

Generally it was the impetus of the Warsaw Pact threat that ensured that the highest standards of training and technology were available to Western defence forces. But in future the situation in Europe will not justify such an effort and the clamour for a peace dividend is making spending on defence more difficult to justify. In this environment and with high technology weapon systems available in the world market place, the technological advantage the West has been able to rely upon will be more difficult to maintain.

The RAN has had considerable success convincing the Government of the merits of its proposal for new submarines and destroyers. Success has been possible because senior naval staff in Canberra have a good understanding of Australia's defence environment and its defence and strategic interests, and have been able to convince Government that the Navy can support these interests. If their success is to be repeated in the future those who aspire to senior rank will need to be equally as skilful and knowledgeable.

With this in mind and with the financial assistance provided by the Friends of the ANI and the support of HMAS WATSON, the Institute organised a seminar on the "Gulf War and Maritime Power and its Place in the New World Order" on 16 May 1991.

The Seminar was most successful and I thank everyone who made it so. This edition of the Journal contains three seminar papers which are relevant to the sanctions and war phases of the Gulf contingency. The next issue will discuss the place of maritime power in the new world order. I hope you will find them as interesting as I did.

To confirm the success of the 'Friends of the Institute' coterie, I am happy to advise you that two more corporations, Bofors Electronics Pacific and Ansett Australia, are now members of this élite group of supporters

Sincerely

Ian Callaway

From the Editor

In the aftermath of the Gulf War there has been considerable review of the Maritime and Land Force strategies. Some of this thought is discernable at the various seminars proliferating the realms of academia. This issue of the ANI Journal incorporates two articles representing lectures given at the ANI Seminar in Sydney in May this year. The August ANI Journal will hopefully contain the remainder of the lectures delivered at that Seminar.

Readers will note that the number of pages in the Journal is somewhat less than in previous issues. This has been due to a change in font size and style. I would appreciate any feedback concerning the change in style as one of my objectives is to deliver a Journal with as professional a presentation as possible at a minimum cost. Reader satisfaction is the best metric for establishing this.

Regards

Don Agar

Guide for Authors

General

All readers, whether members or not, are invited to submit articles for publication. Articles should deal with interesting recent developments in maritime matters which have a direct or indirect bearing on naval matters.

Contributions from overseas are welcome.

Articles specially written for the ANI, and accompanied by a statement to that effect, may be eligible for prizes from time to time.

The Editor reserves the right to reject or amend articles for publication.

Articles from 2500 to 6000 words are welcomed and the Institute will pay for original articles at \$10 for each 1000 words published.

Long articles should be subdivided appropriately and accompanied by an abstract of up to 75 words describing the scope of the article.

The Journal's established style is for impersonal, semi-formal, prose. Where a published work, whether serial or book, is directly quoted, due acknowledgement should be given. Specific numbered references should be used where appropriate and a suitable bibliography appended to the article.

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The cover sheet

The author's name, address, telephone number, present position and brief biographical particulars. If an article has been previously published, a publication history should be included. Any outside assistance accorded the author in research or preparation should be acknowledged.

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Book Reviews

**SECURITY AND DEFENCE:
PACIFIC AND GLOBAL
PERSPECTIVES, edited by
Desmond Ball and Cathy Downes,
Allen & Unwin, 1991, softcover,
517 pp, 25 pp of pages and
figures, RRP \$29.95.**

Reviewed by Tom Frame

This large book is effectively the second volume in a series entitled "Security and Defence". The first volume, subtitled "Selected Essays", was published in 1982. It was a milestone work as the editors of this second volume acknowledge. Never before had Australian defence and security been so comprehensively examined. This latest volume attempts a similar broad survey, and it does it very well. The twenty two contributors, which includes the former Minister for Defence, Kim Beazley, and the incumbent Chief of Air Staff, Air Marshal Funnell, have successfully laid bare the myriad of issues and dilemmas which constitute national, regional and global defence and security planning in the 1990s. Unfortunately, the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and the Gulf War occurred too late for them to be mentioned in this volume.

There are a few gaps and some repetition in the treatment but this is to be expected in an anthology with so many contributors. However, the book is very well edited and produced to the standard that book buyers have come to expect from Allen & Unwin. Considering the scope and depth of the work, and the calibre of the authors, the price is very reasonable. It did not need to be published as a hardcover book and thankfully, for the sake of price, it emerged as a softcover. However, at over 500 pages with a relatively light cover and a glued spine, I expect my now well-thumbed copy to look a little worse for wear in a few years. This is, of course, a comment directed at the publishers and not the editors.

The intended market for this book is spelt out in the preface. It is "designed as a handbook for students – at Australian military staff colleges as well as at universities – and for those more generally interested in security and defence matters". One suspects it will appeal more to the

former than the latter. However, the great variation in chapter subjects should attract a wide readership.

The tone of what follows is set in the foreword by Kim Beazley who admits to a common cause with the contributors. An advocate of a national policy which encompasses both defence and security, Beazley confirms the importance of putting the case for enhanced national security measures to those he refers to as "our political masters". I take that to mean his Cabinet colleagues. He further suggests that a clearly formulated and articulated policy is the foremost persuasive means of achieving it. John Graham, reviewing this book recently in the *Canberra Times*, took issue with the former minister having written the foreword and for praising the participating academics for not letting the defence issue drop from public sight and thus depriving defence planners "of the essential underpinning of public support". Graham remarks, "Do they need that support and should academics be lending themselves to such an activity? Leaving aside Beazley's maladroit description of the relationship, the question is whether it is in the best academic tradition is a pertinent one".

Probably without realising, Graham has identified an important development in the relationship between the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre (SDSC) at ANU, from which this book originates, and the Defence Department over the last few years. Since the decline of the anti-nuclear movement following the 1987 Federal election, SDSC has ensured its survival by acting as a consultancy to the Defence Department. This made sense. The Centre boasted an array of very talented people who could provide alternate views and interpretations to those produced within the bureaucracy. Thus, SDSC undertook several tasks for the Department and served as a useful sounding-board. SDSC also hosts a visiting fellow from each of the Services.

What all of this reflects is a realisation within academia and the government, that each needs to work closer together to their mutual benefit. In so doing, SDSC has become a participant in the defence and security process at the cost of losing a little

of its academic independence. The effect has been a positive one. While retaining and exercising its right to criticise the government's policy, academic thinking has become more conventional, more constructive and more closely related to the current trends and developments within government. In essence, the academic role has become practical and realistic while largely abandoning many traditional polemical agendas. The 1990s will be especially interesting as SDSC, the Peace Research Centre, also at ANU, and the Australian Defence Studies Centre established at ADFA, contend for supremacy and for survival. One wonders whether there is room for all three, particularly in Canberra. If they all rely on the same constituency, one doubts there is.

The affiliation of the contributors is also worthy of comment. More than half have worked in government at one time or another, including ex-service officers. Given that only one currently serving officer has contributed, there must surely be a case for reviewing the current guidelines relating to comment and discussion of contemporary issues by service people. Service people no doubt have much to contribute and should be allowed to participate under either less rigorous or more liberal conditions than those that presently exist. It would be a tragedy if those with something positive and constructive to say were to leave the Services, as some of the contributors to this volume have done, because they were denied the right and the encouragement to put their view.

Serving officers granted freedom to express their views on the clear understanding that they were entirely personal would have broadened both the scope and the appeal of this collection of essays. One also suspects it might have enhanced its credibility.

What I find most attractive about this book is its internal organisation. The editors have no doubt thought long and hard about this aspect and it shows. The ideas and themes are presented in a logical sequence as one chapter appears to build on another. With an unashamed Australian leaning, the book examines strategic concepts from the abstract to the concrete, and then their implementation. This provides the basis for the book's division into three parts: strategic concepts, Australian defence, and security in the region.

The opening chapters by Air Marshall Funnell and Desmond Ball go a long way in outlining the basic elements involved in defence and strategic planning. For a book aimed at students, this is imperative

although seldom done as well as it is here. The following chapters cover superpower strategies, globalism, revolutionary warfare, political terrorism, arms control and an emerging area with great potential, non-provocative defence strategies.

The second section, dealing with Australian defence, left me somewhat dissatisfied. It involved a rather mechanical approach to the ADF, the Department and defence industry, covering a number of seemingly unrelated matters. The Services were mentioned only in passing while one could be excused for thinking the RAN was incidental to Australian defence and security. Members of the ANI will, of course, share my horror at this deficiency and the associated imputation!

Covering the rather bland evolution of defence policy, the section looks at decision-making, personnel, industry and society. The chapter by Anthony Bergin on the "Legal Aspects of the ADF" deserves to be read closely and considered more widely. This is a complex and rather dry area but nonetheless an issue that will have growing significance in the future, especially in the wake of the Gulf War. Bergin outlines the issues clearly and shows that both politicians and service people need to be much better informed about the law relating to their employment and deployment than they have been in the past.

The third section, security in the region, is the most predictable of the three. There is not a great deal that is either new or particularly illuminating. The views of the contributors are already well known with some suffering from greater physical remoteness from their subject areas than others, and it shows. How an American sitting in Washington, who insists on calling this part of the world the antipodes, can give a more accurate description of what is happening in New Zealand than someone living and working here, is beyond me. Surely New Zealand, or Australia for that matter, possesses someone much better placed to talk about New Zealand. To be frank, there is the need for some new faces in this area of debate. Some of those involved have been trotting out the same essays for years at the same time their views have neither changed or developed one iota. Why we need to hear what these people think every time someone mentions defence and security in Australia also exceeds my understanding. There are plenty of bright people around who need to be encouraged to think and write on topics a little more diverse. In this respect they would do well to follow the lead of Desmond Ball who remains the dominant figure.

There will always be a need for the defence and security debate in Australia to be improved. It has come a long way since the mindlessness of the 1950s and early 1960s. The quality of the thought and writing in this second volume of the Security and

Defence series shows that progress has been made. Certainly the ground covered since the first volume was published a decade ago leads me to think the debate is improving markedly and there rightly is every expectation that it will continue to be so until the publication of volume three.

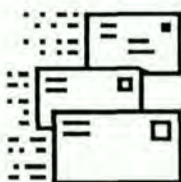


HMAS Brisbane in the Gulf—during a RAS with Success: Note Phalanx fit.

A lot has happened since this picture was taken...



*HMAS Sydney leaving the fleet base support facility at HMAS Stirling for the Gulf on 20 November 1990.
Navy PR (WA) photograph.*



Letters to the Editor

The Editor

Journal of the Australian Naval Institute

I refer to the essay on "The Maritime Strategy for a Strategic Backwater" by Lieutenant Commander L.A. Cocks RNZN which was published in the *Journal of the Australian Naval Institute*, October '90.

The author stated that "In New Caledonia the indigenous Kanak population seek independence from France, however, resistance to this development by French nationalists in New Caledonia and the French government has resulted in violent confrontation".

I am surprised that the author made such a statement as it is well known among senior government officials in Europe and the United States that only a very small minority of Kanaks want independence from France. The primary reason being that Kanaks are caught between two worlds, they have based their economy on the exploitation of natural resources and at the same time are trying to adapt to a modern economy not being able to develop a Kanak form of subsistence, eg. small scale farming. Many are loyal to the present government and would not wish New Caledonia to be politically divided and beset with problems similar to those to be found in Papua New Guinea. Kanaks enjoy specific customary rights and the Melanesian identity, with its customs and clan-type organisation, remains the same today. Economically, the Kanaks would be unable to run the country in a manner similar to that of other developing countries and hence would be susceptible to any advantageous offer of aid. What could then follow would be a race between competing powers. Secondly, it is the FULK (United Front for Kanak Liberation) — who commanded only about 7% of the Melanesian votes at the 1989 elections — who are now causing enormous tensions in the Territory and adjacent islands. It was this organisation who urged Kanaks to boycott the 1989 elections and threatened to disrupt voting. They were associated with the killing of the highly respected leader of the FLNKS (Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front — command at least 50% of the Melanesians

votes), Mr Tjibaou and his deputy leader, Mr Yiewane, both of whom were in favour of the Matignon Accord. It is well known also in New Caledonia that the FULK, a collection of mostly illiterate and unemployed Melanesians, are harbouring deep resentment against the present government, and against society in general, as a measure of retaliation for their perceived shortcomings. Their policy is to try to indoctrinate 'rebel' Kanaks with their ideology. But worst of all for Melanesians, those who refuse to become involved, preferring the security of their present existence, are ostracized by their own tribal members. This can take various forms from extreme killings to refusal of tribal privileges.

Perhaps it is interesting to note that the independence movement must have been seen to lack integrity with the 1990 decision by the Forum Committee not to grant attendance to a group of Kanaks as observers. No doubt, approval of the request would have been seen to create a precedent.

"Indigenous populations have become a minority"

While it is true that the Kanak population is now a minority in New Caledonia, the fact that most Kanaks are content with the present political and economic arrangements would seem to have been overlooked. It must be recognized that New Caledonia is a multiracial society grouped under a French umbrella.

Pre-colonial history of the island is still in an early stage of discovery but investigations in this field are continuing by ORSTOM and by the Société d'Etudes Historiques de la Nouvelle Calédonie. According to archaeological evidence, early Kanaks arrived from Southeast Asia. The island was inhabited by 30 to 40,000 Melanesians and Polynesians prior to European arrival. With nickel mining from 1895, new migrants settled in New Caledonia (French from the mainland, Indians, Tonkinese, Javanese, Wallisians, Polynesians, Indonesians, Chinese and Kanakas from New Hebrides). The story of the present-day Kanaks as a patriotic and loyal group desperately seeking independence comes from the frustrated

imagination of some journalists in search of sensational stories. There exist today 328 tribes (237 on the 'Grande Terre' and 91 on the other islands). Their arrival in New Caledonia was similar to that of the present-day "boat people" in Australia. The successive waves of people fought each other for supremacy and it is difficult to state continuous claim of the island by a particular tribal group.

"New Caledonia is considered by France to be an extension of metropolitan France and the French authorities endeavour to treat as such"

Australia and New Zealand should be well acquainted with this problem given both countries are inhabited by the first settlers — Aborigines and Maoris — who were (and are) forced to integrate within Anglo-Saxon jurisdictions. While the period of white colonial rule is a thing of the past in both countries, one cannot ignore the history of both countries and their colonial heritage, for example, convicts, diffusion of tensions between Aborigines and new settlers, the slaughter of Aborigines in Tasmania, the

famous Maori wars and the present dissatisfaction with the Treaty of Waitangi.

The author describes the Southwest Pacific as a "strategic backwater". I believe this is unfortunate terminology and does not apply in the circumstances as France has contributed to the security of the Pacific with its military presence.

In the final analysis, as long as New Caledonia remains a French territory (as it might at least until 1998 when an independence referendum will be held), it also remains an extension of France. The majority of the people, including many Kanaks, are happy with their current situation. We might remember that it is not so long since Australia and New Zealand were English colonies — and at that time extensions of England!

Ms Myriam S. Amar

Campbell ACT 2601



Washington notes

from Tom A Friedmann In the United States



THE SECOND SPLENDID LITTLE WAR

Well, we won our war against Iraq. Remember, you read it here first.

It really wasn't much of a prediction. The only person who thought Iraq could prevail over the United States and its allies apparently was Saddam Hussein.

And why shouldn't we have prevailed? The forces fielded by the coalition's NATO members, Australia, and New Zealand were, after all, designed to defeat the Soviet Union and not one of its client states. And, lest we become too complacent because of this victory, it is the Soviets who remain the West's primary potential adversary as they continue to modernize their arsenals despite economic and political turmoil throughout the Soviet Union.

I would like to share some thoughts about the conflict.

Always a flag-waving people, Americans just about waved themselves silly for six months. Support for the armed services was almost universal. Even those opposed to the policy of intervention made a desperate effort to separate their policy disagreement from their support for the men and women in the Gulf. The nation made a conscious decision not to repeat the mistake made during the Vietnam War: Policy was not equated to service in the military.

The people who went to the Gulf did their duty and should be honoured for that. But was everyone a hero like some politicians proclaimed? I think not.

Most people today have no concept of duty and therefore cannot recognize it when they see it. Because we are told there are no more heroes, duty is confused with heroism.

Syndicated columnist Mike Royko cites one veteran of World War II who had been taken prisoner during the Battle of the Bulge. "I'm not proud to have been a POW (the United States now gives medals for being a POW)...but I'm no hero. You want to talk heroes, let's talk about the guys from Bataan. Or these English guys at Dunkirk. These guys were heroes."

Television — live television — brought the conflict into our homes in a way we have never seen before. My mother observed that she doubted anyone in the United States would have made it through World War II had they known as much about that war as she did of the war in the Persian Gulf. My father said he never knew much about the progress of his war, and this seemed to be the same for the forces in the Persian Gulf.

What the public needs to know and the legitimate security needs of the armed forces always is a potential source of friction in a free society. But the Defense Department's handling of the press during the Persian Gulf War reflected an unjustified lack of confidence in the press. An Army study after Vietnam disproved the belief that the media was a major factor in turning American public opinion against that war. Unfortunately, there are many in the Defense Department who have not read that study.

No one in the press argues against keeping operational plans secret. But the military's refusal to allow the press to be at the front deprived the services of a powerful ally. I am convinced that the closer the relationship between the press and troops in the field, the better and more sympathetic the reporting will be because of shared experiences. And you never know when you will need a powerful friend, like the Fourth Estate.

The mobilization and deployment of some 500,000 men and women touched millions

of Americans in ways they have never been touched before. Small towns – and some not so small – were emptied by the call-up. Only national unity made the mobilization politically possible. Lyndon Johnson's decision not to mobilize the reserves for Vietnam duty was proven correct, albeit belatedly.

People trickled out of our lives during Vietnam and re-entered them the same way. During the Persian Gulf mobilization, large numbers of people disappeared overnight.

For these of us left at home, we did what we could. We prayed. We donated blood at the Red Cross and wrote wills, trusts, and powers of attorney for these going overseas. We sent "Care" packages filled with candy and books. We worried and waited and became CNN junkies.

And if having friends in one country's armed forces was not enough to worry about, some of us had to keep up with the armed forces of two countries, no mean feat if you know how poor reporting on the Royal Australian Navy was in the United States.

We learned that any country could fire a ballistic missile despite the deployment of the most advanced countermeasures available. The Patriot anti-missile system made an impressive showing against 30-year-old missiles but they did not stop all of the missiles. To these who continue to tout Star Wars as a modern Maginot line, I would ask: How any American Presidents could withstand the political pressure for full nuclear retaliation if only one nuclear armed missile evaded the Patriot system and landed in the United States?

Mobile missile launchers proved to be exceedingly difficult to locate and destroy, just as advertised.

We were lucky that the Iraqis, in their only wise move during the crisis, did not arm their missiles with chemical warheads.

During the future conflicts we may not be so lucky. Neither can we ignore the proliferation of more accurate missiles and nuclear weapons among smaller countries. neither should we ignore the risk involved should such weapons fall into the hands of extremists in the Soviet Union.

Why didn't the Iraqis fight? It would not have taken much effort for a handful of planes armed with Exocet missiles to wreak havoc on the coalition fleet. Pictures of the *Missouri* and *Wisconsin* lying off shore and lobbing 16-inch shells on enemy positions

with immunity were remarkable in the era of the anti-ship missile.

Why did the Iraqi Air Force flee to Iran? The Iraqi Army absorbed great punishment during its war with Iran and gave much in return. Yet, when land war commenced, the Iraqis collapsed.

Did we overestimate the capabilities of our enemy and, if so, why?

The principle of unity of command was again proven valid. Australian, British, American, Polish, Dutch, Danish, New Zealand, Saudi, Canadian, and French naval forces: American, British, French, Kuwait, UAE, Italian, and Saudi air forces and Egyptian, Syrian, Saudi, American, French, British, and Kuwait land forces worked with remarkable coordination. This could have been expected with forces that regularly exercised together, such as the NATO and ANZAC forces, but when you add the Arab and former Warsaw Pact nations to the equation, the results truly were amazing.

Can you imagine the kind of debates going on in the Soviet Defense Ministry? For the third time in a quarter century, Soviet weapons and tactics have been discredited through the defeat of a Soviet client. From the decapitation of the Iraqi air defense system to the performance of Soviet armour, Moscow took a big hit.

Some Soviet generals are trying to put the best face on a bad situation by denying the scope of the allied victory. Others downplay the performance of Soviet equipment by saying the weapons used by the Soviet Union itself are far more sophisticated. But some are calling for reform of the armed forces, including creating smaller, all-volunteer forces.

The Soviets were losers in this one, and it's the losers who frequently learn the most lessons from wars they lose. It is a lesson I hope the West remembers.

We spent millions of dollars camouflaging the army's vehicles and the failure to develop an effective IFF system required that fluorescent orange sheets be put over some of them! How long had it been since flags were flown to identify land forces going into battle?

The tremendous logistics operation could not have been achieved without reserve forces. However, the Army reserve combat units that were mobilized never made it to the front because the Pentagon decided they were insufficiently trained to do the job. As the size of the active forces are reduced, the

Army, which traditionally has had a harder time absorbing combat reservists, must devote particular attention to this problem.

We must be careful to immunize ourselves against "victory disease," the operation was not as perfect as the remarkable lack of casualties makes it seem.

It took six months to deploy the requisite forces, the status of the U.S. Ready Reserve Fleet is scandalous, something the Pentagon has known about for years but overlooked in favour of overlapping layers of weapons systems. Luckily, the turndown in the U.S. domestic airline industry released airplanes and pilots that might not have otherwise been available. Even Soviet aircraft and former East German ships were used to move American equipment.

What good are weapons systems that cannot be deployed? What makes the equation even more dangerous is that we were not faced with an opponent in the air or at sea, either of which could have materially effected the deployment. What if the war had developed into a bloody conflict that lasted three months or more as most people expected?

The new generation of weapons deployed to the Gulf operated under combat conditions but actual combat itself was limited on land and at sea. It is yet to be determined how well, or how often, an FFG could fire its full missile magazine before breakdown or if the Phalanx worked in a multi-missile attack.

The M-1A1 tank, the Apache helicopter, and the Bradley fighting vehicle all performed better in desert conditions than expected. However, the filters on the M1A1 and the Apache needed constant attention — attention that might not have been possible against a more determined opponent.

The F-117 stealth fighter, the Tomahawk missile, and laser-guided bombs changed the nature of warfare. Indeed, the war in the air came as close as we will probably ever see to accomplishing the goals of the air-power enthusiasts of the 1920s. But air power has yet to eliminate the need for ground and naval forces.

A military commander's primary obligation is to expend as few of the lives of his forces as possible. To that end, he should be given the best weapons available and be left to do his job once the civilian authority decides on war. But have the power and accuracy of conventional arms reached a point that commanders must continually guard against using too much force against an enemy? It is my belief that no estimates of Iraqi casualties were given because they were so

great that the Pentagon feared a backlash if they became public. The *Wall Street Journal*, one of the nation's leading newspapers (and certainly no liberal rag), questioned the attacks that destroyed the Iraqi electrical-power grid. As the *Journal* points out, Iraqi military facilities undoubtedly had back-up generating facilities while the civilian sector had none. Such destruction, particularly in light of the success of "smart" weapons, should be carefully assessed as to the extent of the military purposes served.

It has never been easy to be a battlefield commander but modern weaponry has made that job even harder.

Don't compare a head of state to Adolf Hitler unless you're prepared to eradicate that person and his Government. George Bush made a good case to the American people that Saddam Hussein was such a person. But when the opportunity arose to depose Hussein, the President flinched.

But even more damning was Bush's call for the Iraqi people to overthrow Hussein and then refuse to provide support once they rebelled. It was Hungary in 1956 all over again. The United States abdicated its responsibility to the Kurds and Shiites and people are dying by the thousands for our bungling leadership.

America's first "splendid little war" was fought against Spain almost a century ago and there are some similarities with the war in the Persian Gulf.

We fought an enemy that was thought to be much stronger than it was and victory came in a far shorter time than expected.

But the long-term results of this "little war" were far from universally favourable. We have yet to establish normal relations with Cuba and, for that matter, the Philippines. Puerto Rico continuously debates the status of its relationship with the Federal government. The American government has repeatedly violated the principles upon which our nation was based in dealing with these countries.

We are now up to our necks in the mire of the Middle East. We have restored an absolute monarchy in Kuwait which has proven to be incompetent in providing for even the basic needs of its citizens. We said we were not seeking a permanent presence in the area but negotiations for a permanent base are under way. We have betrayed the Iraqi people by inciting them to rebellion and then abandoning them to a vicious dictator. The Arab-Israeli conflict is only millimetres closer to settlement.

So far, the second "splendid little war" seems to be taking the United States on a path that is even more treacherous than the one we took after the first "splendid little war".

Hopefully, time and luck will allow us to extricate ourselves with more honour than the first go-around.



Two RAN s-70-B2 Seahawks, inconspicuous in their camouflage over Sydney Harbour

THE ENFORCEMENT OF SANCTIONS BY THE MULTI-NATIONAL NAVAL FORCE — AN RAN PERSPECTIVE

A presentation to the Australian Naval Institute at HMAS Watson 16 May 1991

by Captain R E Shalders, RAN

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your kind introduction and to the Australian Naval Institute for the opportunity to address such an important group. I will start by limiting the scope of my presentation.

Firstly, let me say that while I intend to give an RAN perspective of the sanction enforcement process, the views I will express are mine alone. The detailed analysis of our involvement in Gulf operations is a major and ongoing process. The lessons learned will be some time in being fully assembled and what I will offer today is a purely personal view based on my involvement as Captain of one of the ships deployed to the Gulf.

Secondly, I will confine myself to the position of the first RAN deployment — essentially the period from mid-August 1990 when *Darwin*, *Adelaide* and *Success* departed Sydney, to 3 December 1990 when the FFGs were relieved by *Brisbane* and *Sydney*.

You will remember that it was on 3 December that the 15 January deadline was set. My focus will therefore be purely on the maritime interception force operations — CDRE Oxenbould will discuss the RAN's involvement in the war and subsequent operations during his presentation. [Also published in this issue — Ed.]

STRUCTURE

The structure of my talk will be loosely chronological. By way of background, I'll address deployment preparations, workup activities and then lead into the concept of operations which developed. I will conclude with a summary of how boarding activities were conducted. The major themes which I hope to draw out are:

- Firstly, that the enforcement of sanctions was successful — trade to and from Kuwait was effectively halted. After 28 October, the occasion of the boarding of the Iraqi tanker *Amuriyah* Iraqi merchant traffic was

laid up in various ports. After that date, with the exception of two incidents which CDRE Oxenbould will address, no further shipping ever attempted to transit to or from Iraq. The second theme I'd like to address relates to interoperability. The uncertainties evident at the start of the operation were quickly resolved. The MNNF were able to overcome initial interoperability difficulties and the concept of 'loose association' became effective and workable. Considering the diversity of forces and differing national interests involved, this was a remarkable feat.

- The third and perhaps most telling factor I'll try to draw out is that the RAN can be very satisfied with the way our units operated. Our men responded magnificently and rose to every challenge offered. Our ships performed reliably over prolonged periods of intense activity. As a test of the RAN's operational readiness, the Gulf was a most successful operation.

DEPLOYMENT

It is fair to say that the first Gulf task group were not fully prepared to go in harm's way when the decision was first announced that the RAN would contribute forces in support of Kuwait. All three ships had recently participated in the RIMPAC exercise but, in our current parlance, all three were, at best, at the minimum level of operational capability or MLOC. In fact, on that Friday morning, *Darwin* was in the midst of a major maintenance period and had just started an engine changeout. *Success* was on passage to Melbourne and looking forward to a weekend in the southern city. *Adelaide* was at sea conducting routine exercises in the EAXA.

The frantic activity which ensued between the announcement on Friday morning and the FFGs departure on Monday is testament to the remarkable efforts of many to get the ships ready. We all have special memories of that 72 hours and I don't wish to dwell on it

other than to say that everyone involved worked with a will and resolve that I'd never experienced before. From my perspective as a CO, it was a very positive start to what turned out to be a very successful logistic enterprise – more of that aspect later.

If I could return now to the uncertainty which was a hallmark of the first deployment. When we left Australia our role and mission were by no means well defined. Our Foreign Minister spoke of our ships as 'steaming around bristling'. In those early days our stated mission was a very constrained 'Identification, Contact, Interrogation and Warning'. No-one had time to think beyond the warning stage. What might we do if our warnings were to be disregarded? Fortunately we had a long three-week transit to the area of operations before those sorts of difficult decisions had to be confronted.

In the absence of clear guidance, and in the best traditions of the military, we in the task group prepared for the worst case scenario – one of all-out conflict. The transit to WA and beyond as far as Cocos Island was a masterpiece of operational intensity. In my experience it was the most demanding and professionally stimulating period of naval activity I'm ever likely to be involved in. The focus was very clearly on anti-air warfare and on damage control. The RAAF provided the loyal opposition at a level of intensity I'd not have thought possible. With the exception of an 18-hour period in the middle of the Bight, the task group were hounded relentlessly and our procedures for dealing with the resulting damage were rigorously evaluated and honed by the 'wreckers', also known as the Sea Training Group. Many of these skills were being re-learned or teamwork was being sharpened. The one area we were all rusty in was chemical defence. All ships brushed off the cobwebs and developed appropriate routines to deal with the expected chemical threat.

Without going into too much more detail, let me summarise by saying that, by the time we arrived at Diego Garcia, all ships were assessed to be at the operational level of capability (OLOC). In my assessment we were ready to go in harm's way, I believed then and still believe now that we were as well prepared as any task group ever to leave Australia's shores.

With hindsight, and in particular with the knowledge of what was to happen during the ensuing three months, we were probably too well prepared. We were brilliant at maintaining an accurate air picture and in challenging any unidentified air contact within our surveillance range. We were good

at dealing with all forms of engineering casualty, personnel casualty and action damage. In fact we could do all those things in CB suits and with our protective masks on. The things we'd not had time to practice and develop were routine surface surveillance and boarding activity. Both of these endeavours were to occupy our time almost exclusively for the next three months.

CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

On arrival in the AO on 3 September the RAN task group were still constrained to only 'identify, contact, interrogate and warn' relevant vessels. Our mission was clearly stated as being to 'prevent the import or export of all commodities and products to or from Iraq or Kuwait'. At that stage there was no clear multi-national organisation or concept of operations in force. The first meeting of the MNNF was held on 5/6 September with the result that a number of patrol areas were agreed.

The RAN task group were allocated the Alpha areas in the Gulf of Oman, astride the major shipping routes leading to Khawr Fakkan in the United Arab Emirates and to the Straits of Hormuz. As events were to show, these patrol areas were to become the scene of the most action in terms of enforcing the UN sanctions in the area. At that time the USN CVGB were working in the outer Gulf of Oman with the US amphibious group in the Masirah area. The WEU nations were allocated the Bravo areas and the USN and subsequently the Canadians were given the Persian Gulf Charlie areas. The Royal Navy tended to try to locate themselves wherever the action was likely to be most interesting.

It was agreed at the MNNF conference that all units would work in 'loose association' which is a command and control doctrine not clearly elucidated in the text books. What it means is that all ships would remain under national control and that tactical and operational control would be retained by on-scene CTGs. As events would subsequently show, it was a remarkably effective form of C2. Communications links were quickly established, including a very complex LINK II architecture. This allowed the CTGs to consult and advise each other and we all got on with the business of ensuring that all maritime trade was 'identified, contacted, interrogated and warned'. It is worthwhile at this point to illustrate the density of traffic in the area. Remembering that it was a period of tension and consequently all air tracks were potentially hostile, it was necessary that everything that flew was correctly detected, tracked, interrogated and identified. The facility of a LINK II which

worked beautifully, with up to 16 participating units, allowed for this task to be completed very effectively. It was not uncommon for the 2-3 members of an FFG Air Picture Compilation Team to be confidently keeping tabs on up to 100 tracks. These included the international carriers (who appeared to be very keen to keep to designated air lanes and squawk the correct IFF codes), the intensive carrier traffic (initially from *Independence* and subsequently from *Midway*) and other local civil traffic. The air teams also had to contend with the daily Iranian P3 maritime patrol who generally flew to within metres of the designated five mile 'clear zone' established by the MNNF units. The air situation certainly was never dull and, while it became routine, the danger of an Iraqi 'leaker' such as an Exocet-fitted Falcon 50 flying in civil air routes, was never far from our minds.

In the early part of September, whilst the French carrier *Clemenceau* was on station in the Gulf of Oman, our resolve was often sorely tested and we were privy to some interesting calls and challenges on international distress frequencies. One French pilot was invited to 'break left immediately sir, my standard is en route to your cockpit in five seconds'. The Frenchman quickly executed a hard left turn!

The surface picture was no less complex. At any one time, within a surveillance range of 100 miles, the ships were tracking up to 200 contacts. In addition, computerised tactical systems embarked specifically for the operation were keeping near real time tabs on many more surface contacts. In our three months on station, *Darwin* processed over 76,000 surface tracks through this system. To put that in some sort of context, off the east coast on a busy day the average FFG surface operator may have responsibility for perhaps 10-15 tracks. Whilst in the GOO, two such operators maintained real time track of 60+ vessels and the JOTS operator handles up to 300 more 'interest tracks' outside the range of organic sensors.

PATROL CYCLES

Having agreed the areas of responsibility, ships of the MNNF then had to actually start enforcing the sanctions. For the RAN Task Group this evolved into a patrol pattern of roughly three weeks at sea followed by a three-day port visit for rest, maintenance and resupply. The FFGs operated together for the first two such cycles which allowed for a comprehensive training program to be maintained – the PEEP or 'Persian Excursion Exercise Programme' provided the framework for daily activities.

Subsequently, *Darwin* and *Adelaide* worked less closely together and generally rotated through the busy Straits of Hormuz patrol box every 24 hours. The 'off watch' FFG would be responsible for intercepting merchant traffic further east.

Whilst the FFGs were deployed in the Alpha areas, *Success* maintained a patrol line well clear of potential attack in the vicinity of Ras el Hadd. The USN CVBG and the attendant fleet supply train were also working in these outer areas. *Success* initially made forays into the inner GOO every 2-3 days to keep the FFGs topped off using the 'delivery boy' mode of replenishment. This subsequently became less frequent and *Success* combined fuelling runs with a resupply visit to Fujarah where fresh fruit and vegetables were embarked at anchor for subsequent delivery to the FFGs.

With FFG and *Success* port visits staggered over a three-week cycle and a regular weekly helicopter pickup at Seeb airfield near Muscat, logistic supply was good. Mail and urgent stores were able to be delivered in reasonable time (14-20 days ex-Sydney).

Throughout this period, the FFGs remained in the second degree of readiness with all weapons and sensors manned. The crews worked a defence watch routine of four hours on and four hours off. For those not actively involved in the surveillance activity, routine DC exercises were conducted and all weapons were regularly cycled and proven. Opportunity was also taken to work with other units of the MNNF transiting through our areas. A number of PASSEX were completed with USN, RN, RNLN and RFA ships.

Whilst hindsight reveals that the maritime interception phase of the Gulf War was conducted in a benign environment, to those of us on station at the time, the threat was very real. The uncertainties of the area of operation were uppermost in our minds and therefore ship readiness was maintained at the highest possible level at all times.

I should note at this point that we found individual performance began to degrade after about 20-25 days of a defence watch routine. The crews remained alert and interested while on patrol but it became obvious that they had their limits. The second task group had considerably more 'pucker factor' to contend with after war broke out on 17 January. This may have assisted in maintaining their edge – particularly during the lengthy period following the outbreak of hostilities where, I understand, *Sydney* and *Brisbane* had in excess of 35 days at sea.

As a final point on patrol cycles, the RAN was second only to the USN in operational tempo. The first task group achieved a ratio approaching 90% of time at sea. Other MNNF forces aimed for a much reduced tempo of around 50%.

SURVEILLANCE

I've discussed the density of shipping traffic and the difficulty of maintaining an accurate plot. Amidst all this traffic of course the vast majority were innocent vessels going about their normal business. While all had to be challenged and their innocence verified, this quickly became a routine task and arrangements were made to share the information gained. This sharing of data for innocent traffic was never fully resolved and it became apparent that many of the vessels became very used to responding to MIF challenges. VHF Channel 16 was the source of much intelligence and it became quite a game for OOWs to piece together the puzzle of which ship of the 30 or 40 on the bridge PPI was responding to which VHF challenge. Surface plot/OOW liaison was never better effected.

We generally had very good intelligence on high interest tracks or 'contacts of interest' (COI). By about late September all Iraqi merchant vessels had been positively located and we had good information on their potential movements. Sitting astride the only route to and from Iraq, the RAN ships were in a position to respond to both inbound and outbound Iraqi traffic.

As events unfolded there was never any attempt by Iraqi ships to break out of the Persian Gulf. That's not to say it was never a possibility and there were several speculative assessments of a supposed 'breakout'. Whenever this occurred there was a flurry of activity on both sides of the Straits of Hormuz as units relocated to be in position. These regular occurrences became known as 'Hitin breakouts' in reference to an Iraqi supertanker which was assessed to be leading a trio of rampant tankers.

Inbound traffic was a very different matter and our major interception involvements centred on ships attempting to transit to the Iraqi port of Umm Qasr or to Kuwait. Most of these ships came from either the anchorage at Aden or from other Red Sea ports. As ships left the anchorage, their movement would be reported and surveillance aircraft would be tasked to relocate and track the COIs. USN P3Cs and RAF Nimrods performed the long range surveillance and alerted the waiting MNNF forces of traffic or 'trade' as the ships became known. Organic

air, represented in our case by Seahawk or Squirrel then took over the hunt.

AVIATION

It is appropriate at this point to diverge just a little to discuss the roles and capabilities of the aircraft embarked in the first task group. In my estimation, aviation was one of the success stories of the first deployment – certainly we could not have achieved the results we did without the sterling contributions of the embarked helicopters.

Each of the FFGs had one Seahawk and one Squirrel, while *Success* has a lone Squirrel. The rate of effort available from this asset base was never fully utilised because it soon became apparent that the surveillance capability of the S70B2 was far in excess of what was required. For an aircraft that was literally rushed into operational service, the Seahawk soon became our major surveillance sensor. In the constrained waters of the inner GOO the Seahawk proved its worth. In general terms, whilst on patrol we were able to effectively cover our allotted areas with two three-hour S70B2 sorties a day – usually conducted at dawn to refine the surface picture generated overnight and then again at dusk to identify contacts before night closed in. The subsequent acquisition of FLIR for the Seahawk, in advance of projected installation later in the life of the project, will of course mean that the natural phenomenon of darkness will become somewhat immaterial.

Both FFGs carried two crews for each S70B2 and the aircraft were therefore capable of flying for many more hours than was necessary in the surface surveillance role. In fact, each ship was capable of supporting up to 16 hours per day airborne if required. The aircraft proved up to the task and reliability and maintainability were excellent. Major servicing were conducted onboard over very short timeframes when in more routine circumstances the aircraft would have been taken down for maintenance for some days. In many ways, having the Seahawk was like having your own P3C parked 'down the back'.

While I've extolled the virtues of Seahawk, we should not forget or underestimate the contribution of the 'flying budgie' or AS350B Squirrel. I'm a great fan of the 'stealth helicopter' as the USN came to name our intrepid trio. Because of the aircraft's low radar signature (many knew it as the 'plastic fantastic') and in view of the itchy trigger fingers evident during the early days on patrol, it was essential that IFF transponders were functioning correctly before the Squirrel set off on such tasks. There were many

occasions when low and (relatively) fast radar contacts appeared at close range on consorts' radars only to be subsequently identified as errant Squirrels. I do the aircrew an injustice there as they were thoroughly professional in everything they did – including their right of self-preservation which included ensuring IFF systems were operational and an absolute refusal to close any military contact within five nautical miles unless positive approval was obtained to enter 'the zone'.

Both Squirrel and Seahawk were fundamental to our surveillance activity. When the situation dictated a more active role such as when 'mother' was tasked to locate and track a 'contact of interest', both aircraft contributed greatly to our success. On one occasion I recall despatching the Seahawk to the limit of endurance (in fact halfway to Karachi) to relocate a COI heading our way. With *Darwin* following at 30 knots, the intrepid aviators headed east to maximum endurance, detected our COI at maximum radar range, closed to investigate, identify and interrogate and were able to return to mother to guide the ship to the intercept. On another occasion when Seahawk was temporarily incapacitated, Squirrel took great delight in achieving the same result, but at night. Both aircraft were absolutely invaluable.

BOARDING OPERATIONS

To return to our primary mission, I'd like to discuss one of the more interesting and certainly more exciting aspects of the interdiction mission.

As the situation unfolded it became apparent that there was a need to develop a capability to board suspect vessels – to verify the presence or otherwise of prohibited cargo. In the lexicon of the period these operations were termed 'visit and search' rather than 'boarding'. I'll use the latter term for convenience.

Darwin was directly involved in five separate boardings. To illustrate the process I'll describe the last and most complicated of these operations – the boarding of the tanker *Amuriyah*. This ship was boarded on 28 October, subsequently cleared and allowed to return to Kuwait. She was in ballast when boarded but was loaded with fuel oil on return to Iraq and subsequently became a casualty of war when bombed and sunk by USN A6 aircraft in the opening stages of operation Desert Storm.

Each of the boardings in which we were involved was a multi-national and co-operative effort. In this particular example the *Amuriyah* was detected on departure from Aden, located by USN P3C and subsequently

lost. She was relocated late one evening by *Darwin's* Squirrel and the ship closed in to take up a covert trail having previously developed a plan of attack in consultation with the designated Scene of Action commander in USS *Reasoner*. USS *Ogden*, an LPD, had been detailed to support the operation and had on board a specialist SEAL/Marine unit. *Darwin* assumed a covert trail about midnight, the Squirrel having positively identified the tanker. The unsuspecting Iraqi had displaced himself some 50 miles to seaward of the normal shipping lanes and was apparently anticipating an uneventful transit. Overnight, the two American ships and a Royal Navy frigate converged to allow all ships to intercept *Amuriyah* at first light.

The technique involved in all boardings began with a routine challenge on channel 16. In this instance the USS *Reasoner* called *Amuriyah* and requested he stop to permit 'visit and search' under authority given to MNNF forces by UNSC 661. Nor unexpectedly, the Iraqi tanker failed to respond, despite the presence of an FFG 100 yards on his port beam and a Knox class frigate the same distance to starboard.

At this point it is worthwhile explaining that the progress of boarding operations were dictated to a very great extent by the rules of engagement in force. As already noted, the vast majority of boardings were multi-national, co-operative affairs and the pace and development of the incident was governed by compatible national ROE. It was essential that the initiative was gained early and retained throughout. It was necessary to generate a degree of momentum and to keep the opposition on the defensive. In one early operation where the scene of action co-ordinator had less flexible ROE than the assisting forces it took 37 hours to gain effective control of the Iraqi vessel – this despite the fact that we had a combined USN/RAN boarding party embarked for over 24 hours. On that occasion the scene commander had limited authority and almost every step of the process had to be cleared through higher command. I'm happy to say that this was never a problem for the RAN Task Group where considerable authority had been delegated to the embarked CTG.

The rules under which we operated required a graduated and escalating response. In the case of *Amuriyah*, her master had obviously learned from the previous Iraqi boardings and he ensured every step of the process had to be used.

Having failed to respond to our challenge, both escorts then hoisted signal groups, attempted loudhailer communications and

used sirens to attract attention. 140,000 tonnes of tanker sailed serenely towards the Gulf of Oman.

Throughout all this, VHF calls continued and naturally these were recorded. At each step of the escalating process, the target was given a specified time period within which to react or respond. It was essential that the target not be allowed to seize the initiative. For example, by being allowed to seek instruction from his higher authority.

Darwin's helo had been airborne throughout the incident and the next step was to buzz the tanker and hover adjacent to the bridge with a written warning. Studied ignorance was the inevitable result.

Note that up to this point in the process all ships and helicopter weapon systems had not been used. On board the frigates guns were trained fore and aft, small arms were concealed and upper deck crews relaxed but ready at their stations. Naturally, being close aboard a potential threat, ammunition was provided, exposed personnel were dressed in flak jackets and steel helmets and special sea duty men were closed up.

On authority given by the SAC (and in our case by the embarked CTG) the next step was aggressive manoeuvre. On all occasions when this had been required, the Iraqi vessels had maintained a steady course and speed. While probably looking very spectacular, manoeuvres across the bow at speed were relatively straightforward and, up to this point, had been effective in forcing the vessel to stop. On this occasion the Iraqi master chose to not only decline to stop but to manoeuvre aggressively himself. As the intended target of his manoeuvring, it was comforting to have the responsiveness of two LM2500 gas turbines instantly available.

By this phase of the operation it was quite obvious that sterner measures were required. Weapon systems were trained on *Amuriyah* and the intention to fire warning shots was advised. *Darwin* fired 50 calibre rounds, initially at 300 metres then 100 metres ahead of the tanker. Apart from an assertion that our second series of warning shots had struck the tanker, notable because this was the first radio response, the *Amuriyah* continued at speed. *Reasoner* then opened out and, after appropriate VHF radio warnings, two rounds of five-inch were accurately laid across the bows. By this stage, two-way communications had been established and all on the net were treated to some Iraqi accented invective.

The alert SUCAP consisting of one F/A-18 and one F-14 had meantime been launched. Whilst both frigates took station close abeam, the aircraft made a series of very low passes overhead. It became obvious that the master had no intention of responding to anything less than direct action. Had it been required, ROE were available to take the ship under direct fire or to foul his screw. Neither course of action was necessary as it had been agreed earlier that, on reaching this sort of impasse, a boarding party would be inserted by helicopter. Accordingly two UH-1 Iroquois took station as 'top cover' while two CH46 Sea Stallions inserted 30+ troops onto the foredeck using a fast roping technique. Even at this point, *Amuriyah* was not going to succumb easily. The master had ordered water cannon to be activated and the decks were awash in an effort to frustrate the embarking Marines.

Having taken control of the ship, the search which followed was essentially similar to all previous boardings. While the crew of *Amuriyah* attempted to frustrate search parties there was limited overt aggression once all on board had been mustered and documentation examined.

For members of the boarding party on this and other occasions there were a number of new techniques and methods to be learned. While the RAN had developed some expertise in investigative boardings of FFVs, it has been many years since we had been involved in searching and verifying the cargo of such large vessels. We came to learn that good portable communications were vital, as was teamwork and maintaining the initiative. To effectively search a large vessel takes a minimum of 3-4 hours with up to three separate teams. Backup support and technical assistance should be available if needed. For example, shipwright expertise was necessary on one occasion to examine tank welds. Arrangements need to be in place to provide a steaming crew if diversion was required. These and many other aspects of the 'visit and search' role were learned through experience and by drawing upon the expertise of the USCG LEDET teams who had a vast amount of experience in enforcing anti-drug-smuggling operations.

CONCLUSION

In attempting to summarise the maritime interdiction mission I hope I've given you a general understanding of how we went about our task. To put that into some sort of perspective, you may be interested to hear a few statistics.

During Operation Desert Shield there were:

- 26,300 recorded challenges;
- 996 MNNF boardings (the vast majority in the vicinity of the Jordanian port of Aquaba;
- the RAN boarded four supertankers, one small tanker, one fishing factory vessel and the so-called 'peace ship' *Ibn Khaldoun*;
- we assisted in boarding operations on two other Iraqi vessels; warning shots were fired on three occasions.

At the start of my presentation I indicated that I would be attempting to draw out three major themes. Firstly I hope I've convinced you that the enforcement of sanctions was successful. To the extent that maritime trade

was effectively halted, I believe we were very successful. Secondly, while the political situation remained unchanged throughout the period, no such uncertainty was evident in the way MNNF units were able to operate together. Interoperability was as much a hallmark of the first deployment as was the constant uncertainty of what might happen next. Finally, and most importantly in my view, the performance of both man and machine throughout the period was nothing short of outstanding. The calibre and professionalism of our sailors was second to none. The readiness and reliability of our ships and men over prolonged periods of intense operational activity give cause for considerable pride and satisfaction in a job well done



"Stealth helicopter"—A Navy Squirrel near Nowra, NSW,



Happy Day — Success homecoming

THE GULF AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR ECONOMIC SANCTIONS

by

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INTRODUCTION¹

I have been asked to briefly discuss two large questions; whether or not the economic sanctions imposed on 'greater Iraq' were given sufficient time to work, and what implications can be drawn from the Gulf about the place of economic sanctions within the so-called 'new world order'. Since it has already become fashionable to rake over the coals of the Gulf in the search for "lessons" that can be projected onto the future, and since economic sanctions do not rate a mention in the first drafts of these textbooks, I intend to take these two issues in reverse order.

In my view, the fashionable rush to historical judgement is premature, and the current lack of interest in sanctions even more so. If war is indeed 'the continuation of politics by other means', then enduring verdicts about the utility of any particular policy instrument within the aggregate mix of strategy remain contingent upon the emergence of relatively stable political outcomes at the global, regional and national levels. The fat lady of politics has not yet sung, yet we are asked to believe that we have borne witness to an opera.

THE LESSONS FOR SANCTIONS

In the months immediately after the Iraqi invasion, there was a good deal of off-the-cuff discussion about the conditions under which economic sanctions might secure the liberation of Kuwait. Though the prevailing convention about the efficacy of sanctions was pessimistic if not downright negative, many analysts found numerous grounds for optimism; as Elliott and Hufbauer put it, there was '... a vision of a post-Cold War world in which ... multilateral sanctions could contribute importantly ...'².

These optimistic prognoses for the future of sanctions started to fade from view when Desert Shield began the slow mutation into Desert Storm, and Kuwait's liberation took on a more overt military constitution. Consequently the initial question - whether sanctions might have achieved the same

objective - is a matter that has now been largely consigned to the category of history's 'might-have-beens' where academics can pick over the counterfactuals safely out of public gaze.

Other factors now help to keep the sanctions question out of the limelight. Since Desert Storm was completed with an absolute minimum of (multinational) casualties, attempts to pick over these counterfactuals now appear to many as a matter of no great practical importance. Most strategists expected the war list would be far longer, or that Israel would inevitably become actively engaged, so changing the course and political character of the conflict. Had either transpired, then it is probable that the case for sticking with sanctions would still engage a significant amount of public attention. But they did not, and to that extent many would now see little purpose in reviving the dormant sanctions debate.

In addition, the first drafts of "lessons" from the Gulf say nothing about the issue of economic sanctions. Though the various interested parties in the so-called new world order - broadly speaking, status quo powers, revisionist powers, and domestic dissenters - will all draw somewhat different "lessons" from the Gulf, they are likely to share a common conclusion that sanctions will be irrelevant to the maintenance of the new order.

The status quo powers of 'the new world order' will be bound, at least in public, by the argument they typically made when Desert Shield gave way to Desert Storm. At that critical juncture, they did not say that the sanctions net was too leaky, or that sanctions were having absolutely no effect³; they argued that **speed was of the essence** if the Kuwaiti population were to be spared from a prolonged and undoubtedly brutal occupation⁴. These arguments, coupled with the very success of Desert Storm in exorcising 'the Vietnam syndrome', now suggest that any future combination of flagrant aggression and brutal occupation should be met by the early application of military force.

As Fukuyama has argued⁵, a resolute revisionist power not deterred by Desert Storm would expect military escalation, and seek to pre-empt it in one of two ways. First, a proven arsenal of weapons of mass destruction could probe the weak spot in the American exorcism of Vietnam - namely, the question mark which still hangs over their willingness to absorb punishment. Second, a revisionist might well give more attention to the means by which control and expansion could be passed off as fraternal assistance to forces of national liberation. Hussein scored badly on both.

Lastly, domestic dissenters will approach any future crisis in 'the new world order' with not dissimilar conclusions. Insofar as they, in good faith, supported economic sanctions as the most appropriate response to the Iraqi occupation, they are now probably feeling that they were sold a dummy. Consequently, dissenters will probably interpret any future call for economic sanctions as a **prelude to war** rather than an effort to avoid it, and so oppose any attempt to implement them.

In short, economic sanctions are unlikely to rate a mention in any of the "lessons" which are currently being written in different quarters of 'the new world order'. This common conclusion should come as no particular surprise, for one of "the lessons" of the 1930s - widely advertised as the prototype for the Gulf crisis - was precisely a jaundiced view about the capability of economic sanctions.

Given that these various interests, practical conclusions and public sentiments all conspire to purge the issue of sanctions from the current public agenda, my brief to resurrect it appears daunting. In the US, for instance, Senator Sam Nunn, the Chair of the Armed Services Committee, has been labelled 'unpatriotic' for continuing to believe, even after the event, that war was not the best option⁶. Let me, therefore, make a number of observations which suggest why the current silence about sanctions is both politically and morally short-sighted.

First, the sanctions imposed on Iraq by the United Nations in early August are still in place. While the formal UN ceasefire terms allow the transfer of humanitarian aid into Iraq, they did not countenance a general lifting of sanctions on two-way Iraqi trade. Sanctions have become 'the weapon of last resort' tasked with imposing the political will of the United Nations on Iraq.

Other options for this necessary task were eliminated during the course of the war. In

theory, total occupation of Iraq was possible, though it was presumably ruled out on the grounds that there was neither a UN mandate, nor sufficient allied agreement, for it. Partial occupation was a second option, since some 15% of southern Iraq fell into allied hands during Desert Storm. Had Hussein then been promptly overthrown by his own military, the partial occupation could have provided a bargaining chip for dealing with a new generation of Iraqi military leaders. But he was not, and insofar as these occupied areas came to provide a refuge for Shi'ite rebels, they became functional to the reconsolidation of his regime.

Hence sanctions became 'the weapon of last resort' largely by default. The war which began with sanctions is now destined to end with them. Consequently, it is hardly appropriate to place debate about economic sanctions into a state of suspended animation.

Second, the formal prerequisites for the lifting of sanctions are onerous, and the task of satisfying them could well be protracted. The resumption of commerce remains hostage to the eradication of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, and the approval of a mechanism for economic compensation.

These former of these preconditions might well be difficult for even a favourably disposed Iraqi government - a description which hardly befits Hussein - to meet. It is, by definition, self-evident that whatever remains of Iraq's arsenal of advanced weapons has escaped detection by the vast array of multinational electronic intelligence employed during the war. Here it is pertinent to recall what Richard Perle once said about Soviet compliance with arms control agreements - 'we have never discovered anything that they have successfully hidden from us'. The ceasefire terms therefore beg two important supplementary questions; how is it intended to thoroughly root out these weapons to the satisfaction of the Security Council, and how long will this take?

The latter precondition may lead to an even more messy stand-off. Though the *de jure* authority to lift sanctions rests with the UN, the *de facto* power is largely in the hands of Saudi Arabia and Turkey - across whose territory Iraq's pipelines pass. It would be unwise to presume that their views on this issue will simply reflect UN decisions. In the Saudi case, their direct economic and strategic self-interests - in relative shares of the oil market; in preventing any rapid reconsolidation of Hussein's power base; in ranking the reconstruction of Kuwait ahead of Iraq - all suggest a hard line. Hence potentially conflicting interests within the

multinational camp, and perceptions of shifts in distributional gains, may paralyse collective decision-making on the suspension of sanctions.

Third; there will now be a strong temptation to expand the range of reasons for playing a tough line with sanctions. Given the practical and moral turmoil which Hussein's treatment of the Kurdish and Shi'ite rebels has created for their policy, Western spokesmen will be increasingly tempted to use the weapon of last resort to deflect the pungent criticism that these rebels have been left high and dry.

The first indication of this extension to the ends which sanctions should serve came as part of the package of Prime Minister Major's argument for Kurdish 'safe haven': he argued that there should be '... no relaxation of sanctions so long as he [i.e., Hussein] remains in power'⁷. Insofar as the push for a 'safe haven' acknowledged a clear allied preference to retain the territorial integrity of Iraq and the rediscovery of the 'principle' of non-intervention, the argument is riddled with contradictions between means and ends. Sanctions were once intended to 'encourage' the Iraqi people to overthrow Hussein, but they clearly no longer are. If a military overthrow is now all that is acceptable to the allies, then it needs to be carefully explained how sanctions will assist in the realisation of this goal; in particular, what place does civilian suffering have in 'bringing the military to their senses'? If, despite these pious wishes, Hussein manages to retain the levers of power, then it is not hard to foresee how Major's arguments lead down the road where sanctions would be conscripted - as they essentially were in Vietnam - to the cause of punishment.

Fourth: what we do know, if only inexact, is that conditions on the ground inside Iraq have decayed to the point where the suspension of sanctions is arguably a matter of great urgency. Those who once argued that sanctions were not working quickly enough now have to confront two facts: that a considerable period of additional time has passed since they first mounted those arguments; and that in the intervening period, a powerful 'force multiplier' (i.e., war) has markedly increased the 'social efficiency' of economic sanctions.

The report prepared in March by Ahtisaari, undersecretary-general of the UN, claims that the air war reached 'near apocalyptic' proportions, and that Iraq has been reduced to 'a pre-industrial age ... but with all the disabilities of post-industrial dependency on an intensive use of energy and technology'⁸. A particularly heavy toll has been exacted

across the whole range of public infrastructure; some valuations place total Iraqi damage at more than three times that of Kuwait. There is an immediate public health risk in Iraq's major cities which is acknowledged by all, and which relief agencies are attempting to address under trying conditions - including insufficient funds. Damage to the internal transportation network will complicate the next most urgent task of feeding those cities - a task which, given pre-war Iraq's high dependence on imported food and current unemployment rates between 70% and 90%, was proving difficult even before Desert Storm.

Even if sanctions were lifted forthwith, it would still take time and money before repairs to pumping stations and pipelines could be completed and significant quantities of oil exports resumed. The authoritative **Middle East Economic Survey** has reported that more than two-thirds of Iraq's oil export capacity has been destroyed, and that even the immediate suspension of sanctions would only enable Iraq to export 800,000 barrels per day (bpd) through its pipeline across Turkey⁹. Some estimates suggest that it will take up to five years before Iraq could achieve pre-war export levels.

Consequently, Jessica Mathews' characterisation of the strategy behind Desert Storm - 'bomb now, kill later'¹⁰ - seems particularly apposite, for it is highly probable that economic dislocation will add a significant number of civilian deaths to those inflicted through the war (and civil war).

Finally; it pays to be ever mindful of the fact that Desert Storm has not been so merciful in terms of the physical and psychological toll exacted from Iraq. Victory has not come at a high price for the victors, but the vanquished will long live with the memories of this war. It seems possible that total deaths from the air and land wars may well top 200,000; indeed, Soviet estimates are already 50% higher. Since about half the Iraqi troops in Kuwait and Southern Iraq were aged and poorly trained reservists, the effective civilian casualty rate is likely to be high. Many, it would seem, were caught up in the 'turkey shoot' on the roads leading out of Kuwait. Given the debate about whether this was 'a retreat' or 'a withdrawal', it would be simple-minded to presume that popular sentiment in Iraq and much of the Arab world will not be adversely influenced over the longer run. Similarly, the bombing of Baghdad seems destined to figure prominently in popular mythology.

It will therefore remain important to ask whether the attempt not just to militarily

defeat Hussein but to humiliate him may not have ultimately spread the sense of shame too widely. The best case against 'military necessity' was based on prudence rather than capability or potential cost, and gave prominence to the possibility of a fundamentalist backlash in the aftermath of a crushing Iraqi defeat. Those who made the case included the doyen of modern military historians, John Keegan¹¹. If the case for prudence proves even half-way right, then the question of whether sanctions could have done the same job better is likely to regain through time some of the pertinence which the afterglow of victory now denies it.

All of this suggests a highly relevant - and highly disturbing - precedent with the closing stages of the Great War. The blockade of Germany implemented in 1914 effectively remained in place for 9 months after the November 1918 armistice. As in Iraq, direct physical occupation was out of the question; consequently sanctions became more important as a source of political leverage once the war had ceased. The idea of starving Germany into submission, which lay at the root of the Royal Navy's blockade policy, began to be realised after the termination of hostilities. Civilian starvation became more common, while attempts at humanitarian relief were hampered by allied disagreements over the uses to which finite German currency reserves should be committed. The alleviation of civilian suffering was one important reason why Germany had little choice but to accept the humiliating terms of the Versailles peace. But over the longer run, the suffering which appeared so politically instrumental in the short run bred widespread resentment and general awareness of the low moral quality of the peace it helped secure. To that extent, the extension of the blockade helped pave the way for the even greater war that was yet to come¹².

In summary, sanctions are still in place. The current lack of public interest in them belies the enhanced significance they already have as the weapon of last resort. There is a possibility that the range of political functions they are meant to serve will expand rather than shrink. The prospect that they might continue to be applied through the foreseeable future should be a matter of concern on grounds of human welfare in the first instance, and a durable peace in the longer term.

For all these reasons, this is not the appropriate time to forget about sanctions - and yet sanctions are currently in the process of being excised from "the lessons" of the Gulf. The exercise is grossly premature when it is not grossly disgusting.

COULD SANCTIONS HAVE WORKED?

Let me say at the outset that I was never convinced that Desert Shield was intended simply as an exercise in deterrence and sanctions enforcement. From the earliest stages, I detected sounds that the White House's orchestration of multinational strategy was set to the beat of the footsteps of Vietnam. Openings for diplomacy were constantly foreclosed by general acceptance of the argument that there could be 'no reward for aggression'. Indeed, this counsel against rewards was amplified through linkage to an overtly 'orientalist' argument which required Hussein to be 'shamed' as the basis for enduring regional peace. Since active diplomacy is an important component of a sanctions operation, it always appeared to me that Desert Shield was an exercise in strategic deception.

That same sceptical judgement could be confirmed from other angles. The previous Gulf War provided scant evidence that the 'battle-hardened' Iraqi war machine was particularly effective - least of all in the decisive terrain of air power. If deterrence were the objective of Desert Shield, then it could have been obtained by supplementing the far from insignificant GCC stock of tactical air superiority fighters with airborne anti-tank capability in particular. The early deployment of carrier battle groups, stealth weapons and marines went far beyond the requisites for deterrence.

In addition, the political bandwagon which quickly fell in line behind the Cavalry pushed for the arbitration of force. Once Washington was able to exact not insignificant sums of money to offset Desert Shield's imputed costs, there was a sense in which subscribers to this public issue of American defence policy had to be repaid in kind - namely, with a favourable military solution. Consequently it was never clear that the US could afford not to deliver - if, indeed, it ever sought - anything other than a military verdict. By combination of these reasons, I quickly arrived at the conclusion that the role of sanctions in Desert Shield was to buy the time necessary for building up preponderant force¹³.

None of that sceptical assessment of Desert Shield is meant to suggest that sanctions could not have worked. What they clearly could not do - no one ever said they could - was to liberate Kuwait in accordance with an ever-contracting timetable. If we leave to one side the thorny question of why speed should have been so essential, the only interesting question which remains is not **whether** sanctions could have worked - but **what**

combination of sanctions and 'companion policies' would have yielded optimal political outcomes across the range of political goals that were, and remain, important in the Gulf. For the remainder of this paper, I shall outline why it was appropriate, in this instance, to retain faith in the power of economic sanctions to engineer a more optimal outcome.

The point of departure concerns images - specifically, the commonly held image about the basis of Iraq's political and military strength. In this country - and, I presume, in other allied camps - Iraq was depicted as a precursor of a new crop of 'middle powers' that possessed a sufficiently robust national power base to launch challenges to regional security structures which were becoming less certain with the relaxation of the vise of superpower rule. In Iraq's case, the spectacular expansion of oil revenues in the 1970s was held to have propelled it out of the rank of more ordinary Third World powers to a position of considerable strength. This image - one manifestation of 'the Hitler analogy' - requires fundamental revision.

To say this is not to deny that Iraq had accumulated an impressive array of conventional military forces, and at least the embryo of some disturbing unconventional weapons. But these forces-in-being said very little about the long run basis of Iraqi national power. They are testimony to the near-universal political backing which Hussein obtained during the war with Iran, and the generous lines of credit provided through that war by the Gulf states. Once denied political and economic patronage - a direct consequence of the invasion - Hussein had to fall back onto his own national resource base to underwrite the long run maintenance of his extended military position. That economic base was weak, and there were good prospects for further enfeeblement.

Though it remains common for our leaders to speak about the Gulf states as 'rich' states, it is absolutely vital to grasp the paradoxes entailed by the fact that the source of their 'richness' lies solely in the over-abundance of nature. Throughout the Gulf region, the 1970s expansion of oil revenues cemented the features of what has been called 'the rentier state'¹⁴.

In states where the major component of the national product has the character of a collective external rent whose dimensions are largely unrelated to productive effort, a rent-seeking ethos frequently infects the whole of society. The state apparatus, through spending on infrastructural projects and

various forms of transfer payments, mediates economic relations between the oil sector and the rest of the economy. Inter-sectoral linkages wither by comparison to external linkages, which expand to cater for both immediate consumption and investment. The services sector experiences hyper-growth but requires expatriate labour to provide advanced skills; agriculture enters a process of involution and often survives on the labours of an imported underclass; while industry frequently becomes dependent on constant infusions of subsidies and imports. Overall, the level of external dependency moves in parallel to the rise in rents, but tends to stay high when external rents decline¹⁵.

While recent details about the Iraqi economy have been hidden under the veil of wartime secrecy, it provides one of the better examples of this degenerative 'gold rush' syndrome. It is arguable that Saddam's invasion was in part a response to this syndrome, for his total external debt was close to US\$100 billion when his troops were dispatched. However, the most important political consequence in the context of our present concerns is that an economy with these characteristics is **particularly vulnerable** in the face of economic sanctions.

The first set of indices which lead to this conclusion revolve around the high degree of external sensitivity of the Iraqi economy. The UN sanctions were applied to an economy that was overwhelmingly reliant on one major export item - an item which made the majority contribution to the national product. The lion's share of Iraqi oil exports could be shut out of the international market by the turn of a tap in neighbouring countries. Once it was clear that a minimal deterrent capability was in place to forestall further threats or acts of conquest, Turkey and Saudi Arabia had no hesitation shutting out those exports. As Elliott et al. pointed out, the likely consequence was a fall of 50% in Iraqi GNP - a decline some 20 times greater than the average impact of successful sanctions campaigns since 1914¹⁶.

The scope of external sensitivity was not confined to the civilian economy; it was as much of a potential problem for the military. Iraq's easy access to foreign suppliers during the war with Iran - when cumulative arms purchases totalling US\$45 billion made Iraq the leading Third World importer¹⁷ - worked to the disadvantage of military self-sufficiency. Anthony has noted that Iraq only made 'limited progress' at indigenous defence production during that war¹⁸. Sanctions could therefore be expected to lead to some

decline in military competence through the medium term.

Second, there was virtually no prospect for Iraq to escape the dilemma of short term external sensitivity through policies of diversification. Sanctions can sometimes spark off an import substitution boom. This happened through the early years of the Rhodesian sanctions¹⁹, and one consequence was the jaundiced view that sanctions were actually counterproductive to intended ends. But this is no iron law. Rhodesia began implementing countervailing strategies from a position where the state's call on resources was low, and where access to South African capital and know-how remained open for a full decade.

However, the prospects for a similar countervailing strategy in Iraq were unusually bleak. During the Iran-Iraq war, conservative SIPRI estimates suggest that the Iraqi military sector quadrupled its call on national resources to an astounding 27% of GNP by 1985 - the highest figure for any nation²⁰. The recent remobilisation probably led to a similar skewed distribution of economic resources. In addition, Iraq's manufacturing sector was only marginally less dependent than its oil sector. The combination of high levels of general import dependence with a strong bias favouring 'guns' over 'butter' and an over-extended strategic position collectively suggest scant opportunities for any inter-sectoral diversion of economic resources through the medium term. These links, endemically weak in the rentier state at the best of times, would have totally hamstrung efforts at countervailing strategies.

In addition, the exit of Third World 'hostages' almost certainly hit the agricultural sector very hard. Recent reports of serious declines in the volume of rations inside Iraq provide firm evidence of poor performance in this sector. Though bottlenecks induced by the war probably account for some of this, the absence of inventive production possibilities under the 'gold rush syndrome' always suggested that short term sensitivity would lead directly to medium term vulnerability.

Third, the cost of sanctions did not necessarily loom large. Sanctions are a two-way street; they necessarily involve some level of current and imputed costs to the states that impose them, and there is no guarantee that the aggregate level of costs will automatically be less than the benefits they are supposed to yield. But on this occasion, it was evident from an early stage that other oil exporters were willing, with or without the blessing of OPEC, to dip deeply

into their spare capacity to cover the initial supply shortfall. Ultimately OPEC - and even traditional 'price hawks' such as Gaddafi - endorsed the sanctions effort. Consequently early fears about massive oil shortages and price rises did not eventuate, and there was a real opportunity to minimise the degree of economic damage to the world economy through the medium term.

However, much of the potential for 'economic damage limitation' was ultimately wasted. Judicious early releases from the near-record levels of private and public stocks held in the OECD world could have been employed to smooth over market anomalies through this transition in the pattern of supply when prices temporarily exceeded US\$40 per barrel, and many oil analysts called at that time for a less restrictive policy. In the event, significant stock draw-downs were delayed until Desert Storm got under way. By then, earlier price rises had already provided a strong fillip to inflation rates just when many OECD economies were entering recession, so creating the real dilemma which now afflicts the US regarding the management of interest rates. Whether it was wise to programme the release of stocks according to the timetable for the war remains to be debated. That issue should be discussed in the context of the significant opportunities which were passed over for bridging the political chasm separating the respective collectivities of oil producers and consumers which has long afflicted the oil market - but limitations of space do not permit an investigation here²¹.

Fourth, the outlook for any significant sanctions-busting was poor. There was some leakage of imports across Iraq's borders, but since this was black market activity rather than aid, its future was dependent on the scarce hard currency needed to finance it. All the customary purchasers of Iraqi and Kuwaiti oil supported UN sanctions, and there was no reason to believe that any would have returned to their traditional supplier once alternative sources came on line. To my mind, it therefore remains an open question as to whether the naval blockade was required to enforce sanctions once a land- and air-based deterrent against 'escalation dominance' was in place. The sanctions net would have leaked a little, but as Brzezinski has argued, the gap between sanctions that squeeze and sanctions that strangle can provide an opening for diplomacy²².

I take from this analysis one simple conclusion - that there was no reason to believe that sanctions would not exert debilitating political effects. The reasons why time was denied to them lie outside my

brief, but the consequences do not. I conclude, therefore, with some reflections on the costs of instant gratification.

CONCLUSION

*...once in a crisis, there are often no good options, only a choice among lesser evils.*²³

The difficult question remains - could the mix of policy have been better? To use Stein's terms; was there 'a lesser evil'?

I take it as axiomatic that the decision to use force has, to date, fallen well short of fulfilling the complete range of goals which were important, if unstated, in the Gulf. Hussein has been removed from Kuwait, and Iraq's embryonic high-tech arsenal lies in ruins. The goal of removing Hussein himself - which, as with the castration of the Iraqi arsenal, could hardly be agreed as UN policy, but was important nonetheless - remains elusive, and we are yet to see whether anything even beginning to resemble a new regional security framework, let alone a new world order, will pass through 'the window of opportunity' that Desert Storm is said to have opened. Personally, I remain sceptical that what has not yet been done on this agenda will ever be done. Were there, then, better ways to approximate all of these political ends?

The best blueprint, I suggest, comes not from a re-run of Munich but from the destabilisation and overthrow of the Mossadegh regime in Iran during the early 1950s. The details of this episode are well known, and do not need to be reiterated in detail here²⁴. In brief: Mossadegh rode a tide of nationalist opinion to power and promptly nationalised the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, which at the time accounted for 40% of Middle Eastern production and included the world's largest refinery at Abadan. Though both producer prices and royalty payments were low by more recent standards, oil still accounted for two thirds of Iran's export earnings and half of government revenue. Though Anglo-Iranian's downstream obligations were heavily dependent on Iranian offtake, the company simply refused to make purchases of 'nationalised oil', filed law suits against would-be purchasers of Mossadegh's output, and maintained its own downstream supply by securing alternate sources from other oil companies. Consequently Iranian sales declined to a fraction of their former level²⁵, and political turmoil began to brew throughout Iran - which provided the breeding ground for a successful CIA-orchestrated coup against Mossadegh. This example of an effective market shut-out hung over the heads of

Middle Eastern producers throughout the 1950s and 1960s and acted as a brake against further attempts at 'resource diplomacy'.

No precedent, of course, is ever exact. Mossadegh never posed a military threat to anyone; that difference suggests the need (which I obviously accept) for a conventional deterrent capability against further Iraqi expansion. Beyond that, the highly developed weaknesses inherent in the structure of the Iraqi economy, and the opportunities for providing aid through embryonic democratic political movements loosely aligned against Ba'ath rule, the similarities are more compelling. The passage of time worked to Hussein's disadvantage, while most of the grander political issues at stake in the Gulf - a new regional security structure; ways and means of addressing the proliferation of unconventional weapons; the 'new world order' - required time and refinement if enduring principles relevant to the future were to emerge. In the event, the rapid movement from deterrence to 'compellence' has made all of these tasks more, rather than less, difficult.

The main reason why this regional agenda is now harder to fulfil is that the real political winners in the Gulf are not the US and its major military allies, but its regional partners who have strong interests in the status quo. In the name of keeping Israel out of the conflict, the US has effectively mortgaged away any political or military leverage it may once have potentially had. Israeli conservatives now have the west thinking about the Palestinian problem the way they think about the issue; the country now possesses both the sword and the shield of an advanced arsenal; and it has a renewed bank of moral capital for having resisted the temptation to retribution. Turkey effectively inherits management of the Kurdish problem, while the Saudis are bequeathed what remains of OPEC. While some sort of 'extended Camp David' peace process may yet be possible between the Gulf States and Israel, the lock-out of the PLO remains a medium term recipe for disaster.

A similar story exists at the level of the 'new world order'. What the Gulf war has done is to cement in place styles of management more reminiscent of the past than indicative of the future. Insofar as Washington and a significant section of American public opinion now believe that military victory can function as some sort of surrogate for long-overdue reform of economic and political priorities - and obtain economic rents for this 'public service' - then precisely the wrong message is being received. Habits of the past, rather than blueprints for the future, have been

spectacularly re-confirmed. This, in my view, is quite unequivocally 'the greater evil'.

¹ My thanks to Alistair Sands, Tony Payne and Andrew Mack for their comments on earlier drafts, and to the Albert Einstein Institution of Cambridge, Massachusetts for financial support of my research on sanctions.

² K A Elliott & G C Hufbauer 'Sanctions in the Post-Cold War Era', *International Economic Insights* 1 (2) 1990

³ In Australia, the government held onto arguments in favour of sanctions well into late November, when Foreign Minister Evans argued in parliament that 'the Australian government shares the international consensus that United Nations sanctions are being effectively implemented against Iraq ... most assessments indicate that they [i.e., sanctions] are having a significant effect and that their main impact has been on Iraqi infrastructure and industrial production rather than food supplies ...'; *Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates*, (hereafter CPD) (Senate), 28 November 1990, pp. 4568-9.

⁴ See the debates surrounding the Ministerial Statement on the Middle East, CPD, (House of Representatives), 4 December 1990, pp.4319-35, and 5 December, pp.4415-35.

⁵ F. Fukuyama, 'Changed days for any Ruritanian dictator', *The Guardian Weekly*, 21 April 1991.

⁶ See 'Iraq's apocalypse', *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, 47(4), 1991, p.2.

⁷ 'EC Backs Enclave For Kurds In Iraq', *International Herald Tribune*, 9 April 1991.

⁸ 'A small casualty', *New Statesman and Society*, 29 March 1991.

⁹ 'Damage to Iraq Exports', *International Herald Tribune*, 12 March 1991.

¹⁰ J. Mathews, 'A New Meaning For The Term "Germ Warfare"', *Guardian Weekly*, 28 April 1991.

¹¹ J. Keegan, 'The Instrument of Catastrophe', *The Weekend Australian*, 12-13 January 1991. It should be noted that Keegan maintained that the avoidance of war was entirely Hussein's responsibility.

¹² On these issues, see A. Offer, *The First World War: An Agrarian Interpretation*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1989, especially pp.77-78, and p.401.

¹³ See my 'Low-profile' counsel too late for Hawke brigade', *Australian Financial Review*, 6 September 1990.

¹⁴ See M. Abdel-Fadil, 'The Macro-behaviour of Oil-rentier States in the Arab Region', in H. Beblawi and G. Luciani (eds.), *The Rentier State*, London, Croom Helm, 1987.

¹⁵ For further insight into the dilemmas of development around the Gulf region, see Y.A. Sayigh, *Arab Oil Policies in the 1970s: Opportunity and Responsibility*, London, Croom Helm, 1983.

¹⁶ K. Elliott, G. Hufbauer and J. Schott, 'Judging From History, the Anti-Saddam Sanctions Can Work', *International Herald Tribune*, 11 December 1990.

¹⁷ R.F. Grimmett, *Trends in Conventional Arms Transfers to the Third World by Major Suppliers, 1981-1988*, Washington, D.C., Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, 1989, p.51.

¹⁸ I. Anthony, 'The trade in major conventional weapons', in *SIPRI Yearbook 1989: World Armaments and Disarmament*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1989. Iran, by comparison, never established a solid foundation for external supplies, and this provided a strong catalyst for greater efforts at defence self-reliance.

¹⁹ For a brief description of the Rhodesian boom, see A.M.M. Hoogvelt and D. Child, 'Rhodesia: Economic Blockade and Development', *Monthly Review*, 25(5), 1973.

²⁰ See S. Deger, 'World military expenditure', in *SIPRI Yearbook 1989: World Armaments and Disarmament*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1989. esp. Table 5A.3. The comparable ACDA figures are over 40%; see *World Military Expenditure and Arms Transfers 1989*, Washington, D.C., US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, 1990, Table 1.

²¹ For some relevant first thoughts on this, see E.L. Morse, 'The Coming Oil Revolution', *Foreign Affairs*, 69(5), 1990/91.

²² Z. Brzezinski, 'The Goal is Assured Oil Supply', *International Herald Tribune*, 17 August 1990.

²³ J. Gross Stein, 'The Challenge of the Persian Gulf Crisis', *Peace and Security*, 5(4), 1990/91, p.5.

²⁴ For a concise overview of the Mossadegh episode, see D. Yergin, *The Prize: The Epic Quest for Oil, Money and*

Power, New York, Simon and Schuster, 1990, Ch.23.

²⁵For an assessment of the Iranian sanctions, see G.C. Hufbauer and J.J.

Schott, **Economic Sanctions Reconsidered: History and Current Policy**, Washington, D.C., Institute for International Economics, 1985, pp.236-9.



A customer for HMAS Darwin — Persian Gulf, 1991



Homecoming — Sailors on HMAS Success search the crowd for loved ones

MARITIME OPERATIONS IN THE GULF WAR

by

COMMODORE C.J. OXENBOULD RAN

As the Gulf Crisis deepened and conflict became more likely, the role of the RAN task group expanded to include direct involvement in military operations to remove Iraq from Kuwait. OPERATION DAMASK eventually resulted in Australian participation in the largest grouping of warships since world II and arguably the most powerful and complex naval force ever assembled. At the height of the conflict the allied maritime forces in the area comprised six aircraft carriers, two battleships, 15 cruisers, 67 destroyers and frigates and over 100 logistics, amphibious and smaller craft.

These ships together deployed more than 800 fixed and rotary winged aircraft. The fleet was assembled from 15 nations and participated in coordinated air and sea operations in a most complex environment with a remarkably high degree of integration. Together the force's firepower was awesome and its main role was to establish sea and air control of the Arabian Gulf and Red Sea area while providing strike support for the allied effort ashore. Pitted against this massive multinational force were the Iraqi air force, with about 1300 aircraft and a comprehensive array of anti-ship missiles and a small missile armed navy. The clever use of mines by the Iraqis, the possible use of chemical weapons and Silkworm missile shore batteries also added to the threat.

By any measure of effectiveness maritime operations in the Gulf War were highly successful. All military objectives were achieved for a remarkably small loss of life among the coalition forces. For those involved the war provided the most significant operational experience in their careers. With the short time available this morning I will only be able to skim over a brief narrative, highlighting the Australian task groups involvement. However, I will conclude with a few personal observations that may provoke questions or further conversation over lunch or during the remaining coffee break.

The guided missile destroyer *Brisbane* and the guided missile frigate *Sydney* formed as a task unit and commenced workup in mid October last year. The additional warning time that was available before the deployment was used to complete a series of

important enhancements, primarily in the areas of communications, anti ship missile defence and surveillance sensors. On 12 November the ships sailed from Sydney and continued an intense workup period during the three-week passage to the Gulf, which incorporated the many valuable lessons learned from the first deployment of *Adelaide* and *Darwin*. *Brisbane* and *Sydney* met *Darwin*, *Adelaide* and *Success* on the outer edge of the area of operations early on the morning of 3 December. On completion of a handover the new arrivals and *Success* continued into the Gulf of Oman (GOO). Entry into the Area of Operations (AO) was marked by an extension of the Australian operating limit to include the Arabian Gulf and an announcement by the Prime Minister that Australian units would be used to support United Nations Security Council resolution 678, which authorised the use of all available means against Iraq unless it withdrew from Kuwait by January 15.

As explained by Captain Shalders, maritime interception operations of Iraq- and Kuwait-bound merchant traffic had all but halted by this time and the first few days in the area were taken up with operational briefs and exercises with USN ships and a short visit to Muscat. Calls were also conducted on senior US officers. From these calls and the other briefs it was obvious that the coalitions blockade was very successful and that no goods were able to enter Iraq from sea and that only limited amounts were smuggled over land or by air. Although the sanctions seriously weakened Iraq and may have eventually destroyed its economy they were not forcing Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait and estimates were that this could take about 12 months.

Of significant note during this period, and often overlooked, is the fact that the level of sea control established by the multinational forces permitted the unhindered reinforcement and resupply of Saudi Arabia in preparation for the allied air and ground offensives.

Another conclusion drawn from these early intelligence briefs was that Saddam Hussein was not going to withdraw. He was simply too well dug in and prepared, to be posturing. At this stage the only two possible outcomes appeared to be war or a

backdown by the coalition forces. This conclusion added significant impetus to the need for change from interception operations to preparations for hostilities.

To achieve early assimilation into the Arabian Gulf anti-air warfare operations (AAW), the Task Group (TG) entered the Arabian Gulf on 16 December. After a day in the southern Gulf, *Brisbane* and *Sydney* moved to the central Gulf where continuous AAW surveillance and interception patrols were being conducted by the multinational forces. To add to the tension, Iraqi drifting mines were being discovered in the area, including one as far south as the entrance channel to Bahrain. Further command briefs for *Brisbane* and *Sydney* were conducted on board USS *Bunker Hill*, an AEGIS cruiser which was the anti-air warfare commander and stationed as a picket closest to the threat. A quickly established rapport with the *Bunker Hill* and other USN ships greatly assisted the smooth and rapid integration of the Australian units into a very active and complicated AAW picture.

To complete area familiarisation, *Brisbane* and *Sydney* arrived at Bahrain 21 December where further briefings took place on board USS *Blue Ridge*, the flagship of the USN Central Commander, Vice Admiral Arthur and in USS *La Salle*, the flagship of Commander Middle East Forces, Rear Admiral Fogarty. During the visit to Bahrain tight security precautions for ships and individuals ashore were enforced in response to the assessed terrorist threat and made the visit somewhat uncomfortable. *Success* meanwhile had departed the Gulf on 17 December for passage to the Seychelles for a well earned Christmas break.

Recommencing operations, *Sydney* sailed from Bahrain 23 December for patrol duties in the central Gulf, guarding against the possibility of an Iraqi pre-emptive strike at Christmas. While the area was outwardly quiet the increased level of coalition air activity during this period highlighted the evolving change in emphasis from interception to AAW operations.

However, the requirement to support the UN sanctions was still present and for some time a close watch was being maintained on the Iraqi "peace ship" *Ibn Khaldoun*, that was a Libyan sponsored attempt to discredit the coalition. This vessel had been loaded with food and medicine and stated its intention to break the UN trade sanctions. Aiming to maximise propaganda value, over 240 women, children and journalists had also been embarked in the vessel. To maintain an international flavour, Rear Admiral Fogarty requested assistance from other nations in the

interception of *Ibn Khaldoun*. *Sydney* was given this task and made a high speed passage out of the Gulf and down the coast of Oman to meet US ships *Oldendorf*, *Fife*, *Curtis*, *Trenton* and *Shreveport* on Christmas morning. A rehearsal was held later that day and the actual interception occurred on Boxing Day in the vicinity of Al Masirah Island. HMS *Brazen* also joined the team and *Sydney* acted as the lead intercept and challenge unit.

Evolving boarding techniques had now reached a very refined stage with the insertion of Marines by helicopter being particularly impressive and effective. The boarding was difficult and struggles occurred with passengers trying to seize the weapons of the boarding party. Shots were fired in the air and stun grenades were also used as part of a noise charge to regain control of the situation. Iraq later claimed that excessive force was used and several passengers reported miscarriages and heart attacks. Examination by USN doctors determined that the injuries were either feigned or unrelated to the actions of the boarding party, who had in fact shown admirable restraint.

As a result of the search *Ibn Khaldoun* was confirmed to be carrying prohibited goods and was held in custody pending the identification of a diversion port and offloading of this cargo.

While the *Ibn Khaldoun* event was continuing, another Iraqi vessel, their tanker *Ain Zalah* was reported underway and returning to Iraq from Aden with crew members from Iraqi ships laying idle at Aden. I was embarked in *Sydney* and given the duty of On Scene Commander for the *Ain Zalah* boarding as well as tactical control of US ships *Guam*, *Trenton*, *Fife* and 3 marine and seal units. HMS *London* also participated. On 29 December *Sydney* detached from *Ibn Khaldoun* to act as the primary interception ship and an 18 hour surveillance operation with the Seahawk commenced soon after. The following morning the Visit and Search took place at sunrise with the US seals seizing control and stopping the ship in less than 12 minutes, and within 30 minutes of the initial challenge. After a three-hour incident free operation *Ain Zalah* was cleared and allowed to proceed to Basrah and *Sydney* detached for passage to Dubai to see in the New Year.

Meanwhile *Brisbane* had sailed from Bahrain 27 December to continue operations with the *Midway* battle group in the central Gulf. The deadline for an Iraqi withdrawal was running out and the need to be fully prepared for our most likely employment in hostilities was now very pressing. At the time *Midway* had

only 2 escorts and the RAN presence was thus particularly welcome. Tensions were continuing to rise and on 30 December two Iraqi Mirage F1 aircraft entered the Gulf and approached within visual range of the on station combat air patrol (CAP) before turning away.

At this stage *Midway* was conducting familiarisation in the Gulf, operating within its confines for short periods then returning to the relative safety of the GOO. *Brisbane* remained with the battle group during its passage back out to the GOO on 4 January and remained with the carrier for two days before detaching and making an eventful passage to Dubai which included the rescue of a Pakistani fishing boat and an Iranian goat trader.

Success returned to the area from the Seychelles on January 2 and immediately assumed the role of duty tanker in the southern and central Gulf before entering Dubai on 7 January and acting as the host ship for the Multi-national Force (MNF) CTGs' meeting. This important meeting took place on 9 January and was also attended by the staff of Rear Admiral March, who had been designated as the USN Battle Force Commander. The continuation of MNF operations was a key issue in light of the ever increasing possibility that hostilities would commence shortly. The multinational force CTGs were asked to indicate their ability to assign units to the battle force and those who were requested to have their ships take up stations by 12 January in the lead up to the impending deadline.

After the conference *Brisbane* and *Success* sailed from Dubai and rejoined *Sydney* to conduct patrol and replenishment duties in the central Gulf. At the time an Iraqi pre-emptive strike was considered probable and, as if to reinforce this, on 11 January, about nine Iraqi fighters went "feet wet" in the north Arabian Gulf. The aircraft approached to within weapons release range of the coalition units in the most northerly picket stations before turning back and before the CAP could intercept. Several of these feints occurred in the following days.

In the increasing tension the Australian task group set about ensuring everything was in readiness. Orders were given for all personnel to be clean shaven for the fitting of Nuclear, Biological and Chemical (NBC) protective masks and to commence taking tablets for protection against chemical nerve agents. Later, as protection against biological warfare, all personnel were inoculated for plague.

On 11 January the *Midway* battle group, now retitled Battle Force Zulu, re-entered the

Gulf and *Brisbane* and *Sydney* took up assigned sectors around the carrier the next morning as part of the carrier's AAW/ASUW screen. Besides the USN ships, the only other allied units in this screen were the Dutch. The Royal Navy had two type 42 destroyers further north with the USN AAW cruisers and Tomahawk strike force and the Canadian CTG was in charge of the combat logistic force holding area in the southern Gulf. The other MNF ships were assigned as logistic force escorts and had some form of operational limitations imposed. On 13 January tactical control of all Australian units was formally passed to CTF154, Rear Admiral March, who was embarked in *Midway*.

In the last Australian pre-hostilities task, *Sydney* escorted *Success* on a delivery boy Northern Arabia Gulf "NAG Swing" to replenish those USN and RN units on patrol in the northern Gulf. The swing commenced on 14 January and was particularly tense with hostilities expected to commence shortly and an ever increasing threat from drifting mines.

In the final naval force expansion prior to hostilities, the USS *Ranger* battle group entered the Gulf on 15 January, becoming part of Battle Force Zulu and taking up station in the carrier operating area. Later in the day information was received that an Iraqi pre-emptive strike could be expected overnight. This possibility, though always anticipated, added to the tension and apprehension in the ships.

Fortunately the strike did not eventuate. The UN deadline for Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait expired at 0800 local time 16 January with no apparent reaction from either side. However, later that day information was received that coalition action would commence shortly and early the next morning hostilities were initiated. TF154 commenced Tomahawk missile and carrier borne aircraft strikes in the early hours of the morning. Iraqi reaction to the coalition offensive was not immediately evident and the expected retaliatory strike did not occur. However, later in the day the first Scud missiles were launched against Saudi Arabia and the following day Iraq launched Scud missiles against Israel in an unsuccessful bid to drag that country into the war and fragment the coalition. Though not a direct threat to the TF, the potential for escalating inherent in the use of Scuds, either against Israel or armed with chemical warheads was always a serious concern.

Brisbane and *Sydney* remained in the north western portion of the screen around the carriers throughout the first few days of the

war, closely observing the awesome display of strike power being unleashed. At times Tomahawk navigational way points were positioned within a mile or two of the Australian ships, causing some interesting moments and providing useful tracking practice if the launches were not promulgated in advance. *Success* meanwhile, operated with the logistic forces fulfilling the vital replenishment tasks.

Apart from the carrier air and missile offensive, the first naval actions in the Gulf were conducted by USS *Nicholas* and the Free Kuwaiti patrol boats. Clearance of Iraqi observation troops from the Dorra oil platforms commenced on the night of 18 January. These actions were very successful, preventing the oil platforms being used as bases for anti-aircraft activity and resulting in the first capture of Iraqi prisoners of war.

On 19 January the third carrier to join Battle Force Zulu, USS *Theodore Roosevelt* and her escorts, arrived in the Arabian Gulf after a fast transit from the Red Sea. On the same day *Sydney* broke free from the screen for 2 days to escort USS *Niagara Falls* to the northern Arabian Gulf. In addition *Success's* valuable period in the Gulf was drawing to a close. With the commencement of hostilities the tanker's time on station was extended by 5 days but she finally departed the Straits of Hormuz on 22 January.

On 24 January, USS *Curtis* and Free Kuwaiti forces were involved in the recapture of Qaruh Island. The capture of the Island had great symbolic significance being the first portion of Kuwaiti territory to be retaken. In addition, useful intelligence on minefield positions was gained from captured documents and Iraqi prisoners, including the first confirmation that mines were being deliberately set adrift.

The Iraqi Air Force had remained fairly quiet in the first days of hostilities, riding out the initial air offensive, and seemingly failing to press home attacks on coalition aircraft. However, on 24 January the IAF did venture into the Gulf when at least two Mirage F-1 maritime strike and three MIG 23 escorts were detected flying down the Kuwaiti coast apparently approaching the battle force. The air warning was raised to red and ships assumed higher states of readiness in anticipation of an attack. Coalition air superiority was soon evident as the 2 F-1 aircraft were splashed by Saudi Arabian F-15s and the other Iraqi aircraft turned away soon after.

That evening the air warning was again raised to red after intercepts of F-1 radar and reports of F-18 tanking over Iraq were

received. The F-1s are Exocet capable and were a primary concern. Thankfully no further activity was identified that night and, after an anxious period, the air raid warning reverted to yellow.

During the afternoon of 25 January various indications of a large air strike being prepared in Iraq resulted in swift reinforcement of the battle force CAP and tanker stations. Although nothing eventuated from this incident the rapid reaction of coalition anti-air defences was most impressive. It seems likely that the initial unsuccessful encounters with a well defended and prepared force dissuaded further Iraqi air attacks. On subsequent occasions minor activity was reported over land. However, the Iraqi Air Force did not attempt further incursions into the Gulf.

Further hampering of Iraqi air activity was the start of the coalition air offensive against hardened bunkers. Perhaps in response, reports were received on 26 January that large numbers of Iraqi aircraft had flown into Iran and throughout the remainder of the conflict the number of aircraft seeking sanctuary continued to increase. By the end of hostilities 138, mostly front-line, combat aircraft were reported to be in Iran. Despite Iranian assurances that the aircraft would be impounded until the end of the war, the threat of a minimal warning air attack originating from Iran was a significant planning consideration throughout the conflict and was increased with Iraqi aircraft in Iran.

Westralia entered the AO on Australia Day and proceeded to Muscat to embark stores landed there by *Success* and complete some radio installation work. Three days later the last Tomahawk firings originating from TF 154 were conducted when USS *Princeton* fired two salvos of three missiles. A change of coalition strike targets was now evident. As the initial objectives of destroying enemy command and control and air defence structure were achieved, strikes widened to include the attrition of all military targets in Kuwait.

During the earlier days of the war Iraqi naval vessels had made only tentative forays and were usually subjected to timely air attack. On 30 January, however, movement by a large number of combatants was detected from Iraqi ports in an apparent attempt to reach sanctuary in Iran. These units were quickly engaged by a combination of carrier based aircraft and RN Lynx helicopters operating in tandem and under the control of USN SH60Bs. One damaged Osa patrol boat was later reported to have reached Bandar E Khmoeini but at least 10 other combatants

were reported destroyed or badly damaged. Attrition of the Iraqi Navy continued for the remainder of the war and a total of some 138 vessels of all types were assessed to have been sunk or rendered non mission-capable.

RAN Clearance Diving Team 3 (CDT3) was deployed from Australia at the end of January to assist with the disposal of the very real mine threat. The team had valuable expertise in very shallow water operations which was not shared by the USN forces and would be very important in the event of an amphibious landing. The diving team deployed to Bahrain on 31 January for training, briefings and to await specific tasking.

By this stage the Iraqi threat had been reduced to the extent that the carrier operating area could be moved some 60 miles closer to Kuwait. This had the dual effect of reducing tanking requirements and increasing the sortie rate for carrier aircraft.

As the carriers moved north, *Brisbane* and *Sydney* restationed into the northerly sectors of the screen immediately south of the Zagros mountains gap and within sight of the Iranian coast. The Australian units thus became the first line of defence for both air and surface threats coming from Iran, all CAP aircraft being concentrated on the main threat axis in the direction of Iraq. This tasking demonstrated considerable trust by the USN in RAN capabilities as the threat of short or no warning attack from aircraft in or over Iran, was at the time considered very real. By this stage of the war *Brisbane* and *Sydney* were also being allocated duties as CAP and tanker control units, thus providing a further sense of involvement and purpose. On 5 February *Westralia* entered the Gulf for the first time under escort of the Danish frigate *Olfert Fischer* and the Norwegian frigate *Andenes* and proceeded to the central Gulf for a stores transfer with *Brisbane* and *Sydney*.

The fourth and last carrier battle group, USS *America*, entered the Arabian Gulf from the Red Sea on 13 February to add its firepower to that already present. At this point, strike targets were again shifting; from attacks on fuel storage, ammunition dumps, communications facilities and the like, to battle field preparation and the attrition of Iraqi front-line armour and artillery. At the same time, preparation for the commencement of Mine Countermeasure (MCM) Operations were continuing and a combined RN/USN MCM force commenced passage up the Gulf to positions in the NAG. Sweeping operations commenced several days later with the aim of clearing a fire support area to the south of Faylaka

Island in support of future amphibious operations.

On 14 February the carrier operating area moved again, this time a further 50 miles north west. *Brisbane* and *Sydney* moved concurrently to sectors on the north western edge of the screen, closest to Kuwait and the Iraqi threat. The logistic forces also moved from the Southern Gulf to a box which was to the south and adjacent to the carriers area.

The amphibious task force, TF 156, was at this stage making an overt transit up the Gulf deliberately advertising its presence to Iraqi intelligence. In pre-war planning, target dates of early and then mid-February had been set for a landing on the Kuwait coast but the concept had by now been rejected. A landing seemed likely to result in very heavy casualties and unacceptable damage to Kuwait City, particularly during initial bombardments. However, an amphibious raid on Faylaka Island was still planned and the elimination of threats to MCM and the amphibious force remained a top priority. The overt presence of the amphibious units was designed to focus Iraqi attention on the continuing threat from this direction. From post-war analysis, this ploy succeeded and Iraq completely failed to appreciate the direction of the final coalition ground offensive.

Sydney had a break from screening duties from 17 to 21 February when the ship was assigned to the combat search and rescue role with USS *Oldendorf* in an area just south of the Dorra oilfields and some 40 miles off the Kuwaiti coast, well within Silkworm missile range. The requirement was to rescue any aircrew that may be forced to eject over the Gulf and the Seahawk helicopter proved well suited to this task. In addition the Seahawk was required to conduct daily reconnaissance of Jaz Kubbar Island only 17 miles off the enemy held coast.

While on patrol overnight 19/20 February, *Sydney* experienced 3 very loud explosions in her vicinity. Two were correlated with allied activity but a third, which occurred in the early morning, was later linked to debris with Chinese markings which was found in the vicinity. Though unconfirmed it seems possible that the explosion may have originated from a Silkworm missile or artillery rocket impacting with one of the many oil well heads in the area.

On 18 February, first USS *Tripoli* then USS *Princeton* struck mines in the NAG causing only minor personnel injuries but significant structural damage to both units. *Sydney* was some 18 miles to the south of *Tripoli* at the time of the initial strike,

while in the latter incident *Sydney's* Seahawk was the first helicopter on the scene and ready to provide medevac support to *Princeton* if required.

The discovery of these minefields and reports of Silkworm missile targeting delayed mine clearance operations and they were not completed in time to allow the Faylaka Island raid to occur before the end of hostilities. However, adequate levels of mine clearance were achieved to allow battleship gunfire support to commence on 23 February.

On completion of duties in the NAG, *Sydney* proceeded down the Gulf to Dubai arriving there 22 February after 47 consecutive days at sea. *Westralia* joined *Sydney* in Dubai on the 23rd to allow the transfer of stores brought from Australia and unable to be transferred at sea in an operational environment. 23 February also marked the expiry of the latest US ultimatum for Iraq to commence the withdrawal of forces from Kuwait. G-Day, the start of the ground offensive, was initiated the following day. At the start of the offensive all four carriers were brought on line providing round the clock flying while shifting strike tasking from battlefield interdiction to close air support. *Brisbane* experienced its busiest air control activity during this final stage and on the day of the offensive had control of four tankers on two tanker lines and 6 CAP aircraft.

Coalition ground forces made rapid advances into Iraq and Kuwait but other threats remained. In particular the threat from Silkworm missiles along the coast was very real and a great deal of effort had gone into eliminating these sites with air-strikes. The portable nature and the relatively small size of the launchers, along with the presence of decoys, made certain destruction difficult and on 25 February several Silkworm missiles were fired at a naval gunfire support (NGS) group consisting of *Missouri*, *Jarret* and *HMS Gloucester*. Most fell into the sea shortly after launch, but one Silkworm posed a threat and *Gloucester* fired two Sea Dart missiles and destroyed it.

Sydney sailed from Dubai for AAW duties in the north western sector of the carrier screen on 25 February and remained there until the ceasefire. *Brisbane*, after also completing 47 days at sea arrived in Dubai on 27 February in time to hear that the coalition forces had entered Kuwait City and to witness the jubilation of the many Kuwaitis exiled in Dubai. That night President Bush announced that Iraq had been beaten and that a ceasefire would commence at 0800 local the following morning. Just

after the start of the ceasefire *Westralia* sailed from Dubai to continue replenishment duties.

With the requirement for the carriers to be so close to the Kuwaiti coast removed and to reduce the mine threat, the carrier operating area was shifted about 60 miles south-east back towards the central Gulf. The battle force now assumed a defensive posture. However, naval operations in the Gulf had not yet ceased and *Brisbane* sailed from Dubai 2 March for escort duties with the replenishment ships *Pasumpic* and *Niagra Falls*, operating in the NAG until 4 March. During this swing the threat from free floating mines was still very high. Three mines were discovered along the replenishment track including one that passed some 50 yards from *Niagra Falls*. This mine was kept in sight by *Brisbane* until a USN heliborne EOD team arrived to destroy it.

CDT 3 was meanwhile tasked to assist in the clearance of Kuwaiti ports. During a reconnaissance for this task on 2 March the OIC of CDT 3, Lieutenant Commander Griffith, made the only direct contact by an Australian with the enemy when he captured an Iraqi soldier who was hiding in a warehouse in Ash Shuwayck (The port for Kuwait City). CDT3 commenced deploying to Ash Shuaybah the next day and began diving and ordnance disposal operations soon after. Combined operations by USN/RN and RAN teams, in the most difficult conditions, allowed the official opening of Ash Shuabab on 12 March and RAN efforts were then moved to the Kuwaiti naval base at Ras Al Qulayah before moving on to Ash Shuwayck. The team performed extremely well and received much praise for its work.

The wind down of USN forces in the Gulf began almost immediately with the USS *America* being the first to depart the Gulf on 4 March to relieve the *John F Kennedy* and *Saratoga* battle groups in the Red Sea. The *Midway* battle group departed the Gulf on 10 March for the GOO and then continued passage to Japan 3 days later. *Sydney* acted as *Midway's* shotgun from 5-9 March, returning to the carrier screen on completion.

CTF 154 relinquished tactical control of all MNF on 9 March and Commander Middle East Forces assumed coordination duties for all units continuing to enforce UN resolutions. Also on 9 March *Brisbane* commenced her final escort role for replenishment units USS *Platte* and USS *Niagra Falls* on another NAG swing. After recent heavy weather the threat of drifting mines was thought to have increased; fortunately none were found. The escort duty continued until 14 March.

On the afternoon of 14 March the three Australian ships left the carrier operating area for the last time and made passage to Dubai awaiting a government decision on future Australian operations in the Middle East. Six days later it was announced that *Brisbane* and *Sydney* were to depart the Arabian Gulf on 22 March. *Westralia* and CDT 3 were to remain in the Gulf on MNF duties awaiting a further government decision.

So that is a very brief synopsis of maritime operations in the Gulf War. Undoubtedly the applicability of the war to Australia's strategic situation will be argued at length.

Nevertheless there are many lessons to be learnt from committing ships to combat for the first time in 20 years. Some are far reaching and expensive and will require close consideration in the overall ADF program, while others are relatively minor and only require a little bit of fine tuning. From the overall experience of Operation Damask, I think the ADF, and the RAN in particular, can be heartened.

All RAN ships and units drew considerable and genuine praise from the allied commanders for their performance. In some very tense and demanding circumstances, the performance of all personnel was professional and purposeful and for my part it was a pleasure to serve with such an expert team. The quick reaction in deploying *Darwin*, *Adelaide* and *Success* was also most impressive.

Furthermore the ships were supported by an excellent logistic chain which, with support from the RAAF transport, kept us well supplied. When the ships entered harbour after 47 days at sea they were without any defects which effected their operational ability and possibly in the best material state of their lives.

Together these indicators reflect well on the Navy's personnel and its standards of training, recruiting and readiness.

The package of enhancements which was put together and installed in a commendably quick time also worked well and allowed full integration with the American battle groups. However, the extent of enhancements required in Tier 1 surface combatants raises some questions with regard to the fitted for but not with policy. In addition, and as found by other navies (such as the USN), the inner layers of anti-ship missile defence still require strengthening and helicopters need to be equipped more comprehensively for the surface surveillance and strike role.

On the broader operational side, there were many strong points. The most noteworthy was the success of the overall allied strike warfare plan and the very valuable contribution made by the carrier based air wings, Tomahawk missiles and precision guided munitions. By the ceasefire, approximately 14,000 of the overall coalition total of 110,000 sorties had been flown by the four Gulf carriers and one dropped over 300,000 lbs of ordnance in a single day and averaged over 200,000 lbs a day. The integration of the allied forces was also impressive as was the control of such a massive force with very few real problems and it reflected the considerable benefit of large multinational exercises such as RIMPAC.

Overall there were far more positives than negatives.

Operation Damask and the Gulf War provided a unique experience where the RAN provided a very visible and active participation that allowed Australia to demonstrate its very clear resolve to support the United Nations security council and Kuwait.

The challenge is now to heed the lessons of this experience.



NEWS UPDATES

Jane's 94th edition.

The release of the 94th (1991-92) edition of the authoritative reference *Jane's Fighting Ships*, was accompanied by a lengthy news release from the book's Australian distributors, Hinton Information Services.

The Hinton release summarised the book's foreword, provided by the Editor, Captain Richard Sharpe, RN (ret.). Captain Sharpe puts the view that naval forces "...were the first to signal unambiguous opposition to the threatened invasion of Saudi Arabia (and)...enabled the ground forces to be established in Saudi Arabia by ensuring the safe arrival of several million tons of reinforcement and resupply..."

Sharpe also points out the value of ship-launched aircraft and missiles and the help the threat of amphibious invasion gave the land invasion when it came.

He was critical, however, of the failure of some governments to place their ships under a unified operational command.

It is a tradition for *Jane's* to present a review of the world's navies. In the current edition, Captain Sharpe draws attention to the continuing decline of European navies and warns that dependence on US naval support might well become more difficult as US distant deployment levels fall. There are, according to Sharpe, implications in this for countries like Japan and Australia.

Despite the appearance of slipping down into the economic mire, says Sharpe, the Soviet Union has launched ten new submarines (six nuclear powered) in the past year and is sea-testing a new class of frigate. The Soviet Navy is not suffering the same level of cutbacks as other forces.

Captain Sharpe is also critical of the lack of hard orders by the Royal Navy for new surface ships and submarines, despite often-stated commitments to new and improved naval capabilities.

New Swedish Combat Vehicle

While not of particular Naval significance, the new CV90 fighting vehicle is of general interest, partly because the Australian Army is in the process of procuring a vehicle for a comparable role.



The CV90 is a 22-tonne, 70 km/h tracked vehicle with a stated range of 300km and a ground pressure low enough to allow it to operate in marshy ground, snow or soft soil.

As well as a Bofors 40mm cannon and 7.72mm machine gun, the CV90 grenade launchers and can carry up to eight fully-equipped soldiers.

Submarine refit on schedule

Australian Defence Industries reports that the \$41 million refit of HMA Submarine *Onslow* is on schedule. *Onslow's* casing has been removed and ADI workers are now stripping out all equipment.

ADI has been named preferred tenderer for submarine refit work and has said that it expects to start refit work on a second submarine later in 1991.

According to ADI, a submarine refit contract represents two years' work for about 250 tradespeople and a similar load for subcontractors.



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