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## **JOURNAL OF THE AUSTRALIAN NAVAL INSTITUTE**



## **The Australian Naval Institute Inc.**

The Australian Naval Institute was formed and incorporated in the Australian Capital Territory in 1975. The main objects of the Institute are:

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

The Institute is self-supporting and non-profit making. All publications of the Institute will stress that 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 discourage discussion, dissemination of information, comment and opinion and the advancement of professional knowledge concerning naval and maritime matters.

The membership of the Institute is open to:

- Regular membership is open to members of the RAN or RANR and persons who, having qualified for regular membership, subsequently leave the service;
- associate membership is open to all other persons, not qualified to be regular members, who profess an interest in the aims of the Institute;
- Honorary membership may be conferred upon persons who have made a distinguished contribution to the Navy or the maritime profession or rendered service to the Institute.

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# JOURNAL OF THE AUSTRALIAN NAVAL INSTITUTE

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## From the President



This quarter sees our final journal for 1992 and the last in the old format before we go to a new style in 1993, which I sincerely hope will evolve in quality stimulus and in the quantity.

As the lead article for this issue, *The Year in Retrospect*, we are privileged to be able to publish the Chief of Naval Staff's review of 1992 and some of his thoughts on the way ahead for the RAN. The message is clear, it is one about change and the need to manage change and make it work for the benefit of the RAN. I am sure the Chief would endorse my sentiments that we in the Institute have an important part to play in assisting the navy navigate its way through this process of change, in achieving its goals, and in meeting the challenges of the years ahead.

During the month many of our Corporate friends joined with us in Canberra for a dinner to thank them for their continued support of The Institute. We are in the process of arranging a day at NAS Nowra in the new year, so that they will gain a better understanding of Naval aviation as an integral part of our ships' combat system.

As I wrote in the last journal, The Institute has a legitimate role in articulating the importance of maritime thinking in Australia. The strength of Australia's future lies in our youngsters and if we are to achieve our task by informed debate in our journal we need to actively encourage the young officers and our sailors to join The Institute and to participate in the debate. I know their ideas are refreshing and it is time they were published. They will almost certainly engender response.

Please encourage membership - contribute to the debate - contribute to the journal - only then will The ANI have the potential to go from strength to strength.

Regards,

Don Chalmers

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*The Journal Publishing Group — from left: Jason Sears, Dick Sherwood, Di Devereaux and Richard MacMillan*

## From the Editor

As noted in the last journal, Don Agar has moved onto greener pastures, and I am sure all members join with me in acknowledging the contribution Don has made over the last four years in ensuring that the members have had a wide variety of published thought on maritime issues pass through the pages of the journal. No doubt he will make a success of his new endeavours. As was also noted a Journal Publishing Group, or perhaps more correctly an

Editorial Board has been formed to oversee the development of the journal as we move the ANI towards the year 2000. In this respect, I am only too happy to say that I have inherited the daunting task of managing editor with at least the ongoing support of Simon Woolrych, Richard MacMillan, Di Devereaux and Jason Sears. It is our intention to endeavour to ensure that the Journal meets the needs of you, the members of the Australian Naval Institute, and in that respect your feedback is most welcome.



It was of interest to note that in his first journal as editor, back in August 1988, Don noted the need to receive plenty of contributions if the journal was to maintain the high standards required by the Institute's members. Significantly, he noted in his final issue, that of August 1992, that a less than satisfactory number of articles had been received for the forthcoming issue. In fact by the end of October the number was exactly zero, and as we go to print nothing has been received for February. The simple message is, we can try all the innovations possible with respect to editorial/publishing strategies, but without input from you, the journal will very quickly deteriorate from being a medium by which a broad cross-section of members can express their opinions on developments in maritime and naval affairs, to a medium for the views of a select group of naval *academics*, or worse, as a medium for reprinting material from other published sources. Surely, there must be lots of issues getting the rounds of the mess-decks that are perhaps worth someone putting pen to paper — Women at Sea, acceptable sexual behaviour, NQM, special pay privileges for PWOs, tying ships up, regional security commitments, law of the sea, technological developments, information systems and their use by the navy and the so-called peace dividend, would seem to be a few that come to mind.

That, the standard editor's plea out of the way, what have we install for you in this issue? Well firstly, there is a very timely article on ASW by Graham Dunk, which will hopefully result in some thought provoking responses (any length will do) from the warfare community, especially at a time when the question of ASW is under the microscope at the policy level at least. Ian Pfennigwerth provides the reader with an interesting insight into a DA's job, especially in a communist country and fair warning for any pending guests of the Jinling Hotel, Nanjing. Simon Andrew's paper on Inspections and

NQM is perhaps timely, Tom Frame provides his regular input and Greg Swinden has provided another short historical piece for the naval history buffs. There is another book of the quarter, plus some ongoing book specials. For those who bought Tom Frame's *Garden Island* last quarter, we apologise for the sudden drop in price — market forces (Academic Remainders have severely undercut us).

Of special note, the membership secretary tells me that our **Replied Paid mailing envelopes** are working well (although some members still forget to put their names on the change of address form). One of the most serious problems facing the Institute in recent times has been keeping track of its members, so please let us know when you change address. Finally, the end of the year means membership renewal. Use the reply paid envelope and show your continuing support of the body that in essence exists to represent you — the naval profession.

From all of those involved with compiling the journal, may we wish our readership a Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year, and we look forward to your continuing support in 1993.

Sincerely,

Dick Sherwood

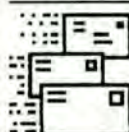
## NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the ANI will be convened in Canberra on Thursday 18 February 1993 at 7:30pm for 8:00pm.

The venue is Legacy House, 37 Geils Court, DEAKIN, ACT.

Items for inclusion in the agenda should be forwarded to reach the Secretary no later than 8 February 1993





## Letter to the Editor

The Editor,  
Journal of the Australian Naval Institute

Dear Sir,

### NAVY PROJECT MANAGEMENT

I refer to the article by Lieutenant Commander Alan Hinge, RAN *The Navy Project Manager's Primer* in the August edition of your journal.

In his article Commander Hinge provides a handy check list of questions for the big ticket Navy project manager that may assist planning and prevent problems by minimising the likelihood of previous project mistakes being repeated; to the detriment of cost, schedule, specification and perhaps one's own career.

What were the previous project mistakes and will this handy check list provide the answer for the future? Of course it won't, as it barely scratches the surface of the problems that face the proactive project manager. So where is the good Commander leading us?

He quite wisely takes us back in time to the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Public Accounts' (JPCPA) Report *Review of Defence Project Management* issued in 1986. He reminds us that the Committee was critical of the Defence Department and made a number of recommendations to improve the management of capital projects in the Department of Defence.

The JPCPA was quite strong on the role of the project director, the training and experience he should have and that he should be accountable and responsible for his project, particularly in respect of major capital equipment projects. As I recall the JPCPA proposed the establishment of a project management specialisation to ensure that suitable officers would always be available, given the extensive capital program in the offing.

The Report had much more to say and, together with its supporting papers, makes compelling reading.

The inference in Commander Hinge's article, as it is in the nature of a helping hand, is that the current Departmental guidance on project development and management is still deficient in the directions it gives to project managers to avoid the problems of earlier years and to be fire proof for the future.

But more intriguing is why does he suggest a primer would help now, surely if we have taken full account of the 1986 Report we must be well passed the primer stage!

Is the real inference in Commander Hinge's article, written from the heart of the Naval Materiel Division, to suggest that the level of effectiveness in the training of project managers in the Defence Department has only reached the primer stage, that the development of the project management specialisation is not that far progressed and that therefore the future of a very comprehensive, costly and complex capital equipment program is not secure? One must be careful not to read too much into his intriguing article!

Defence project management as expounded in the Capital Equipment Procurement Manual, for example, is a carefully structured process. It is not the sort of process that one could expect to practise successfully without considerable instruction beforehand and without a well developed understanding of the concept of project management.

Project management is a specialisation in its own right, at least that is what the Australian Institute of Project Management believes and is actively securing the support of Industry to foster and develop.

Returning to Commander Hinge's handy checklist, I believe it is fair to say that the currently documented Defence Department procedures, if followed in a disciplined manner, would ask the same questions posed by Commander Hinge and at the optimum time.

But it is not the questions themselves which will achieve the stated intention of his article. A critical factor also is the perception and intuition of the project director to appreciate the real meaning of the answers to a more timely and wider set of questions that have been carefully structured in the established processes which have grown out of the very criticisms in the 1986 Report.

Each question and answer should cause the *proactive* project director to assess what is going on around him, how to react to it and how to control it. This is a skill nurtured in modern project directors by training and experience. It is a skill which should be complemented by a thorough understanding of Government

Departments and the commercial world into which the director's project is taking him. It is a skill to be expected in a professional from a recognised specialisation. It is a skill that is so essential to the capital equipment program which provides the materiel strength of the Defence Force.

Valuable though primers are for beginners, the management of major Defence projects is not for them, at least, that is, I believe, one of the most significant lessons of the JPCPA Report of 1986. There is no substitute for the well trained, experienced and long term specialist in project management.

Even though we may approach the question quite differently, I join with Commander Hinge and ask what is the future of the project management specialisation in the ADF?

B.L. WEST RADM RAN (Rtd)

A previous Chief of Naval Materiel.





## THE YEAR IN RETROSPECT

### A MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF OF NAVAL STAFF

1992 has been a very busy year for the RAN. Australian ships have enforced UN sanctions in the Gulf whilst also participating in three major exercises - K92, RIMPAC and STARFISH. Accounts of these activities are contained in the Navy Annual, *Australia's Navy 1992-93*, which also provides an update on the progress of our journey of self-reliance with articles on the Collins and ANZAC projects and the future of Australian shipbuilding. In this article I would like to review the year that has been and look towards 1993.

#### The August Budget

There were fears before the Treasurer's announcement of the 1992 Federal Budget that Defence would suffer a real cut in funds. In the event, Navy's funding allocation of \$1411 million was an increase of \$50 million or 3.6% over actual outlays for the fiscal year 1991/92, but the difference basically represented the effect of inflation and exchange rate movements and thus represents zero growth in real terms.

Consequently, the August budget will allow the Force Structure Review priorities to proceed as planned although it is likely that the Defence budget will be reduced by 0.5% in 1993-94 and then maintained at this level in real terms in 1994-95 and 1995-96.

This was as good as Navy could have realistically expected with the foreshadowed reductions only serving to underline the need to continue the FSR changes and other measures aimed at improving efficiency.

#### Self Reliance

Our drive towards self-reliance has picked up pace. The Seahawk Squadron HS816 was commissioned earlier this year as was the Australian built guided missile frigate HMAS *Melbourne*. *Melbourne's* sister ship, *Newcastle*, is likely to be completed in mid-1993 — some months ahead of schedule. Fabrication work on



the new submarines (*Collins*, *Farncomb* and *Waller*) continues and construction work on the first of the new frigates, *Anzac*, has commenced. Both projects are on schedule and on budget. I am confident that this fine performance will continue into the future with the proposed mine warfare forces, the offshore patrol vessels, oceanographic ships, helicopter support ship and DDG replacements. This year Defence will spend about \$1.16 billion on the ANZAC and Collins projects alone which equates to around 40,000 jobs for Australians and over \$400 million in revenue being returned to the Government.

#### Naval Quality Management

Naval Quality Management was introduced last year in an endeavour to eliminate waste and provide greater job satisfaction at all levels. Since the introduction of NQM some progress has been made towards changing the way that Navy managers do business, however, given the scope and diversity of the organisation, the level of success achieved is not uniform. I commend to you the informative article on the progress of NQM contained in *Australia's Navy 1992-93*.



It is most important to remember that NQM is not a short term 'fix'. Its greatest benefits will become most apparent a number of years from now with the culture change, although I believe that it has already resulted in a trend towards people being happier, more satisfied and motivated in what they are doing.

### **Rationalisation of Facilities**

As a logical extension of the Force Structure Review and other related efficiency reviews, the Facilities Rationalisation Study was initiated in January of this year. The study is aimed at consolidating the training and support bases in southern Australia into the minimum practicable number of major complexes, emphasising both multi-user and joint facilities. Within this framework, HMAS *Lonsdale* in Melbourne has closed. We are also examining the potential for rationalising functions elsewhere in the Navy Program.

The long term rationalisation plan being developed is expected to realise considerable resource savings which could then be used to further implement the recommendations of the Force Structure Review. Navy, as well as the other programs, would have an opportunity to share in these savings, enabling us to invest greater resources in other priority areas.

### **Training Initiatives**

Consistent with the national management approach to both command and control and Navy's Program Management and Budgeting structure, a separate training command will be established from 1 July next year. It will be fully responsible and accountable to CNS for national training activities.

### **Management of Information**

Central to Navy's now long standing drive to become leaner and more efficient is good management of information. My aim is to introduce modern information systems into Navy to enable better decision making at all levels.

Progress will be incremental. It will be important

that Navy not waste resources. To this end, Navy is to develop an information systems plan (NISSPLAN) in conjunction with the Defence Information Systems Strategic Study. Procurement of systems will be based on cases which clearly support business information needs or on demonstrable efficiency gains.

### **The Navy and the Environment**

The RAN has always been environmentally conscious although, in the past, it often dealt with its responsibilities on a reactive basis without comprehensive policy direction. Navy is now taking a pro-active approach to the environment and, as of April this year, has established a Navy Environmental Cell which is to produce a Navy Environmental Plan by mid-1993. This Plan will include two key documents a source manual and a policy manual as well as training and awareness programs, auditing and monitoring plans, networks of contracts and accords with other groups in government and industry.

### **Personnel Matters**

Much has occurred in the personnel world over the past twelve months. Navy is currently developing an Enhanced Posting System which should be operational by late 1993. The system has been designed as an automated career management system matching billet prerequisites to the qualifications, education, training and experience data held on individuals. It will allow career managers to monitor and control the funding associated with postings and have the potential to include course planning.

One outcome of the Force Structure Review was that both technical training and associated facilities would be rationalised. Consequently, there has been a decision to move away from trade based apprentice training to competency based technician training. Under TTP '92, technical training will align itself with the National Training Board and adopt a competency based system utilising the national core curriculum. Initial technical training will be centred at HMAS *Cerberus* and all advanced technical training which includes equipment



application courses and further academic studies will be undertaken in fleet training centres or local TAFEs.

Changes have also been occurring in the Seaman Branch. The Seaman Categories Rationalisation Study was commissioned in January this year and completed in September. It provided a blueprint for the future of the Seaman Sailor branch. Faced with the twin problems of an outdated, inefficient structure and the need to minimum man hi-tech ships, SCRS proposed radical changes. By creating categories based on functional needs and using multi-skilling, SCRS has reduced fourteen categories to seven. No functions are deleted, but more effective means have been found to fulfil them. Although the implementation of SCRS is under way, an instant solution is not expected. The scope and complexity of the task dictate that it will take at least two years to complete.

The area of service conditions and pay reform remains complex and difficult. In the prevailing industrial and economic climate there has been

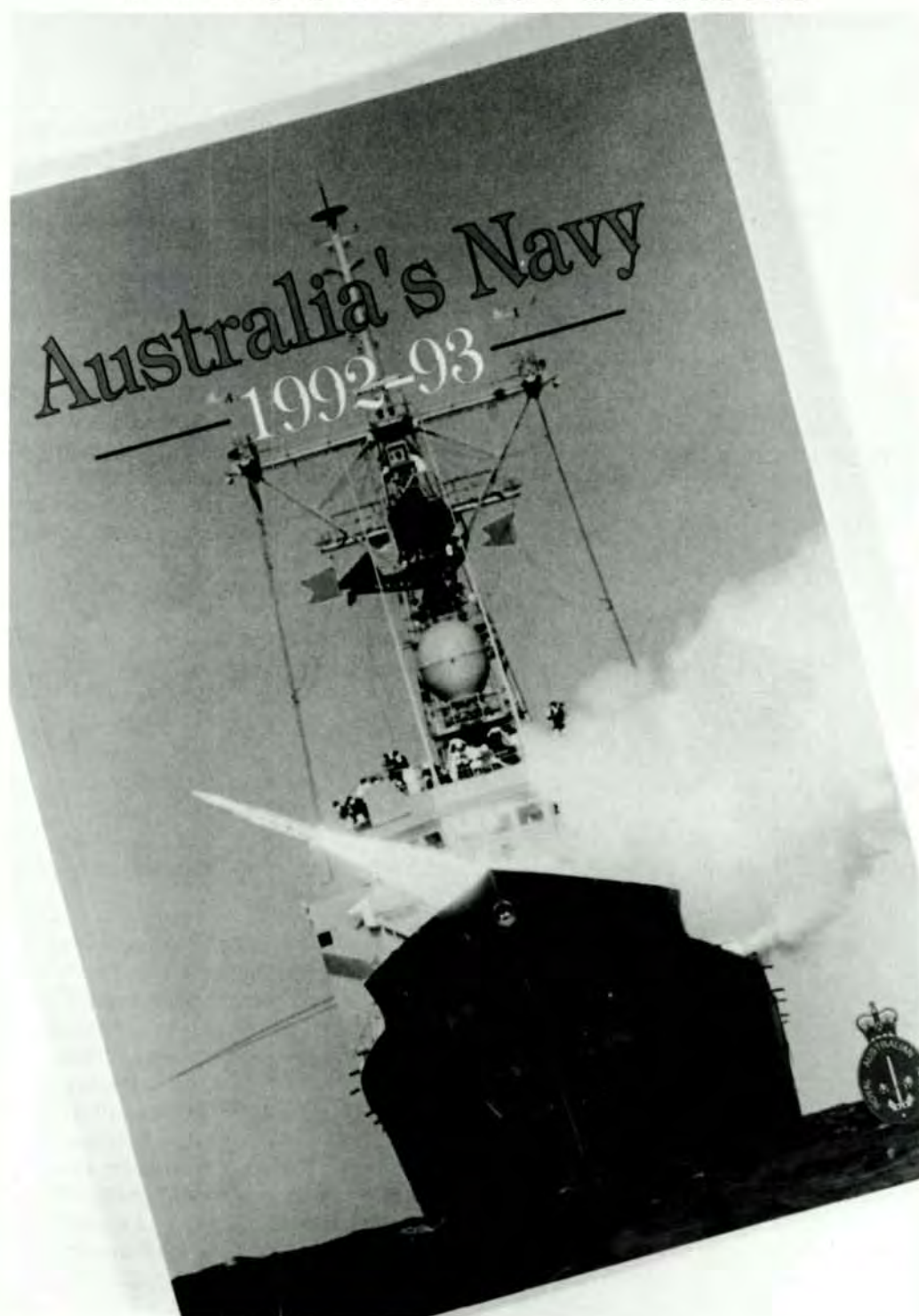
little opportunity for significant pay initiatives. Normal periodic reviews of salary-related allowances have progressed. It is important that we continue to improve service conditions during this period of high retention otherwise, when the economy picks up, Navy might be faced with the prospect of losing expertise at the time when it can least afford to — midway through its journey of self-reliance.

In summary, it is clear that Navy is going through a period of great change. The overall message is that we must learn to manage this change and make it work for us. Funds will continue to be tight and every effort must be made to make our operations more efficient and effective. I am confident that in Navy we have the talent and determination to meet these challenges and to take the RAN into the Twenty-First Century.

I.D.G. MACDOUGALL  
Vice Admiral  
Chief of Naval Staff



## **ANI BOOK OF THE QUARTER**





## AUSTRALIAN NAVAL INSTITUTE BOOK OF THE QUARTER — SUMMER 1992

Introduced by Jason Sears

**ANI Book of the Quarter Special discount of 15% to ANI members presenting a copy of the AGPS advertisement accompanying this article.**

**Australia's Navy 1992-93, The Third Annual of the Royal Australian Navy, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1992, softcover, 104 pp., 130 colour photographs, RRP \$14.95.**

*Australia's Navy 1992-93* is the third edition of the Navy Annual and it continues to impress with its progress and content. The standard of both the written and photographic contributions is very good and the Australian Government Publishing Service has maintained its high production standards.

The Annual provides a high quality publication that informs Australians about their navy. *Australia's Navy* is also used by Australian Defence and Naval attaches and commanding officers of ships as a means of giving government officials in regional countries an insight into the RAN.

The 1992/93 edition of *Australia's Navy* has focused upon the RAN's operations in support of the United Nations, the Navy's journey of self reliance and the Service's commitment to the environment.

The Royal Australian Navy continues to support the United Nations in a variety of ways. Since the end of the Gulf War its guided missile frigates *Darwin*, *Sydney* and now *Canberra*, have operated in the Arabian Gulf in support of UN security resolutions enforcing sanctions against Iraq whilst some Navy personnel were also

involved in the very dangerous task of conducting inspections of Saddam Hussein's chemical and biological weapons arsenals. The Navy also has a communications unit in Cambodia and provided personnel for a movements control group to support the initial deployment of UN forces into the country.

At home, the RAN's drive towards self-reliance has picked up pace. The Seahawk Squadron HS816 was commissioned earlier this year as was the Australian built guided missile frigate HMAS *Melbourne*. *Melbourne's* sister ship, *Newcastle*, is likely to be completed in mid-1993 — some months ahead of schedule. Fabrication work on the new submarines (*Collins*, *Farncomb* and *Waller*) continues and construction work on the first of the new frigates, *Anzac*, has commenced. Both projects are on schedule and on budget.

*Australia's Navy* also contains a thought provoking article by Dr John White of AMECON on the future of Australian naval shipbuilding in which he urges Defence and industry to mirror the key elements of the proposed National Industry Policy which encourages the formation of large companies of world standard with in-house design capability and which facilitates the export activities of these companies by encouraging opportunities in the domestic market. It is well worth reading. Indeed, it is significant that our nation's two largest engineering projects are the ANZAC frigates and Collins Class submarines. This year Defence will spend about \$1.16 billion on these two projects alone which



equates to around 40000 jobs for Australians and over \$400 million in revenue being returned to the Government.

The Annual also reflects the Navy's progressive attitudes towards the environment. In her paper "The Royal Australian Navy: Protecting Australia, Protecting the Environment" Jane Dally shows that Navy has a vested interest in maximising the efficiency of its operations by developing a knowledge of and a commitment to the environment.

This third edition also continues its connection with The Sir David Martin Foundation with one dollar from the sale of each copy of the Annual being donated to the Foundation. The Navy Annual has already raised almost five thousand dollars in support of this worthy cause.

With 104 pages containing some thirty articles and 130 colour photographs, *Australia's Navy 1992-93* is very good value and would make an ideal Christmas gift. The Annual is an important publication which does more than provide an update on where Navy is. It is largely written by the officers and sailors who were involved in the activities described in its pages and for this reason I believe that it will become a valuable historical



# Australia's Navy

## 1992-93

### *Beyond the Gulf War*

The third volume in a series of full colour annuals produced by the RAN, *Australia's Navy 1992-93* offers an absorbing and enlightening insight into a wide range of Navy activities over the last twelve months. On one hand, the Navy enforced United Nations sanctions in the Red Sea against Iraq and, on the other, rescued people stranded by flooding on the southern NSW coast.

And, while the RAN worked closely with other allied navies, in such exercises as the August RIMPAC 92 gathering at Pearl Harbour, it continued the drive towards self reliance. Self-reliance means Australian industry building Australian ships. It presents a new series of challenges to a Navy used to relying on the expertise of its allies.

In fact, what *Australia's Navy 1992-93* reveals, in over one hundred full colour pages, is that the RAN is not just a wartime service. It is an organisation dedicated to serving Australia.

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## ASW - WHAT FUTURE RELEVANCE FOR THE RAN?

by

LCDR G.A. Dunk BSc MSc MCGI RAN

Anti Submarine Warfare (ASW) in the RAN is a dying art form. This has been brought about by a variety of factors; the inability of tactical development to adjust to the different employment of submarines since World War II, the reduced amount of submarine exercise time available to surface ships, but more particularly the *Defence of Australia 1987* (DOA 87) statement that 'the threat to Australia from submarines is low'<sup>1</sup>. This has made it difficult to argue for ASW capabilities through the Defence higher committees, with even the decision to fit a hull mounted sonar to the ANZAC ships not being a fait accompli.

What however is the answer? Does it lie in the traditional approach of assigning some sort of future threat to our neighbours, of determining

capability acquisition and will continue the slow decline to irrelevancy and extinction.

It is an incontestable fact that Australia is one of the more secure countries in the world, by virtue of its geographic position, lack of land boundaries with any other country, and its non-threatening political outlook. As stated in *Australia's Strategic Planning in the 1990s* (ASP 90) 'no specific military threat to Australia in the foreseeable future'<sup>2</sup> has been identified, although the possibility of some threat developing in the future cannot be totally ignored.

Defence policy lists as one of its objectives the promotion of strategic stability and security in the region<sup>3</sup> whilst the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Senator Evans, has gone further and

repeatedly spoken of regional confidence building, and the concept of "common security"<sup>4</sup>. These actions are directed towards ensuring that the possibility of any threat developing is further removed, and that it will not involve our regional partners. This implies that this threat, should it eventuate, will come from some extra-regional nation.

ASW is an expensive business, in terms of both capital equipment and manpower, with results not being immediately

obvious due to the visually impervious medium in which the target operates. The environmental data necessary to support operations can only be acquired over extended periods, and capabilities can be readily lost. DOA 87 acknowledges a requirement to maintain requisite ASW skills even though the current submarine threat is low<sup>5</sup>. We must therefore endeavour to preserve these skills in a time when finances are scarce, by



which of those neighbours has, or will have, a submarine force, of determining how those submarines will be deployed against us in some future conflict, and then of arguing for capabilities to counter the expected scenario? Or does it lie in some other, non-traditional approach? This paper will contend that the traditional approach offers little in the way of sustainable argument for



arguing for ASW capabilities that have utility in the wider picture, and particularly in the regional "common security" advocated by the Government, whilst being able to fulfil the peculiar ASW role should the need ever arise.

In recent times the capability of submarines has increased dramatically, with the result that tactics based on having surface ships close the position of the submarine to effect prosecution are no longer valid. It is widely accepted that the optimum ASW strategy is to avoid areas of submarine probability by evasive routing, or, if this is not possible, to saturate focal areas with air assets prior to the passage of the surface shipping. Should a submarine target be detected ships would clear the area with alacrity, leaving the prosecution to aircraft.

As a large percentage of Australia's "area of direct military interest" (ADMI) is archipelagic in nature, as indeed is the region at large, surveillance must of necessity take a prominent position in the ASW strategy of the RAN, evasive routing being less successful. ASP 90 notes that, in this period of pressure on available resources "defence planning needs to be especially rigorous in its analysis of priorities"<sup>6</sup>. In ASW these priorities must be on surveillance capabilities; namely ship-borne helicopters and arrays, both towed and bottom mounted.

Towed arrays for the RAN are an interesting proposition. Whilst it is commonly accepted that towed arrays should be fitted to submarines, there is significant resistance to their being employed from surface shipping even though the Force Structure Review (FSR) quite rightly states that "the effectiveness of both surface ships and submarines will be enhanced by the use of towed acoustic arrays"<sup>7</sup>. The array will detect nuclear submarines, snorting conventional submarines, surface targets and aircraft at long range. Contrary to popular belief, with the appropriate transient processing and analysis, the quiet conventional submarine can be detected at operationally useful

ranges. The KARIWARA array, currently under development by Australian Industry, will continue to perform satisfactorily at ship operational speeds. The obvious advantage of the array is that it will provide 360 degree surveillance for 24 hours a day in all weather conditions. The combination of towed array for detection, classification and initial localisation,



and the helicopter or fixed wing aircraft for prosecution will make a potent weapons system.

Bottom mounted arrays offer Australia an opportunity to provide continuous coverage of focal areas and harbour approaches in northern Australia. In this regard the capability should be considered as complementary to air and surface surveillance of the Jindalee Over-the-Horizon Radar (OTHR) network. The arrays will also provide surveillance against the non-military threats facing Australia; eg. illegal immigration, drugs, quarantine and fauna smuggling. Being static however, bottom arrays will have no utility in the regional sense, nor be responsive to surveillance requirements in the wider regional context. Bottom-mounted arrays would also be of use to regional countries to improve their surveillance capabilities, and export of the KARIWARA technology into South East Asia should not be discouraged.

As in Australia, regional countries are interested in the movement of ships and submarines in and around the area. Once the who, what and whither



has been determined, the most important information, the why can be speculated upon. In this regard Australia can assist in regional confidence-building through participation in multilateral surveillance arrangements. Towed array fitted ships, and ASW aircraft would be of most utility in this role.

This point is illustrated through the following hypothetical situation. Tensions between China and India are increasing over some issue; perhaps with regard to border infringements in the Himalayas, or, as Gary Klintworth of the ANU has suggested, China and India have undertaken to support the opposing sides in a civil war in Burma.<sup>8</sup> A serious deterioration in the situation may well be evidenced by the movement of submarines, from one side or other, through the region to take up patrol off the other countries coastline. All regional countries would be interested and concerned in such developments, and if detected diplomatic action may avert the recourse to open conflict.

A similar situation may arise if an internationally brokered settlement is found to the conflicting claims over the Spratly Islands. Significant submarine movements around this area, may be a precursor to other military action and detection of these movements would allow subsequent diplomatic pressure to be brought to bear. Noting that Australia's important sea lines of communication to Japan and North East Asia run adjacent to this area, it is in our interests that military action be averted.

Australian involvement in any such co-operative regional surveillance would be beneficial in keeping the ASW skills alive in the RAN, whilst simultaneously stating Australia's resolve for a stable security environment. It would also serve to improve the level of environmental knowledge concerning this important region. Exchange of this information with other nations would further add to regional cooperation. As stated by Senator Evans in 1991, one of the main benefits of defence cooperation with regional countries is that it 'helps stake a claim for active Australian

participation in the gradually emerging sense of community - of shared strategic and security interests'<sup>9</sup>

It is of concern therefore that the Australian Surface Ship Towed Array Sonar System (ASSTASS) Project, which aims to provide a towed array capability for the FFGs and ANZAC ships, has not attracted a higher level of support from those responsible for allocating resource priorities. This Project has been gestating for almost 21 years and has never seemed to attract any significant support. Although ASP 90 states that 'we must not let short-term programming difficulties to distract us from the need for long-term planning'<sup>10</sup>, the future of ASSTASS is far from assured.

As noted previously surface ship towed arrays offer the RAN a means to maintain expensive ASW skills whilst simultaneously showing Australia's commitment to an Asian future. Both of these objectives should be vigorously pursued. The ASSTASS project may indeed be the last opportunity, short of the unlikely event of the use of submarines against Australia's interests, for the RAN to escape the traditional approach to ASW before this warfare discipline becomes a virtual irrelevancy.

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<sup>2</sup> *Australia's Strategic Planning in the 1990s*, Departmental Publications, Department of Defence, 27 November 1989; paragraph 6.23.

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<sup>5</sup> *Defence of Australia 1987*; op-cit, paragraph 4.20.

<sup>6</sup> *Australia's Strategic Planning for the 1990s*; op-cit, paragraph 4.25.

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<sup>8</sup> Klintworth, G; *The Asia-Pacific: More security, less uncertainty, new opportunities*, Working Paper No. 240, Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, Australian National University, Canberra; page 2.

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<sup>10</sup> *Australia's Strategic Planning for the 1990s*, op-cit; paragraph 4.29.





## DEFENCE ATTACHE IN CHINA

by

Ian Pfennigwerth

### THE AUTHOR

*Ian Pfennigwerth served as a member of the RAN between 1958 and 1992. A Communications sub-specialist, he served in a wide cross section of postings during his career. He commanded the guided missile destroyer HMAS Perth in 1983-84, and held many shore billets as well, including Director Electronic Warfare, Navy, Director, Naval Intelligence and Security and the Director of Naval Command Control Communications Computers and Intelligence, the posting from which he retired as a Captain this year. Captain Pfennigwerth was the Australian Defence Attache in Beijing from 1989 to 1991.*

The manager of the Baicheng Branch of the China International Tourist Service was adamant; the foreigners were not going to be allowed to wander at will around her town. Instead, at no cost to ourselves, we were to go fishing. She proved as good as her word. Instead of spending a day exploring the possibilities of the nearby People's Liberation Army (PLA) weapons test range we sat at the side of a fishing pond and fished, all day. And when we had finished fishing we had to sit and eat the fish. It was only after we were safely installed on board our train and it had begun to roll out of the station did she relax her vigilance, and I had no comeback except to recall that I had, after all, caught the biggest fish.

The duties of a Defence Attache are many and varied, and all DAs have their favourite stories to tell. Most feel that *their* country is just a little bit special, and a bit different from others. This is certainly my attitude to the People's Republic of China after a two year posting in Beijing.

I had felt the urge to learn more about China in the early 80s, when the Asian Studies major of my degree began to demonstrate to me how

shallow was my understanding of the Chinese involvement in, and influence over the region to our North. This indicated that I had much to learn, and the occasion of the first visit by the Joint Services Staff College to the PRC in 1982 provided a unique opportunity to see the country at first hand. To be honest, I returned with a feeling that China was not a place in which I would want to serve. Accordingly, it is difficult to explain why I accepted the invitation to start language training in preparation for a posting as DA Beijing when this course of action was proposed a year later. Perhaps it was simply the challenge of it all.



Academic study of a country takes on more immediacy when the prospect of living there looms large. On top of two years of full-time Mandarin Chinese language courses, and a further



year of part-time study, I added much research into the recent history and politics of China, its geography, its culture, and its economic system, as well as a dose of Marxist ideology! In the end I believed that I had a pretty good idea of what living and working in China would be like, especially as I had managed to visit the mainland twice during my advanced language training in Hong Kong.

The reality was otherwise. Study gives one only a very superficial grasp of a subject - further experience is required before one can be said to know much about it. In the case of China our perceptions were further confused by the highly subjective, and frequently inaccurate, picture of events in Beijing at the time of the Tiananmen Incident which Western correspondents were delivering. In retrospect it is strange that we tend to accept that version of complex events purveyed by teams of media "experts", who normally do not even speak the local language, and who have been rushed to the scene from some other trouble spot by their networks.

There is a postscript to this observation. I was frequently approached by Western journalists in Beijing for comment on issues or events in which the PLA had an involvement. When possible, I always made time for them to see me, but the subsequent stories rarely accorded with my briefings. Clearly I was not telling the journalists what they wanted to hear. The moral of the story is simply that special caution needs to be exercised regarding media reports on China.

What then is China really like? That's a tough question to answer about the most populous country on Earth. An easy way out is to look at its capital. By design, Beijing is becoming a city of world status. The process of rebuilding and beautifying the city was accelerated during our stay by the massive preparations for the 1990 Asian Games. There are plenty of bad things about totalitarian governments, but one has to be impressed at the ease with which huge numbers of citizens can be mobilised to undertake tasks

such as mass tree plantings, road and kerb repair, and general sprucing up. During our two years whole new districts of Beijing sprang into existence, and the list of five-star hotels grew steadily. Western-style shops and supermarkets, office towers, apartment blocks, and all the appurtenances of a great city — including traffic jams — made their appearance. The most common exclamation of visitors was "This is not



what I expected!".

As for Beijing so it is for many parts of China, particularly along the Eastern seaboard. China is modernising, and the rate of economic progress is truly remarkable. However, it must be said that development is patchy, and that the remote rural areas of the West and South remain untouched by much that can be recognised as progress. There are still plenty of sights and smells to meet the common Australian stereotypes of China.

But more of that later. Another most common question was "What does a Defence Attache do in China?". It sounds simple. The DA is a member of the staff of the Embassy, and he reports to the Ambassador. His field of expertise is matters military and, in a country like China, where very little goes on that does not have some military connection, this is important. The DA forms a key part of the team which reports back to the Australian Government on day to day events in China, and which comments on their significance.

The DA is accredited to the Chinese Ministry of National Defence, and his official link with the PLA is through the Foreign Affairs Bureau of



that Ministry. All contact with the military, the military-industrial complex, or any organisation which may be associated with defence must be processed through the Bureau. While many countries adopt this method of dealing with foreign attaches, in some the Bureau can be helpful in facilitating the DAs' task. Unfortunately such is not the case in China. For the most part the DA has to report on the PLA without a great deal of cooperation from the PLA.

Under these circumstances the type and depth of the reporting which the DA can manage is limited, but there are ways around the problem. A principal source is the press, not the English language version, which is almost always filled with stories effused with sweetness and light, but the plethora of Chinese newspapers and magazines which give a less biased and more accurate account of events in China. For, although all Chinese papers are State-controlled, and all must carry pronouncements in the ideologically correct format, there is a surprising degree of freedom of expression.

China also publishes a wide variety of professional journals, which are frequently used by groups publicising a point of view not necessarily in total agreement with official policy. The frequency of articles on a particular issue and the rank or position of the authors can be indicative of a looming shift in thinking. Official statements can also be revealing. During 1990, a series of articles appearing in the Chinese Army newspaper, the *PLA Daily*, dealt with the conditions under which the troops lived. Statistics proudly headlined like "more than 50% of Second Artillery (China's strategic missile force) barracks now have heating and running water" meant that they had not always done so, and that almost half still did not have these utilities.

It would, of course, have been much easier if the PLA had invited their guest attaches to visit units on manoeuvres, as we do in Australia, but Chinese paranoia about military "secrets" runs deep. I could never understand why the Foreign Affairs Bureau's "minders" found it impossible to confirm the news which was published in the Army's newspaper or shown nationally on the

official TV channels. It is most likely that a lifetime of being told that all foreigners are spies and that DAs are particularly intent on damaging China's interests has inhibited their ability to admit to anything. Officially-sponsored visits to PLA ground force units were all conducted at the skill-demonstration level — unarmed combat, obstacle course runs, brick- and stone-breaking with heads, and the like. Questions were usually inhibited by a sudden shortage of time in the programme. If the aim was to impress the foreigners with the prowess of the PLA, these types of visits failed to do so.

But the real way to learn about China, and the PLA, is to travel widely, to observe keenly and to ask a lot of questions. Fortunately, the Chinese authorities placed few restrictions on my travel, and I was able to see for myself the vastness and contrasts of that big and fascinating country. The most vivid impression I gained was of the vitality in many parts of China and, as I mentioned earlier, the rapid pace of change in the Eastern provinces. We are, I suspect, prone to imagine China as best represented by its impressive cultural treasures, like the Great Wall and the Forbidden City in Beijing. While this is an attractive stereotype it has always been flawed, and the China of Deng Xiaoping bears little resemblance to it.

I have spoken of the changes taking place in cities like Beijing, but the most remarkable changes are in the countryside. Not only are the peasants building themselves larger and more opulent houses, but their excess profits are being ploughed back not into vegetables and grains but into new factories of the burgeoning rural industries. Infrastructure projects are underway across the length and breadth of China — new ports, upgraded railroads and even freeways — to improve transportation and to boost export capacities. The size and character of the national air fleet are being rapidly revised. Chinese air travellers may still be attempting to squeeze their own body weight of carry-on luggage into overhead lockers and under seats, but they are doing so in Boeing 757s and 767s as well as the venerable Ilyushins and Tupolevs.



For all this progress there is a price, and China is paying it. Pollution of the atmosphere and waterways is phenomenally awful. Cars in Beijing have to be cleaned of fallout once per day, and in grimy industrial cities like Shenyang in the northeast people don't seem to even bother with this chore any more. Lakes and rivers are used as effluent disposal systems as well as sources of food and drinking water. Many famous beauty spots are filthy, not only from litter but from the Chinese penchant for alfresco toileting.

Above all, there is the mass of people. China is now having to come to terms with the Mao-inspired explosion in population which has placed serious strains on resources, services, and even the social structure. Chinese people, normally gracious and friendly individuals, become rudely aggressive in crowds — they have no option. Shops, markets and streets are usually crowded, but nowhere is this aggressive behaviour more enthusiastically demonstrated than when the crowd is mounted on bicycles! Driving — or even being driven — in China is an adventure, and many a sophisticated Westerner has quailed before the challenge of it. However, both traffic indiscipline and the population explosion are subjects for official action; evidence suggests that the Government is being more successful with the latter than the former. The policy of one-child families is beginning to take effect, especially in the cities, and one now sees stores and parks thronged with fat, demanding and over-indulged "little Emperors and Empresses". China must be one of the few Third World countries to run obesity correction programmes in primary schools.

The other feature of China which makes the job of DA Beijing unique in the ADF is its Communist system. It would do all Australians good to endure the experience of a Communist regime for, say, six months to enable them to put our society and its problems in perspective. First hand exposure to the stultifying effects of Marxist dogma upon political and official life, to the antics of the bloated, inefficient and possibly corrupt Party hierarchy, to the incredible bureaucracy, to the strange concept of justice which exonerates a Minister of embezzlement of

millions of dollars but executes importers of M-rated videos, and to the disgraceful gap between haves and have-nots in a nation where equality is constitutionally enshrined, would be a sharp and salutary lesson. One can only admire the ingenuity and spirit of the Chinese people who, despite being lumbered with such a burden, have found ways of making an increasingly attractive life for themselves, and for their drive in seizing upon the opportunities in the new Socialist capitalism.

While foreigners are largely sheltered from the more direct effects of the regime there is much which does affect them. Probably that most alien to Australians is the fact of being under physical and electronic surveillance. It is not a pleasant feeling to have one's home, office, car, telephone and hotel room bugged, and to occasionally recognise a face in a crowd which is taking rather more than the usual interest in a foreigner. But one gets used to it, and it can sometimes be turned to advantage when the domestic staff are being slack. Where else can one complain directly to the boss by talking to a wall? Incidentally, for those visiting Nanjing — a highly recommended city — the bedroom mirrors in certain rooms of the otherwise excellent Jinling Hotel have cameras mounted behind them. Don't say you weren't warned!

Finally some impressions of the PLA itself. I have written many reports and papers on this huge organisation, which seems to me to be largely misunderstood. The image painted of it as a force of thugs hell-bent on social oppression, and the sobriquet "Butchers of Beijing" awarded at the time of Tiananmen by the Western media, do little justice to an army so poorly equipped for student bashing that it lacked even tear gas, and so unprepared (and unwilling?) to do what the politicians asked of it that it took more than three weeks to clear the Square. In the end it was the paratroops of the PLA Air Force who did the dirty work.

The PLA clings to the three roles derived from its origins as a guerrilla force — production, social change and armed defence of the Revolution. Its major strategic concept into the 1980s was that of People's War, under which an invader would be



drawn into a deep advance into Chinese territory only to be annihilated under a tidal wave of regular forces and the Militia (estimated to be about 45 million strong). More modern strategic concepts of mobility, professionalism over ideology, advanced weaponry, and quality rather than quantity were beginning to win acceptance until Tiananmen. The purge launched by the General Political Department to rid the Army of such incorrect thinkers seems to have been perfunctory and short-lived. Professionalism, modernisation, and downsizing are now official themes of Army building.

Nevertheless, the PLA of today is still largely a poorly trained collection of conscripted farm boys, led by an officer corps more concerned with its privileges than its professional duties, and operating old and obsolescent equipment. But it is changing. Considerable work has been done on the development of strategic and tactical concepts more in keeping with the emerging world situation, and a great deal of energy has gone into restructuring the forces and improving their training. And I have developed the greatest respect for the Chinese arms industry. The PLA may not have the equipment which it offers for sale, but that situation could quickly change.

When out of sight and earshot of their Political Officers, PLA officers and soldiers were always interested in talking with the funny-looking foreigner. While few had any real idea where *Aodaliya* might be, their grasp of professional military issues was always informed. Those journals I spoke of earlier keep them abreast of international weaponry and tactics, and the officers have the benefit of Western journals and study materials in their staff colleges. Interestingly, in view of the strenuous efforts undertaken to insulate the Army from the deleterious effects of the "peaceful evolution" campaign, which the Chinese authorities are convinced is being waged against them through the Western media, PLA personnel have a surprisingly good idea of international political developments as well.

The more junior officers resent the chicanery which keeps them poorly paid and excluded

from the military housing to which they and their families are entitled. They respond poorly to the calls from on high to "live frugally" in the face of clear evidence that superiors actually live rather well. The troops wonder at their appallingly low pay and rotten living conditions when, in the few hours leave they have each week, they see all around them signs of new affluence and prosperity. The Party is a target for enormous cynicism. But they are patriots to a man (and woman), and they are extremely proud of the progress which China has made over the past 40 years. They anticipate, with confidence and much justification, further improvements in the years to come.

Although I was the Defence Attache, and expended much effort to be and be seen to be even handed in my dealings with the PLA, in China like speaks with like as it does everywhere else. So I have the fondest memories of the personnel of the PLA Navy with whom I came in contact. In keeping with Chinese practice I will conceal their identity under the cover of the adjective "certain".

I remember a journey in the back of a three wheeler taxi, loaded with peasants and fish, which was made even more memorable by the enthusiastic singing and comic banter of a trio of sailors from a certain unit of the South Sea Fleet. I remember the kindness of a sentry at a certain base of the East Sea Fleet who stopped a passing tractor and directed the driver to convey a very footsore DA back to town on a scorchingly hot day. I remember the splendid fish feast outside a certain base of the same Fleet where two doctors explained in great detail how their unit fitted into the organisation. And I remember the genuine professional interest of officers of the North Sea Fleet in my opinion of what they had shown me of their ships and training establishments. Above all I remember and acknowledge the gesture of the Chinese Chief of Naval Staff who insisted, against advice and in a departure from protocol, in personally receiving my farewell call. It was an effective demonstration of the comradeship of the sea, and an indication of what may be to come in our Defence relations with China.



In closing I record my appreciation for the efforts of the many Chinese people who helped to inform me on their country, its aspirations, its problems and its strengths. They have suffered much, and may still have more to endure, but they have survived and have, for the most part, begun to prosper. Throughout they have retained their cheerfulness, their courage, and their disrespect for authority and pomposity. Above all they showed a willingness to respond to the poorly-

phrased questions of a red-headed foreigner who butchered their fine language.

China *is* different, and our time there was an experience which we thoroughly enjoyed. Those who are comfortable sheltering behind their stereotypes of China may feel no desire to visit this vibrant and intriguing country. But for those few, those happy few, who prefer to gain their experience at first hand, the Middle Kingdom awaits to delight, frustrate, entertain, and outrage.





# THE FORMAL INSPECTION IS INCOMPATIBLE WITH NAVAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT

by

Lieutenant Commander Simon Andrews, RAN

## THE AUTHOR

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*Cease dependence on inspections to achieve quality. Eliminate the need for inspections on a mass basis by building quality into the product in the first place.<sup>1</sup>*

## INTRODUCTION

The Navy has a culture that depends heavily on inspections — on the assumption that processes are not predictable and hence are prone to dangerous failure. The successful implementation of Naval Quality Management (NQM) into the Fleet requires an understanding of what processes are involved in everything we do, and a concerted effort to build quality into these processes and cease inspecting for quality in the outcomes.

The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate that the formal inspection system is incompatible with NQM and so must be discontinued. The paper is divided into two parts:

- Application of NQM to the Fleet. This part will demonstrate that formal inspections do not add value to the process which leads to warship 'quality'.
- Inspection versus Quality Management. This part will argue that inspections are largely counterproductive and are contrary to the basic principles of NQM. An alternative system will be proposed.

The scope of this paper is limited to the formal

inspection system for warships; however, the principles discussed may apply more widely. It is assumed that the reader has an understanding of the basic principles of NQM.

Within the Maritime Command the formal inspection is defined in Maritime Orders (MARORDs) Chapter 1. It consists of departmental assessments by staff officers followed by a ceremonial visit and inspection by the Inspecting Officer.

## APPLICATION OF NQM TO THE FLEET

The principles of NQM are often seen as applying only to manufacturing processes because many of the terms used do not readily relate to the naval environment. Three such NQM terms are 'product', 'process' and 'quality'. Successful implementation of NQM into the Fleet requires an understanding of how these terms apply to Fleet units.

### The Product of a Warship

One way to define the product of a warship is in terms of its goal. This goal is operational readiness. It is set by the Chief of the Defence Force (CDF), and is expressed clearly in the CDF Preparedness Directive.

Operational readiness should be a warship's overriding goal. Everything a warship does should be focused on that goal and should contribute to its achievement. There should be no other conflicting goals, and there should be no activities which hinder the achievement of the goal.

### The Process Which Leads to a Quality Product

The process which leads to this product of operational readiness is Fleet operational training.



which encompasses workups, Operational Readiness Evaluations and sea checks. The aim of operational training is to enable ships to achieve and maintain appropriate levels of operational readiness in accordance with CDF directives.

This process of operational training involves intensive sea and harbour training under the direction of Staff from the Commodore Flotillas (COMFLOT) organisation and Maritime Headquarters. This training process is thorough and effective. It does not involve a formal inspection.

### **The Measure of Warship Quality**

The measure of quality of this product of operational readiness is the level of capability which the ship achieves and maintains. There are two levels of capability. A ship which joins the operational Fleet after workup is at the Minimum Level of Capability (MLOC), which is the level required for normal peacetime operations. In addition, ships may be brought up to a higher level of operational readiness for specific tasks or missions. This is known as the Operational Level of Capability (OLOC).

The 'tasks or missions' referred to imply risk. In most cases, they would involve operations in a hostile, or potentially hostile, environment. Every ship which has deployed for Operation DAMASK has been required to achieve OLOC so that the Maritime Commander can send her 'in harm's way'. This is an exacting test of a warship's operational readiness and efficiency, and a test also of the effectiveness of the process of operational training which enables the ship to achieve the goal. The product of operational readiness must be of the highest quality if a warship is to achieve OLOC and be sent 'in harm's way'.

### **Summary - Application of NQM to the Fleet**

NQM principles and terminology are applicable to warships. The product of a warship is operational readiness. The process which leads to this product is Fleet operational training. The

measure of warship quality is the level of capability achieved by the warship. The formal inspection is not part of this process. Therefore, why do we have formal inspections?

## **INSPECTIONS VERSUS QUALITY MANAGEMENT**

### **Reasons for Inspecting**

The official reasons for inspecting RAN ships are explained in the introduction to DI(N) ADMIN 18-4, and can be summarised as follows:

- to ensure that the organisation, material condition and management are adequate;
- to ensure that approved Functions and Roles are being carried out efficiently;
- to provide an opportunity for Administrative Authorities to assess the standard of discipline and morale;
- to ensure that records are being maintained in accordance with current regulations;
- to provide an opportunity to inspect the standard of uniforms and drill;
- to examine problems and difficulties being experienced;
- to make recommendations which will assist in improving the efficiency of the ship;
- to provide a means of advising the CO of the standard of performance of the ship under his command; and
- to enable Navy Office to be kept aware of the standard of the unit and the command.

In addition to these official reasons for inspections, there are many commonly-held underlying assumptions about the benefits of formal inspections. The more common of these are:

- The formal inspection is a useful management tool because it enables the inspecting officer (IO) to get a realistic impression of the state of the ship.
- It is important that the IO is seen onboard with full ceremonial — high ceremonial visibility is good, and the formal inspection is a good occasion for such ceremonial.
- sailors expect to be inspected and would be disappointed if an inspection was cancelled.
- inspections provide an ideal opportunity to



'huck out' the ship and rid it of unwanted gear.

- Inspections provide an opportunity to clean/paint the ship.
- The formal inspection provides a focus for the ship — a goal to strive for.
- The formal inspection provides an opportunity to be forced into 'getting the house into order' - logs, records etc.

### Good Intentions; Counterproductive Results

There is not one overall aim of the RAN inspection system clearly stated in the Defence Instruction; however, it would appear to be to provide an objective and accurate overview of a ship's efficiency. The reality is that the inspection '...tends to provide...a subjective, one-time unit snapshot, for which special preparations have been made, sometimes for months in advance.'<sup>2</sup> Ships 'play the inspection game' and prepare for the outcomes which are known to be successful. This approach is characterised by short term improvements, or 'cosmetics,' which are devised to pass the inspection. This results in fluctuating performance from one inspection to the next, rather than continual improvement towards the goal of operational efficiency. NQM seeks continual improvement in the process.

Another reason why inspection results fluctuate is because the inspection is a 'lag' performance indicator. It is a '...measurement of the effect, which often occurs only after a considerable period of time from when the causative factors had their influence.'<sup>3</sup> Thus, if a department is found to be unsatisfactory during the inspection, the recommendations for improvement are reactive, occurring after the problem has developed.

Yet another problem with inspections is that many officers fear poor inspection results. There is a widespread perception in the Fleet that poor inspection results lead to poor reports, particularly for Commanding Officers and Heads of Departments. For this reason, inspections too often become short term goals which divert attention away from the long term objective of operational efficiency. One of the fourteen

principles of quality management is to 'drive out fear, so that everyone may work effectively for the company...' <sup>4</sup>

This problem of inspections being short term goals has another, more serious implication. The inspection is imposed from outside, and this often conflicts with the priorities which a Commanding Officer may have for his ship. In the worst case, personnel may have to be diverted from operational training in order to prepare for the inspection. Cleaning, painting and practice for the guard and divisions may take place when in fact the Command priority may have been for NBCD refreshers, Combat System Trainer Van exercises or Command Team Training. If this has been the case, then the inspection has detracted from the quality process.

Finally, inspections have long been recognised — and acknowledged — as causing an undue burden on Fleet Staff in terms of administration, cost and effort. Any change to the present system which reduces this burden would be beneficial. The theories of NQM contend that a move towards a quality process will lead naturally to savings in cost and effort.

It can be concluded that the good intentions of inspections are not being justified by truly productive results. Quality management demands a different and more effective system than inspection. What then is the alternative?

### The Alternative — Fleet Quality Assurance

The current emphasis of external quality checking by inspection must be replaced by a system of internal quality assurance conducted continuously by the CO and his ship's staff and supported by an appropriate external quality auditing system provided by COMFLOT and Fleet Staff. This can only be done if an appropriate Fleet Quality Assurance System is established.

The Directorate of Quality Assurance - Navy, (DQA-N), has produced clear guidelines about the mechanisms which are required for establishing a quality assurance system <sup>5</sup>. This



will be a very complex and time consuming task which will involve such milestones as the adoption of Australian Quality Standards in the AS 3900 series for appropriate Fleet operational training activities and procedures, development of quality auditing trails, the production of Quality Process Documents and the introduction of quality assurance statistical tools. Personnel will have to be trained, and traditional attitudes towards accountability and responsibility will have to be reviewed.

Such a huge task will not be accomplished quickly. It will be necessary to phase in the new system over time. Despite the daunting nature of the task, it is achievable and it is imperative that it is achieved if NQM is to be fully embraced in the Fleet. A precedent for such large scale change has been set with the introduction of the RAN Training Technology System into the Navy, in which quality standards have been successfully imposed on training. NQM demands that it is now time to impose quality standards on the Fleet.

### Can Anything Be Salvaged From The Inspection System?

Some aspects of the RAN inspection system are undoubtedly valuable. For example, certain departmental inspections cover critical areas of safety and operational efficiency which must always be checked. Similarly, the Supply Department requires external auditing to ensure that financial practices are sound.

The way ahead must be for a high-level Fleet process action team (PAT) to analyse every element of the inspection system, identify those aspects which add value to operational training or which are critical for reasons of safety, and incorporate these into the Fleet operational training organisation.

These procedures could be called 'quality assurance checks' and could be conducted during the Operational Readiness Evaluation. The Royal Navy currently conducts full departmental inspections during the Staff Sea Check at Portland. Therefore, it should be feasible for COMFLOT

Staff to carry out those critical quality assurance checks, which would be less time-consuming and extensive than departmental inspections, without detracting from the ORE scenario. Matters of on-going concern could be monitored on an 'ad hoc' basis by Staff seariders during the ship's operational cycle.

Non-productive practices which cause unnecessary administrative burden should be discontinued immediately. One such practice is the rendering by ships of post inspection corrective action reports.<sup>6</sup> Discontinuation of these reports would have the dual benefits of cutting down on an unnecessary administrative burden, and sending a clear signal to the Fleet that positive steps were being taken to implement NQM.

### CONCLUSIONS

The formal inspection system does not add value to the process of warship operational readiness. The reasons for having inspections, and the assumed benefits of inspections, are to a great extent unrealistic and counterproductive. Inspections are contrary to the basic principles of NQM and must be replaced by a Fleet Quality Assurance system. However, those aspects of the present formal inspection system which are critical to safety and operational efficiency must be identified and incorporated into the Fleet operational training organisation. It is now time to act decisively to implement NQM into the Fleet. Discontinuation of the formal inspection system would send a clear signal to the Chief of Naval Staff and to the Fleet that this was happening.

<sup>1</sup> Deming, W. Edwards, *Out Of The Crisis*, Cambridge, 1986, p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> Boike, Lieutenant Commander R. USN, 'Management by Inspection' *United States Naval Institute Proceedings*, Vol 118/4/1.070, April 1992, p. 89.

<sup>3</sup> Crosling, R. and Munzberg, B. *NIES TQM 'How To' Approach, Guide to Concepts, Principles and Imperatives*, revision 1. Department of Industry, Technology and Commerce, 1990, p. 67.

<sup>4</sup> Deming, op cit, p. 23.

<sup>5</sup> Director, Quality Assurance - Navy, *Notes for RAN Course No. 906200 Quality Assurance Acquaint Training Course*.

<sup>6</sup> Henderson, Lieutenant Commander J. M. USN, 'Whom Do We Think We Are Kidding?' *USNI Proceedings*, Vol 89, No. 4 April, 1963.



## WOMEN AT SEA

A personal view

By

LEUT Susan. Sly, RAN

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Living and working on board a sea-going vessel can be one of the most rewarding experiences of one's life. There are many challenges to be met that one would not encounter ashore, ranging from handling a ship in close company in heavy weather to simply balancing cash on a desk that insists upon emptying itself into your lap every five minutes. The most mundane facets of normal life can take on an extra meaning in a constantly moving platform.

I am often asked what it is like to be 'a girl at sea' and I guess my initial answer is the same as that for men – although I love it, it's not a job for everyone. Granted though, being one of only two females in a ship of over three hundred men does have its particular quirks.

There is still resistance in some quarters to having women at sea, however the majority of men don't see any great problem and will judge each case on its merits. Where there is resistance, it usually surfaces not in direct comments or actions but more often in an apparent attitude – a deliberate

discourtesy, being overlooked as a candidate for a task or in the opposite case, being repeatedly selected to fulfil tasks while everyone else just watches on. There are subtle little ways that people make their point and you just have to put up with it and convince yourself that one day it will be worth it.

As females are very much in the minority at sea we tend to be subject to scrutiny more than males, particularly by the media. Fortunately the novelty appears to be wearing off and with more females being introduced into the Fleet this should continue to improve with time.

Although ships now entering the fleet are in general designed with the carriage of females in mind, older ships are not. Mixed messing is simply not practical (both sexes need their privacy) so particular berths or messes must be designated for female use. This can result in females being placed in superior accommodation to their male peers which naturally leads to resentment. Ships now coming in to service are fitted out bearing in mind the number of females it is anticipated that they will carry, so again the problem should resolve itself with time.





As far as sharing heads and showers go, there isn't as great a problem as people perceive. In my last two ships, male and female officers have shared facilities without difficulty. In the first ship (*Moresby*) the showers were simply separated by partitions with shower curtains added for privacy — no expense to the management required.

I have to admit that one situation I personally find uncomfortable is that of having to transit through mess decks out of hours when the occupants generally do not expect a female to be in the area. Warning of my approach by banging loudly on a hatch in the middle of the night and shouting 'incoming!' at the top of my comparatively high voice would be about as popular as pouring flat beer at a barbecue, so I just approach with caution.

Similarly, some of the sailors are reluctant to shake me as they would a male. While I am conscious of the fact that I will be woken up to go on watch by a male (so I dress for bed accordingly) and have given specific permission for them to shake me as usual, some are still reluctant to venture within the confines of the cabin. I find it difficult to appease my cabin-mate when she has been shaken for the third night running by a loud thumping on our door accompanied by 'Are you awake Ma'am? It's 0315, time to go on watch'.

Critics of having females at sea often raise the issue of favouritism. One cannot deny that it does occur in some cases, however, I think females in general tend to be more polite than men are (particularly with other men) and often it is for this reason and no other that they are met with a better response to a request.

As far as paying courtesies in general at sea goes, I do not expect men to curb swearing around me or to hold a door open as I walk through behind them — but I appreciate and acknowledge the gesture when it is made. Likewise I make no attempt to be butch or rough in their presence — I am a bit of a tomboy but see no need to pretend to be a man.

Overall, there are certainly drawbacks to being part of any minority group, in this case that of females at sea. The attitudes are definitely changing however and there is no reason why a woman should not gain just as much from, or contribute as much to, a posting to sea as an equivalent male would.

Why would any girl in their right mind want to go to sea? Well for my money there is no feeling in the world like standing on the Bridge of DDG and giving the order: "Starboard 30!".





# AN ESSAY ON THE USE OF NAVAL POWER IN CRISES: A COMPARISON OF TWO US NAVAL EFFORTS

By

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## INTRODUCTION

A navy is a tool, or instrument, and the possession of naval power gives to its wielder a wide range of valuable abilities, depending on the size, strength, and composition of the naval force available. Having a globally capable navy, coupled with the will to use it, can give a nation significant advantages in shaping world events.

In this regard, the United States has been the preeminent employer of naval power in the post World War II era. More specifically, the United States has attempted to use its navy as an instrument of control during several world crises and other occasions of regional tension.

The term 'control' is used in this essay to denote the ability to influence a situation to a nation's advantage; to manage a crisis and dictate the pace of events. In this regard, the US Navy provides the National Command Authority (NCA) with a valuable tool for the management of crises.<sup>1</sup> However, warships are also 'vehicles of cost and risk, as well as of military and foreign policy opportunity'.<sup>2</sup> There are strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOTs) involved whenever naval power is employed in a crisis to further a foreign policy or specific national objective.

This essay will compare and contrast two separate occasions where naval forces were used by the United States in an attempt to achieve policy

objectives during times of tension in international relations. The examples used will be the Lebanese conflict in 1982-83, and the Persian Gulf 'Tanker War' of 1987-88. Both of these involvements began as naval presence missions, and both eventually resulted in armed conflict. A brief history of both crises will first be presented, since this background knowledge is essential to facilitate an accurate comparison. Next the SWOTs applicable to these conflicts will be addressed, using examples from the conflicts for illustration. Finally, this essay will present some general concepts and lessons from the SWOTs, derived from the successes and the failures of naval force in these two involvements.

## THE LEBANESE CONFLICT

The US Navy-Marine Corps team was first involved in Lebanon in 1958, when an unopposed amphibious landing was performed in support of the incumbent government. The operation was successful, and perhaps it established a sort of precedent for the involvement that followed in 1982. For the purposes of this essay, the U.S. Marine Corps is treated as an instrument of naval force. This is defensible in that marines are simply another means of naval power projection ashore, much like an air strike or naval gunfire.<sup>3</sup> The Marine Amphibious Unit (MAU) is small, and it is primarily a political tool. It is not designed for large scale land campaigns of long duration, and hence should not be thought of as an army. Marine Corps involvement is crucial to understanding how naval forces were employed in Lebanon to support policy goals.

In June of 1982, the Israeli Army crossed the border into southern Lebanon in an effort to stop armed raids on their territory by Lebanon based Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO)



guerillas. When Israel later declared a military blockade of Beirut on 2 July, U.S. Secretary of State George Schultz saw an opportunity for a major correction in U.S. Middle East policy. Dispersal of PLO troops would remove Yassir Arafat as a major player in the Middle East. With the PLO out, Lebanon could be transformed into a stable buffer between Syria and Israel. With this in mind, a Multi-National Force (MNF) of French, Italian, and US troops was dispatched to Beirut, there to supervise the withdrawal of the besieged PLO. It was to be a limited mission, to be accomplished within 30 days.<sup>4</sup>

On 25 August 1982, the first of 800 marines from 32 MAU came ashore. The evacuation of PLO troops was effected without incident, and the MAU returned to its amphibious shipping. US diplomatic efforts appeared to be on course, but hopes for a more stable Lebanon disappeared on 29 August when the newly elected president, Bashir Gemayel, was assassinated. Lebanon began to sink back into anarchy.

On 20 September, President Reagan announced that he was sending the marines back into Lebanon. The marines were to become part of a reconstituted MNF, intended to assist the new Lebanese Government in establishing security and to help preserve a general cease fire in the region.<sup>5</sup>

Elements of the U.S. Sixth Fleet had been present in the Eastern Mediterranean throughout this period. The Amphibious Task Force routinely assigned to the Sixth Fleet is designated as TF 61. The mission statement from the US Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) to the Commander of TF 61 directed marines to interpose themselves between the Israelis and the populated areas of Beirut and to 'establish an environment which will permit the Lebanese Armed Forces to carry out their responsibilities in the Beirut area.'<sup>6</sup> Colonel Mead, the commander of 32 MAU, interpreted his mission as requiring a highly visible profile. As soon as his troops were established, he had

them demonstrate this presence mission by flying US flags on vehicles and bunkers, placing flag patches on shirt sleeves, and conducting patrols in nearby Shiite Moslem neighbourhoods.<sup>7</sup>

The remainder of 1982 and the early months of 1983 were relatively quiet in Lebanon from the perspective of the US involvement. However, a foreshadowing of trouble for the United States' peacekeeping role occurred on 18 April 1983 when the US Embassy in Beirut was bombed and 17 US citizens killed. This was symptomatic of



a trend that was beginning in Beirut. The MNF began to be regarded as targets, and sniping or haphazard, limited artillery shelling directed at the MNF occurred sporadically through the summer months.

By the end of August 1983, attacks on the US Marine positions at the Beirut International Airport began to take place with increasing severity. Marines would routinely return fire.

US naval involvement in the factional fighting began to increase. On 7 September, reconnaissance flights with F-14 aircraft from the USS *Dwight D. Eisenhower* (CVN 69) were initiated. On the 8th, US warships began naval gunfire bombardments against Druze artillery emplacements in reply to shelling of airport positions. On 10 September, the cruiser *Virginia* (CGN 38) fired more than 350 rounds in support of the predominantly Christian Lebanese Army forces, targeting the Druze and their Palestinian allies during the battle of Suq-al-Gharb. This





support was specifically requested by the Lebanese Army commander, and the U.S. response confirmed the status of the MNF as belligerents in the eyes of the Druze and other Moslem factions.<sup>8</sup>

Throughout September and October, the marines were subjected to almost daily artillery, rocket, and sniper fire. Marine artillery and naval gunfire missions were conducted in retaliation. The Pacific-based 31 MAU was ordered north through the Suez Canal to Beirut as a reinforcing unit, ready and available, if necessary. The battleship *New Jersey* (BB 62) was ordered to the area and arrived in late September.

The fortunes of the US forces took an even worse turn when on the morning of 23 October, the Headquarters building of the MAU's Battalion Landing Team (BLT) was destroyed by a gas-enhanced bomb, killing 241 men. This was a major disaster for both the naval forces and U.S. policy. The wisdom of America's presence in Lebanon began to be seriously questioned at home and around the world. But the force stayed on, being drawn further into ever-escalating armed actions.

On 3 December, an F-14 reconnaissance flight was fired on from Syrian controlled territory.

The following day a 28 aircraft strike force from two U.S. carriers was launched in response. The *New Jersey* regularly conducted gunfire missions into the hills around Beirut. However, by the end of 1983, it was clear that 'the fundamental tensions causing the Lebanese civil war remained unresolved, and were perhaps more intractable than ever.'

The situation in Lebanon continued to deteriorate in the first two months of 1984. It was by now evident that the marine presence at the airport was no longer contributing to the hoped for process of national reconciliation, and on 23 February the marines began withdrawing to their amphibious shipping.<sup>9</sup>

## THE TANKER WAR

It is instructive to compare this encapsulated history of the US involvement in Lebanon with a brief chronology of America's naval role in the Iran-Iraq War, specifically in what was referred to worldwide as the Tanker War.

On 1 January 1949, the United States' Middle East Force (MEF) was activated. This small naval presence was established in the Persian Gulf to underline the nation's interest in maintaining 'unimpeded access' to the Free



World's supply of oil.<sup>10</sup> This mission became considerably more challenging when, during the course of the war between Iraq and Iran, both belligerents embarked on a campaign to attack merchant ships carrying oil in the Gulf.

The Tanker War was a campaign of economic attrition and political intimidation. Iraq attacked ships serving Iranian ports, and Iran attacked ships serving Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, who supported Iraq's war efforts.<sup>11</sup>

The US Navy, already present in the Gulf, was determined to keep the Iran - Iraq War from closing down this corridor. But keeping the oil flowing once again put the Navy in the potential no-win role of peacekeeper in a violent region.<sup>12</sup> It was against this backdrop that in November 1986 the Government of Kuwait began enquiries to the US and USSR with regard to reflagging its tankers or chartering tankers already sailing under these nations' flags. The Reagan Administration agreed to reflag 11 Kuwaiti tankers in US colours, and worked out the details in the early months of 1987.

There was deep concern in the US Congress over the wisdom of the reflagging operation. But the Administration persisted on the grounds that it was defending the principle of freedom of navigation in international waters and trying to check diplomatic encroachment of the Soviets into this strategically vital region.<sup>13</sup> The US Navy had the relatively straightforward missions of keeping the Strait of Hormuz open and escorting US flagged tankers from point A to point B.

The danger involved with the reflagging was that Teheran saw the US commitment as clearly siding with Iraq against Iran in the war. Washington was no longer neutral either in its choice of means or its ends. This new commitment threatened to rob Iran of its major means of retaliation against Iraqi attacks on its oil tankers.<sup>14</sup> Again, the US began to be viewed as a belligerent in an essentially local conflict.

Comparisons began to be drawn between the US involvement in the Persian Gulf and the operations

in Lebanon when the USS *Stark* (FFG 31) was hit by two Iraqi Exocet missiles on 17 May 1987, killing 37 crew members. But there was a basic difference between the bombing of the BLT Headquarters and the attack on the *Stark*: The marines in Lebanon were subjected to a specific, intentional attack with a desired political aim. The *Stark* incident was an accident, the result of poor Iraqi missile employment procedures. In either event, the result was the same. US personnel were killed while in the performance of a tension control mission in a dangerous area.

At the time of the *Stark* attack, US naval presence in the Persian Gulf consisted of the MEF flagship USS *La Salle* (AGF 3) and five other destroyer/guided missile frigate ship types. The first convoy of reflagged Kuwaiti tankers was initiated on 21 July 1987. But by this time, the US naval presence was considerably bolstered. The *La Salle* had been joined by three guided missile cruisers, one guided missile destroyer, and four guided missile frigates. Just outside the Strait of Hormuz was a Carrier Battle Group (CVBG), soon to be augmented by a Battleship Battle Group (BBBG) led by the USS *Missouri* (BB 63). US naval forces conducted 136 convoy operations in the Gulf from July 1987 through December 1988.

On 24 August 1987 an Iranian warship approached a US convoy, but turned away when the USS *Jarret* (FFG 33) interposed herself between the warship and the convoy. Eventually, however, the relationship between the US and Iran deteriorated as the close interaction of military units resulted in frequent incidents of attack.

Armed Iranian speedboats, called Boghammers after the name of the Swedish manufacturer, would occasionally fire on ship based helicopters, provoking retaliations. Iranian Boghammers and oil platforms were engaged and destroyed by US naval air and surface units in carefully controlled applications of armed force.

This state of limited armed conflict hit its peak in April of 1988 when the USS *Samuel B Roberts* hit a mine, crippling the ship and injuring 10 crewmen. Upon concluding that Iran laid the



minefield, the US Government ordered a retaliatory attack on Iranian assets in the southern Persian Gulf. Operation PRAYING MANTIS sparked a day-long naval battle in which US ships and aircraft razed two oil platforms and sunk several Iranian boats and naval vessels.

Minor skirmishes between US helicopters and Iranian Boghammers continued periodically, but the final major incident in the United States' involvement in the Gulf War occurred on 3 July 1988, when the USS *Vincennes* (CG 49) shot down an Iranian civilian airbus which flew over the ship during a small surface action. On 20 August, the cease fire between Iran and Iraq went into force, effectively halting armed conflict in the Gulf.

## STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS

The foregoing briefly describes two very similar uses of America's naval power in times of crisis. Yet each had some significant differences in approach and implementation, and ultimately, in their degree of success. The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats involved with the use of naval forces as instruments of control in times of tension will now be examined as they relate to these two US employments.

### Strengths

In examining the strengths of the use of naval power, the foremost advantage is in its deterrence value. The psychological effect of the mere presence of a warship or group of warships can be significant. Naval forces are usually employed in this role to achieve one of two broad political objectives:

- to deter actions inimical to the interests of a nation or its allies, or
- to encourage actions that are in the interests of a nation or its allies.<sup>15</sup>

In a crisis situation, naval presence serves to 'manifest credible warfighting capabilities in a specific geographic area during times of rising tension, in order that possible opponents might be persuaded that their contemplated initiatives would not go unopposed if pursued.'<sup>16</sup> An example of a successful use of this deterrent power was the lack of Silkworm missile attacks on convoys in the Strait of Hormuz. The US made it patently clear that such attacks would bring immediate retaliation against the Silkworm bases. With a CVBG operating just outside the Gulf, the threat was indeed credible.

Another strength of naval power is its inherent flexibility. With a force of sufficient size and capability, the target nation can be threatened with any of five basic actions:

- amphibious assault,



- air attack,
- bombardment,
- blockade, and
- exposure through reconnaissance.<sup>17</sup>

The US had all of these options available to them during both involvements. If the nation has the naval resources available, this inherent flexibility allows sea control. This was vital in the predominantly maritime arena of the Persian Gulf. With over 30 ships in the area, there was enough capability to overwhelm any Iranian threat, ensuring safe passage of ships and enhancing the accomplishment of US objectives in the area. Conversely, control of the sea was



immaterial in Lebanon. Although allowing the US Navy to land Marines, conduct air strikes, and perform naval gunfire missions, the predominantly land-oriented nature of the conflict did not lend itself to seaborne influence. As Booth observes, 'The scope of a navy's influence can be limited. While they can sometimes have effects far beyond the shoreline, in many cases they cannot.'<sup>18</sup> This fact is a weakness in the employment of naval force.

Turning again to strengths, warships have the advantage of being controllable. This means they combine the potential for escalation in the use of force with the ability to be withdrawn. During escalation, this control allows a nation to present a clearly defined graduation in the use of force.<sup>19</sup> This controllability is greatly enhanced by the sophisticated communications suites now found on warships. Sir James Cable argues that the use of limited naval force in modern times is controlled in minute detail by 'express government decision.'<sup>20</sup>

This strength was evident in both Lebanon and the Persian Gulf, as the US gradually increased naval power and use of force to meet increases in the perceived threats. The detailed control that the NCA had over the use of force was most explicitly demonstrated during Operation PRAYING MANTIS, when President Reagan personally gave assent to a request from an A6 Intruder pilot to engage Iranian Boghammers it found attacking a Panamanian flagged vessel.

The size and reach of the world's oceans give naval force incredible mobility, and the ocean's non-territorial nature means that simple demonstrations of will can take place without the risks that could eventuate by a loss of control on land.<sup>21</sup> In Beirut, this mobility and lack of risk was negated by the landing of marines, effectively anchoring American naval power in an exposed position. During the Tanker War, care was taken to remain in international straits and waters. All planning for the escorting of the reflagged tankers could then be based on the ability to carry out assigned missions in such a way as to avoid a situation that would draw the United States into the war.

## Weaknesses

There are some substantial weaknesses involved with the use of a navy, whether it is used in a mere presence role or to apply armed force. The most significant weakness is that the results of a naval effort are unpredictable. A naval force can 'incite hostility, provoke counter-availing forces, add unwelcome responsibilities, encourage unwanted expectations, and so on.'<sup>22</sup> The effectiveness of a naval power's presence depends largely on correctly interpreting the perceptions of foreign decision makers, and this is a notoriously difficult task.<sup>23</sup> Stansfield Turner stated 'I think we who exercise naval presence do not know enough about how to fit the action to the situation: how to be sure that the force we bring to bear when told to help in some situation is in fact the one most appropriate to the circumstances.'<sup>24</sup>

This was an accurate prediction with regard to the naval presence in Lebanon, which failed to deter armed conflict. Turner would later refer to the naval role in Lebanon as a 'gross misapplication of naval force...there's no way President Amin Gemayel could not look at that fleet out there as being a guarantee. Why should he then compromise with the Shiites, the Sunnis and the Druze when he had the fleet there...In truth, if you were a Shiite, as I think the facts bore out, the guns of the *New Jersey* weren't that threatening.'<sup>25</sup>

Costs are incurred with the use of naval power as an instrument of control, and Ken Booth identifies these as political, economic, and opportunity costs.<sup>26</sup> This essay adds a human cost to the list, measured in terms of lives lost while engaged in naval operations. Economic and opportunity costs will be addressed as weaknesses, whereas political and human costs are more appropriately examined later as threats.

A deployed naval force takes a vast amount of money to support. The economic costs can be staggering. The above normal costs of US operations in and around the Gulf, for example, were estimated at \$69 million for Fiscal Year (FY) 87, and \$10 to \$15 million per month in FY 88.



The opportunity costs of expanded naval operations refer to options lost when ships and aircraft sent to Lebanon and the Gulf were not available for duty elsewhere, and ships and aircraft elsewhere had their steaming days and flying hours reduced. The stepped up employment of ships in many cases meant that needed maintenance availabilities were also deferred.

A final weakness involved with the use of a navy in a crisis situation is that warships can rarely achieve the desired effect acting alone. They usually need to be orchestrated with other instruments of diplomacy.<sup>27</sup> American and international diplomacy was continually in action during both the Lebanese conflict and the Iran-Iraq War. These diplomatic efforts were only marginally successful.

### Opportunities

The opportunities presented by the use of naval power on an international scale for control of a crisis are significant, and it is the attempt to realise these opportunities that cause nations to employ their navies despite the weaknesses and threats.

Of primary importance is the chance that a navy might successfully achieve its mission and obtain an advantageous outcome in an international crisis. The success of the US Navy's Persian Gulf operation was a case in point. In addition to the near perfect record for protecting escorted ships, it helped accomplish two major national security and foreign policy objectives:

- it helped bring the Iran-Iraq War to an end without either side achieving a victory that could form the basis for further aggression in the region, and
- it helped restore US credibility with the Gulf Arab states.<sup>28</sup>

Another opportunity realised could simply be the maintenance of international order. The US Navy accomplished this during the Tanker War by keeping the Strait of Hormuz open.

An aspect that follows on from the above is the opportunity to establish regional or world

preeminence, and bolster a nation's prestige.

### Threats

The threats involved with the use of naval power must be recognised and weighed by the nation choosing to employ their warships.

The most dire threat is to lose control of the situation in a crisis and become deeply involved in a general conflict. The deployment of warships and marines increases the likelihood of involvement and the risks of escalation in local disputes.<sup>29</sup> This is because warships can act as a catalyst, provoking or attracting trouble. Close interaction of armed forces in a crisis can ignite serious conflict.<sup>30</sup> This situation occurred in both Beirut and the Persian Gulf, where mere peacekeeping and presence missions soon escalated to a state of armed conflict, although not a participation in general war.

Political costs can be a threat to the government employing its naval power. These political costs can be divided into external and internal political costs. Booth states: 'The maintenance and use of armed forces, and especially their misuse, can incur many external political costs: the action reaction phenomenon might provoke an arms race; exposure might result in a loss of prestige; war might result in defeat; victory might generate hatred.'<sup>31</sup> The effects of external political costs were felt in both conflicts. For example, there was considerable loss of US prestige as the marines were subjected to regular attacks in Beirut, culminating in the BLT Headquarters bombing. The *Stark* and *Roberts* disasters had a similar effect during the Tanker War.

Internal political costs are likely to occur when a nation resorts to armed force. In most Western democracies, there has been a perceptible decline in the acceptability of military force. Political leaders and governments can be shaken by public opinion. The most dramatic example of the effects of both internal and external political costs occurred when the *Vincennes* shot down the Iranian Airbus. The domestic and international condemnation of this act threatened to overshadow the successes of the USN in the



Gulf, and resulted in deep embarrassment for the Reagan Administration.

Closely related to the concept of external political costs is the fact that regional influence-building efforts can be adversely affected due to a naval power's identification with a particular local power.<sup>32</sup> In Lebanon, America's identification with the Gemayel government eventually resulted in a complete failure to attain either diplomatic or military goals. As Turner states 'We overlooked the political implications of using our power on behalf of Christians in a Christian, Moslem, Jewish conflict.'<sup>33</sup> As mentioned previously, the conveying of reflagged Kuwaiti tankers during the Gulf War placed the US in direct opposition to Iran.

Human costs in the pursuit of a naval role in times of crisis can also incur a threat to governments. US operations in the Persian Gulf in 1987-88 cost 53 lives. Most of these deaths occurred on the *Stark*. In contrast, the Lebanon involvement not only took the lives of the 241 men in the BLT Headquarters, but also a number who died in the various shelling and sniping incidents. Incidents of this type caused a public outcry which forced the American Government to review its policies, and threatened to undermine support for these operations.

## CONCLUSIONS

Are navies a valuable instrument or an unreliable tool? Is their usefulness overshadowed by their risks? This essay has compared two incidents of the use of naval forces, both employed to achieve admirable goals, which had two very different results. The effects that naval power can have on a situation, both politically and militarily, are extremely difficult to predict. Each situation must be treated differently; there is no formula that will work in all cases. That being said, it is still possible to derive some general lessons and concepts from these two examples of the use of naval forces in times of tension.

Naval forces should have well-defined and clearly achievable goals. Vague direction such as to 'establish an environment' in Lebanon does not

set out a measurable goal that is appropriate for an armed force to accomplish. On the other hand, the directive to keep the Strait of Hormuz open and protect merchant shipping was achievable, appropriate, and well within the US Navy's capability. Although a navy can be crucial to achieving a nation's political objectives, it is inappropriate to directly task a naval force with their accomplishment.

Marines should not be employed unless absolutely necessary, and then only for short durations. Marines are shock troops, not a continental army. The Navy-Marine Corps team is an indispensable tool for foreign policy: it considerably broadens the range of naval force options available to American decision makers. Conversely, they are vulnerable to attack, and can complicate the mechanics of national maritime strategy. Although inherently flexible, marine units can be an unwelcome anchor for a naval force, negating its mobility and ability to withdraw quietly and without loss of face.

When using a naval force as an instrument of control, a nation must have sufficient military power available to achieve the aim. Or, as Turner put it, '...any force deployed needs to possess an immediately credible threat and be prepared to have its bluff called.'<sup>34</sup> The US quite obviously had sufficient force on hand during the Tanker War. In Lebanon, there was also considerable armed might available, however it could not be effectively employed to achieve the aim of peacekeeping in that highly politicised conflict. This leads to the final concept applicable to the use of a navy as an instrument of control.

When employing a naval force for any reason, valid military targets are necessary if the force is to be effective. If the potential to use armed force is present, then its use must be planned and directed. In the case of Lebanon, this point was not thought through by governmental decision makers. When diplomatic efforts failed, and the naval presence mission escalated to armed conflict, there were no targets that, if successfully engaged, would bring victory or a favourable resolution. Were the navy and marines to engage the Phalange, the Sunnis, the Israelis, the Druze,



the Syrians, the PLO or the Shiites? The political and military complications of Lebanese conflict were staggering and quite unsolvable. Beirut was simply a no-win situation for the American naval force.

With regard to the Lebanese conflict, Turner said: '...it's a very important lesson that there are more limits today than maybe 20 or 30 years ago where naval presence, let alone minor combat of this sort, can be used.'<sup>35</sup> Yet during the Tanker War this same type of limited warfare proved successful. Given the proper combination of geography, politics, force structure and objectives, naval power can still be a useful instrument. Responsible and knowledgeable governments must carefully consider all of the SWOTs in a situation before choosing to give teeth to their maritime strategies during times of tension.

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<sup>3</sup> Turner, S. 'Missions of the US Navy.' *To Use the Sea*, Supplement 1975, US Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, 1975, p 10.

<sup>4</sup> Evans, D. 'Navy - Marine Corps Team in Lebanon.' *USNI Proceedings*, May 1984, p 133.

<sup>5</sup> Wright, C. 'US Naval Operations in 1982.' *USNI Proceedings*, May 1983, p 225.

<sup>6</sup> Evans, op cit, p 134.

<sup>7</sup> *ibid*, p 134.

<sup>8</sup> *ibid*, pp 136 - 137.

<sup>9</sup> *ibid*, p 139.

<sup>10</sup> McDonald, W. 'The Convoy Mission.' *USNI Proceedings*, May 1988, p 36.

<sup>11</sup> O'Rourke, R. 'The Tanker War.' *USNI Proceedings*, May 1988, p 30.

<sup>12</sup> Elliot, F. 'The Navy in 1987.' *USNI Proceedings*, May 1988, p 146.

<sup>13</sup> Childs, N. 'The Naval Stakes in the Gulf.' *Navy International*, October 1987, p 530.

<sup>14</sup> Ramazani, R. 'The Iran - Iraq War and the Persian Gulf', *Current History*, October 1987, p 63.

<sup>15</sup> Turner, op cit, p 13.

<sup>16</sup> McNulty, op cit, p 20.

<sup>17</sup> Turner, op cit, p 13.

<sup>18</sup> Booth, K. *Navies and Foreign Policy*, London, 1984, p 35.

<sup>19</sup> *ibid*, p 33.

<sup>20</sup> *ibid*, p 104.

<sup>21</sup> *ibid*, p 35.

<sup>22</sup> *ibid*, p 35.

<sup>23</sup> *ibid*, pp 31 - 32.

<sup>24</sup> Turner, S. 'Designing a Modern Navy: A Workshop Discussion.' *Exercise Prince Reader*, p 28.

<sup>25</sup> Turner, S. 'US Naval Policy.' *Exercise Prince Reader*, p 22.

<sup>26</sup> Booth, *Navies and Foreign Policy*, op cit, p 219.

<sup>27</sup> *ibid*, p 35.

<sup>28</sup> O'Rourke, 'Gulf Ops' op cit, p 50.

<sup>29</sup> Booth, 'Foreign Policies at Risk: Some Problems of Managing Naval Power.' op cit, p 63.

<sup>30</sup> *ibid*, p 65.

<sup>31</sup> Booth, *Navies and Foreign Policy*, op cit, p 219.

<sup>32</sup> Booth, 'Foreign Policies at Risk: Some Problems of Managing Naval Power.' op cit, p 63.

<sup>33</sup> Turner, 'US Naval Policy.' op cit, p 22.

<sup>34</sup> Turner, 'Missions of the US Navy.' op cit, p 13.

<sup>35</sup> Turner, 'US Naval Policy.' op cit, p 22.







A rare crow's nest view of the aft section of the ill-fated light cruiser HMAS SYDNEY in her camouflage livery.

Photo: Vic Jeffery, Navy Public Affairs Officer (WA)



## CHARTING THE NORTHERN COASTLINE HMAS GERANIUM 1919-1927

By

Lieutenant G.J. Swinden, RAN

Launched at Greenock, Scotland on 8 November 1915 *HMS Geranium* was a Flower Class Sloop of some 1250 tons and capable of 16 1/2 knots. *Geranium* arrived in Australia in late 1919 with her sister ships *Marguerite* and *Mallow* to conduct minesweeping operations (to clear minefields laid by the German raider *Wolf* in 1917). The three enjoyed limited success as only one mine was swept, this being off Cape Everard, Victoria on 8 September 1919.



All three were decommissioned from the Royal Navy in Sydney on 18 October of that year and handed over to the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) as part of Britain's "Gift Fleet" to the RAN. This comprised six modern destroyers, six submarines and three sloops.

From late 1919 until decommissioned on 23 July 1927 *HMAS Geranium* was employed as a Survey Vessel in Australia's northern waters. After being paid off she lay in reserve at Sydney until 1932 when she was handed over to Cockatoo Island for dismantling. On 24 April 1935 the *Geranium* was sunk off Sydney Heads. These are the bare facts concerning *HMAS Geranium* as found in any reasonable text concerning the history of the RAN, such as George Odgers, *The RAN, an Illustrated History*. What is left out, obviously

through lack of space, in these general histories is the actual history of the ship - what did she do, where did she go and who were the men who served in her.

For much of her career *Geranium* or as she was known to her crew *The Gerger* was employed as a survey vessel in Australia's northern waters. The RAN Survey Service began in 1921 and *Geranium* was specially fitted out to carry out survey duties. The period between March and



November of each year was allocated for survey work in the north after which *The Gerger* would return south for refit and her survey data processed in order to produce new or corrected charts.

The need for adequate charts of Australia's coastline was, and still is, a necessity for the safe passage of vessels in our waters, as most of Australia's trade enters and leaves through her ports and waterways. Many of *Geranium's* surveys were to be carried out in areas where surveys had not been conducted for over 40 years. *Geranium's* first survey began in 1921 when Bynoe Harbour, Broome, Darwin and the surrounding areas were surveyed. During this first survey *The Gerger* was diverted to escort the sailing vessel *Gwendoline* from Broome to Wollal. The *Gwendoline* carried several foreign scientists including a number of Swedes and Americans and their equipment to observe the 1921 total eclipse of the sun.

Surveying in the twenties consisted of a great deal of hard work for *Geranium's* ten officers and one hundred and three ratings. Depths in shallow water were calculated by lead line — a rope with a lead weight on the end was cast into water and the depth read off from marks on the rope. Many a long day from early morning until dusk was spent in a ship's boat pulling through bays and inlets as the lead was swung to record the depth. Tides were gauged by setting up a tide pole and a party of men would be detailed off to watch the pole. Each hour for several days the depth would be read and recorded. During their off duty hours (the dog watches) the men would often gather on the forecandle for a *sing song* or spend their time catching sharks, which were prevalent in northern waters. The polishing of tortoise shell and pearl shell as souvenirs for family and friends was also a popular pastime. Swimming was not encouraged because of the danger of sharks, crocodiles and box-jellyfish, although occasionally the men would try and sneak a few baby crocodiles onboard as pets. However, the most popular event looked forward to was the Banyan — a

chance to get ashore on some deserted island or part of the coastline and laze on the beach and enjoy a meal cooked over an open fire.

*The Gerger* would return to port for fresh provisions and to coal ship. Coaling ship was the dirtiest and the least welcome task in the RAN of the 1920s as it required all of the ship's company not on duty to load coal into the ship's bunkers from hoppers on the wharf. The men were covered in coal dust from head to foot, and only the oldest and dirtiest clothes were worn for this evolution.



For days afterwards the men would display rings of black coal dust under their eyes as they were unable to completely wash the dust from their eyes and skin.

Being in harbour was not all hard work, leave or liberty was allowed and the local hotels received a large amount of patronage from the *Geranium's* men. These included the Continental and Star Hotels in Broome, the Terminus and Victoria in Darwin and the Torres Strait and Metropole at T.I. (Thursday Island).

*The Gerger's* next survey was off the South West Coast of Tasmania, but in 1923 she returned to warmer climes when she conducted surveys of the Great Barrier Reef, Arnheim Bay in the Gulf of Carpentaria and Roebuck Bay at Broome. The 1923 survey was particularly interesting for several reasons, not the least of all being a mutiny of sorts. On the way north, *The Gerger* called in at Cairns and leave was granted. That night some of the men who were ashore and under the



influence of alcohol ran across the Captain (Commander Harry Bennett, DSO, RN) and Lieutenant J.P. Dixon, RN, and proceeded to use foul language in front of them. Later that night when Dixon returned onboard he found some oily rags and peanut shells littering his cabin. Dixon was not liked by the crew of *Geranium*, being described as "a RN man who insists on discipline and will have things just so. Some of the men do not want things just so". Remembering that the 1919 *HMAS Australia* mutiny had occurred only a few years before and many Australians, not just Australian sailors, were highly critical of Royal Navy discipline.

The Captain called the men together and spoke to them concerning the incident and after that there was no more trouble until *Geranium* reached Bynoe Harbour near Darwin. Here, Rear Admiral Clarkson was embarked for passage to Darwin. That night as the Captain and Admiral dined, the ship's lights failed and then a number of men began to sing; "Oh I don't want to die, I want to go home", outside the Captain's door. The Captain called all the Petty Officers together and told them to get the men under control. As an extra precaution several rifles used for shooting sharks were removed from the gunners store to a safer place.

Upon arrival at Darwin the *Geranium*, provided a guard of honour at the unveiling of a memorial to Sir Ross Smith, at the point where he crossed Australia on his flight from Britain in 1919. However, matters did not improve. One of the *Geranium*'s men returned from leave drunk and instead of going onboard *Geranium* went aboard the steamer *Montoro* (which travelled between Darwin and Sydney) and went to sleep. When found by the *Montoro*'s crew he did not want to leave and it took nearly two hours to remove him from the vessel.

Another incident arose when several Aborigines were brought onboard to carry out menial jobs, five were paid the price of one beer a day while the head Aboriginal was paid the price of one whiskey a day. What upset the crew was this Aboriginal was allowed to use a ladder, which was reserved purely for the use of Petty Officers

and above and which, if they dared to place a foot on, would result in instant punishment.

Matters did not improve when *Geranium* put to sea and began survey work in the Gulf of Carpentaria. In the Sir Edward Pellew Group of islands, several officers went ashore and became lost in a mangrove swamp and took an entire day to get back to the ship. Another officer discovered in the scrub of Turtle Island a strange log which was painted red and yellow with plugs of mud and leaves at each end. Pulling out one of the plugs the officer found that the log had been hollowed out and contained Aboriginal remains. The log was taken back to *Geranium* where the Aboriginal workers onboard went into a frenzy, refusing to touch the log, and calling out that it contained a devil.

Nine days later the *Geranium*, whilst preparing to anchor, struck an uncharted reef near Vanderlin Island. Able Seaman Alec Chook Fowler was on the bridge at the time and remembers the event. "At about 1530 I asked the skipper if he required the sounding machine going and he said, 'No Fowler, we've been in this area before.' I was the sounding recorder and I couldn't remember being there before, but then who was to have a better memory than an officer. The Captain then told me, 'go aft and tell No 1 (the Executive Officer) we will be anchoring in five minutes'. So I left the bridge and made my way along the boat deck and down the ladder to the quarterdeck and just as I said, 'Compliments of the Captain No 1 we are going to anchor in five minutes', when all of a sudden we hit this reef. She rolled to starboard then to port straightened up with her snout up in the air and her stern partly submerged. No 1 said, 'Fowler I think we are well and truly bloody well anchored'. Well it was all hands to the pumps and what ever could be spared had to be moved aft. All the heavy gear from the mining room amidships below the messdeck was manhandled off".

Commander Bennett put out two anchors, and hauled in the cable by the capstan to pull the *Geranium* off the reef. One cable parted but the other remained firm and enabled *The Genger* to get off the reef. The anchors had to be set by



hand, each being taken out and set by one of the ship's boats. Once off the reef *The Gerger's* troubles were not over. She began to take water through several holes in the hull but fortunately these were plugged by divers with cement, which was used on board for making survey benchmarks.

*Geranium* then made passage to Thursday Island, but encountered bad weather. After this it was decided to take the Aboriginal remains ashore as many of the crew believed they were responsible for jinxing the ship. Even as the remains were being taken ashore the cutter in which they were being carried was accidentally rammed by a Pearl lugger.

Later, off Moreton Bay, heavy weather was encountered and *The Gerger* had to put into harbour.

Finally, *Geranium* reached Sydney, the ship docked and repairs were made. This survey cruise was over and many a sigh of relief was breathed. The cruise had not been a total disaster: Adequate surveys had been conducted and several types of fish not known to exist in Australian waters had also been discovered.

By October 1923, *Geranium* was again in northern waters on survey work and on 12 October towed the passenger vessel *Montoro* off Young Reef in, the Great Barrier Reef.

In 1924, *Geranium* embarked a Fairey IIID float plane for use in survey work, thus becoming the first Australian ship to use an aircraft in survey work. In 1925, a second survey vessel, *HMAS Moresby*, commissioned. From 1925 until 1927 *Geranium* and *Moresby* operated together in northern waters.

One of *The Gerger's* last actions before decommissioning was on 13 May 1927 when she towed the passenger ship *Tasman* off a reef at Clarke Island. On 23 July 1927, *Geranium* was paid off into reserve and later sunk. There is little to remind Australians today of the valuable work done by the *Geranium*. One of her ship's company, was so proud of her, he even burst into verse, detailing *The Gerger* and her activities:

### HMAS GERANIUM

*When World War I had ended and peace had been restored,*

*Three sweepers of the Flower class came under Navy Board.*

*Two to sweep our coastline, destroying enemy mines*

*The other one for survey work in our Northern climes.*

*The "Gerger" was selected to map our coast and Bays*

*And modernise the many charts made in earlier days.*

*From Darwin down to Bynoe, from Broome to Arnheim Land*

*From early morn till late at night, the lead was heaved by hand.*

*From point to point on an endless track*

*Pulling oars and straining the back.*

*In the bows of the boat the leadsman keeps*

*Alert of mind, to call the marks and deeps.*

*After many weeks of labour – to Port for liberty  
Then back upon the survey ground, recording accurately*

*The shoals, reefs and shallows and hazards of the sea*

*To make it safe for other ships, to travel trouble free.*

*On shore the "Tide Pole Party", hourly note the tide*

*Registering the rise and fall, a pole their only guide.*

*A relief from sounding party, billeted on land*

*Awake, they keep their vigil, from tents pitched on the sand.*

*Eight months of constant toiling, then for Sydney bound*

*Suspension of "hard layers", instead long leave is found.*

*A routine which created, a brotherhood of man  
By working close together, when survey work began.*



*The "Gerger" work is forever, plotted on the chart  
Around Australia's coastline, many poles apart.  
Ships now travel on routes the "Gerger" pioneered  
With men of the Survey Service who worked and persevered.*

— Chief Petty Officer Lovell Mears Boxsell,  
as published in *Open Sea*.

A more poignant reminder is on Soldiers Point on Melville Island's east coast. There lie several rusted iron poles and a concrete bench mark bearing the inscription HMAS GERANIUM 1917. But perhaps her most noticeable legacy are the charts that were produced from the data she collected. Although now updated, they were for many years the only reliable charts for navigation in our northern waters.

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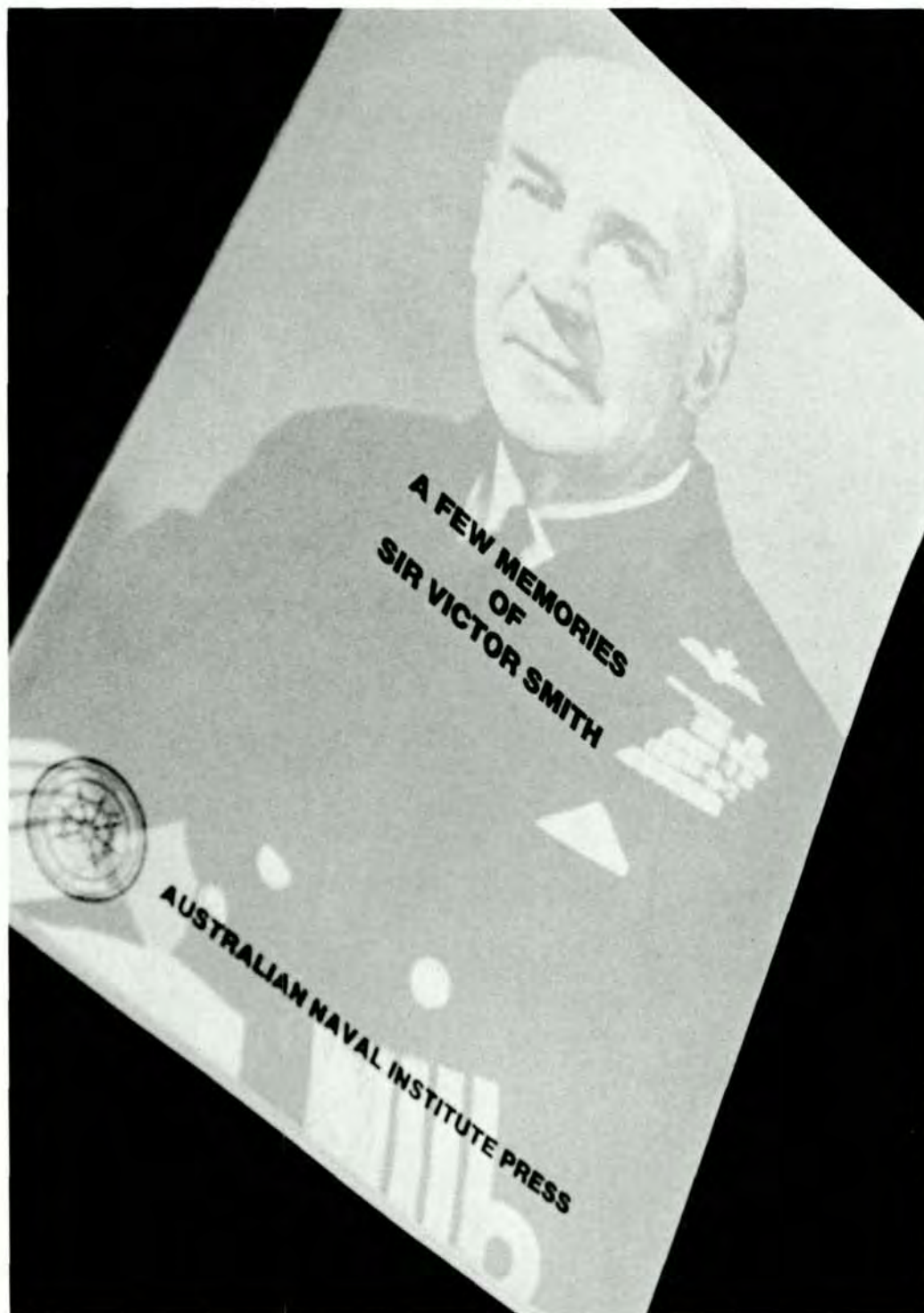
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## **ANI SPECIAL PUBLICATION**







## BOOK REVIEW

### A FEW MEMORIES OF SIR VICTOR SMITH; 64pp booklet published by the Australian Naval Institute.

Australian literary and Naval life is the richer for the publishing in 1992 of *A Few Memories of Sir Victor Smith*. This 64-page booklet, published by the Australian Naval Institute, tells the story of Admiral Sir Victor Smith AC KBE CB DSC RAN Rtd, a most respected Naval aviator.

Like the former Commodore "Toz" Dadswell, who was actively behind this publication, I came under the spell of "VAT" Smith, in 1989. Like "Toz", I too, found he was quite willing to cooperate in the subsequent long article I wrote. But he himself took no step to put pen to paper, despite the adventure and the achievement of his story.

In the case of *A Few Memories*, the story was made possible because Commodore Dadswell, himself a former naval aviator, had six taped interviews with the retired Admiral. It is those tapes that Lieutenant Commander Peter Jones, then research officer to the Chief of Naval Staff, moulded into a flowing narrative and saw through to publication. Thus the telling of a significant life history has been made possible.

The booklet is an *I* one, the *I* being Admiral Smith. It is well that his adventurous, selfless story is available for all to read, and perhaps be aspired by. His story really rates a book. But since the modest man himself, and presumably no-one else, has done anything toward that being made possible, it is well that we have *A Few Memories of Sir Victor Smith*.

The Admiral is familiarly known as VAT Smith. It derives from his Christian names, Victor Alfred Trumper, for the famed cricketer of old was his uncle.

Admiral Smith now lives in retirement in Red Hill, Canberra today, aged 79. The forward to the booklet by General Peter Gratton, a successor to Admiral Smith in being Australia's chief serviceman, refers to Sir Victor's *modest understatement*. He adds that the Admiral had said that he had never written an autobiography as his experiences were really only similar to those of so many others.

"Similar to others indeed!" exclaims the General. "He was the first graduate of the Royal Australian Naval College to become a four-star admiral, and probably the only Australian who will ever serve 49 years in uniform. Moreover, he led a squadron attack on the *Scharnhorst*, who was shot down twice in the Mediterranean, who is widely recognised as the father of the Fleet Air Arm, who went on to become not only the head of his Service but Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee, and who was described by Sir Arthur Tange, not known for his over-generosity in bestowing praise, as an outstanding public administrator and a man who had 'won enormous respect from us all.' "

It is interesting to find that Admiral Smith had his desire for naval life kindled as a *wolf cub*. As a boy in Chatswood, NSW, born in 1913, he had no family naval associations. But an RAN Lieutenant Commander would teach the *pack*, knots and speak on life in the Navy. The son of Mrs Bradford, a teacher at his Chatswood Primary School, also used to tell him about Jervis Bay, the naval station on the NSW south coast. "The more I found out the greater the attraction", he recalls.

By the time his father, George, bought a T-Model Ford in 1925, interest was swinging from sending the boy on to Sydney Grammar, to the Naval College at Jervis Bay. Then at the tender age of 13, he successfully faced up to an interviewing



committee of naval officers. "My first impression was one of amazement at the amount of gold braid on their uniforms," he reminisces. He was one of a very small proportion of those seeking entry, to join the college as a cadet midshipman.

The justice of the respected officer of later years is evident in his comments on bullying and flogging. Older boys were able to administer summary punishment on younger boys — a circumstance he commends for being later abolished.

Characteristically in his respect for senior officers through these pages, he tells of "an arresting character" and a "fine man I was very proud to have known". He was Commander E.S. Fegen, Executive Officer at the college and a former rugby player. As Captain of an armed merchant cruiser later in World War 2, he was awarded the VC.

Sporting and social life pleased the young VAT. The wives of the masters and officers came along to Wednesday night dances, "to have their feet trodden on". The cadet's wonder at things Naval shines through these pages. He found the arrival of the *Australia* and the *Canberra* "terribly impressive". The big cruisers had steamed into Jervis Bay, "an unforgettable sight."

Graduating in 1930, he began shipboard life on board HMAS *Canberra*. But the Mediterranean port of Malta was a real eye-opener. He had joined the Royal Navy vessel, *London*, and they beheld the island's Grand Harbour. His Depression-era pay of five shillings a day was obviously compensated to some extent by the sight he saw.

It is best recorded in an address he gave, about 1970, to Canberra chapter of the Naval Historical Society, later printed over five pages:

"The Grand Harbour was completely full with battleships, the aircraft carrier and the cruisers, whilst Sliema Creek seemed equally full with destroyers, submarines and depot ships. It was a time when competition between ships was

intensely keen. Later, in 1933, no fewer than 70 ships took part - an unforgettable experience".

Looking back, he had no feeling that the officer and sailor of 1970 was inferior to his earlier counterpart — that "it doesn't blow like it used to".

The transfer of the midshipmen to a two-week course on the aircraft carrier HMS *Glorious* first kindled the lad's noted interest in the Fleet Air Arm. He "saw the great advantages carrier aircraft gave the fleet aircraft were increasingly important. The Air Force had never wanted the Navy to have a Fleet Air Arm," he recalls. There was, moreover, "lethargy on the part of some senior RAN officers towards such as arm."

As flying developed for the Australian Navy, the Air Force provided the pilots and the Navy the observers - a jack-of-all-trades on board planes. That RAAF exclusiveness to training pilots apparently robbed VAT of ever being a pilot.

The observer was the navigator and, later radar operators, and bomb aimer.

Admiral Smith recalls the *Swordfish*. This seemingly flimsy aircraft had one wing above the other after the style of aircraft of the films of the 1930s, in which the two-man crew yelled messages at each other from the open cockpits. It comes as a surprise, in view of the huge and ponderous wartime aircraft of just a few years later, that the *Swordfish* was regarded as a bomber.

VAT recalls that it could "stagger" up to 10,000 feet. It was obviously no threat to the sound barrier; it had a cruising speed of 90 knots. A bit over 100 miles an hour on a flat run.

After World War II broke out in 1939, VAT Smith figured in an epic with the *Swordfish*. It was like a mosquito taking on a serpent. The big German warship *Scharnhorst*, lurking off Norway and a bitter threat to Allied convoys taking arms to beleaguered Russia, via the Arctic, later, was learned to be sailing south down the Norwegian coast. A sizeable screen, presumably of other ships, was about her, a nautical terror.



VAT was stationed in the Orkneys off Scotland. One of the three-man *Swordfish* crew was discarded to make way for extra fuel tanks for a long run across the North Sea. VAT was in charge of six *Swordfish* which made off to do battle with the *Scharnhorst*. Turning north off the Norwegian Coast, they sighted the German force. The British aircraft carried out a torpedo attack. No hits were scored and they lost two of their six planes. "The attack on the *Scharnhorst* was rather frightening," recalls VAT. "It was alarming when you are on a committed course heading towards the target. You are very low over the water because of the limitations height allows you to drop a torpedo so it will run. Until you get within range where you can drop the torpedo and then get out of it, you are in some respects a sitting duck. That doesn't make life pleasant."

Presumably, a single German bullet among the barrage fired at the flimsy challengers could have ended the story of Admiral Sir Victor Smith thereandthen. Incidentally, after inflicting terrible damage on Allied shipping, *Scharnhorst* herself went to the bottom when challenged successfully later in the war by ships of the Royal Navy.

May, 1941, saw the young officer Smith, observer on a *Fulmar* aircraft ordered to attack a force of heavy bombers heading to intercept a British convoy bound for besieged Malta. Smith, with that "under statement" referred to by General Gration, tells how his aircraft "suffered quite a lot of damage and it was necessary to ditch." A destroyer picked them up from their rubber raft.

Then there was "one of the nuisances". While undertaking the complex procedure of ditching in the sea, with aircraft recognition from their own ships not very good, a number of those ships subjected them to anti-aircraft fire.

Four months later, another plane on which VAT was among the crew was shot down on similar Mediterranean duties. Another destroyer picked them up. He was aboard the more sophisticated British aircraft carrier *HMS Ark Royal*, when she was torpedoed near Gibraltar. It was "the end of a very gallant ship."

He was among those taken off the sinking carrier. He got the DFC soon afterwards. Phew! A cavalcade of hazardous adventure.

At last in 1942, the Naval aviator was posted back to Australia. He had been away five years. He was amazed, after the London blackouts and severe rationing, how much it was "business as usual" in Sydney.

War was by then under way in the Pacific. Singapore fell, with "the shock of the loss of two great warships, *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse*." He recalls what he says was "the first ray of brightness" the Battle of the Coral Sea. Commemorated in 1992 50 years on, it was led by an American Navy with whom VAT had his own associations. As a young Australian officer, he had been deputed to liaison duties with the Americans on *USS Chicago*, and made very welcome by the ship's company.

He was a lieutenant, aged 28. He missed Coral Sea, having by then been transferred to *HMAS Canberra*, while that heavy cruiser joined with the Americans in a notable repulse of the Japanese at Guadalcanal. That Solomon Island struggle is generally rated by the Americans as the first major reversal for the Japanese during World War II.

Australians rate that honour to their rejection of the Japanese at Milne Bay. Be that as it may: we were very fortunate we had the formidable US numbers on our side after the Japs stormed down through the islands to the north.

In the Guadalcanal action, *HMAS Canberra* went down off Savo Island in August, 1942. Smith's job had been to sit with the pilot in an aircraft perched on *Canberra's* superstructure throbbing with life, the aircraft made a tortuous ascent from the cruiser. Later they put down on the plane's pontoons and were jacked aboard.

When *Canberra* went down, he was among some 700 crew lifted to safety from the stricken cruiser.

Back to Britain. A time of air raid sirens and bombings and, as Churchill had put it a couple of



years earlier when Britain had stood alone, without Russia or America, "our finest hour".

One evening in 1943, the Naval officer, by then 30, met an English girl, Miss Nanette Harrison, at the London flat of a mutual friend, the Australian, Sydney Cotton. She had been a British WAAF, discharged after taking ill, and working for a London solicitor. It was a significant moment in a significant life.

Then, in one of the urgent departures that went with war, he joined the "Second Front" — the establishment of an Allied landing on Europe, the battle-scarred beaches of Normandy in France. He went in several days after the early waves, helping establish headquarters on shore for a British admiral.

On his return to England, Nanette, said "Yes, yes," to his proposal and they were engaged. Then he was redirected at short notice back to Australia. They wed first, VAT being conscious of the advantages of obtaining a passage for Nanette back to Australia, if she was a war bride when the war ended.

The wedding photo in the booklet of he and his English bride is interesting today. Here is a slim, fair-haired English girl, smiling, with characteristics very much of what Australians would see as English. She is still beside her husband, almost 50 years later. Three sons and many adventures later too, the English WAAF of yesteryear watches the interests and the health of her infirm husband. I know her as a reserved, but co-operative older woman and find it strange to see the immature but appealing English girl she was on her marriage.

She's "Lady Smith" today - but she told a neighbour to break it down when he addressed her as that in a supermarket. She has a long record of work for Marymead the ACT children's care centre started up by Catholic nuns some years back. The couple sometimes attend the historic St John's Anglican Church in Canberra. The retired admiral, who sang in a church choir in his youth, regards faith as most important.

The years after the World War II were to see Admiral Smith begin his significant rise through the ranks. He was posted to Britain, liaising with the Royal Navy in seeking to found a Fleet Air Arm for the Australian Navy.

Still in his 30's when the Korean war was under way in the early 50s, he was second-in-command of the RAN aircraft carrier HMAS *Sydney*. A decade later he was Captain of another Australian carrier, HMAS *Melbourne*.

He was leader of the Fleet Air Arm station at Nowra, NSW, between 1957-59, a role emotionally pleasing to a man who, if he expresses the tang of the sea, has a special liking also for the sky over that sea.

"A Few Memories" lists his flag officer experiences at much greater length than herein. But one experience in 1962, in Japanese waters, serves to demonstrate the concerns of the *Melbourne's* skipper. He reports, "If anyone wants the testing experience of remaining on full alert throughout an entire night, then take an aircraft carrier through the Schimonoseki Strait. Likewise was a voyage through the Inland Sea of Japan an exciting passage, heightened by many fishing boats not showing lights.

In 1967 he was appointed Vice Admiral and First Naval Member and in 1970 Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee — which meant head of all three services.

Admiral Smith touches on two collisions involving *Melbourne*, both after he left the carrier, in his memories. Like all his other comments, these are never aggressive.

Sir Arthur Tange, Secretary of the Defence Department wrote to him on his retirement in 1975, commending his "unprejudiced judgement" and "unwillingness to be swayed by special pleading from any quarter."



It is interesting to see the unfolding story of Admiral Victor Smith as it is seen in the 20 photographs throughout this booklet. Page 15 shows him with other cadets at the Naval College; an ordinary kid, apparently unsure of himself, introverted, perhaps a little sullen. As a sub-lieutenant of 22 his pleasant nature is manifest as he poses on board a ship. He looks quite daggy in his wartime wedding-day photo with Nanette holding his arm.

Then the photos start to picture a more serious, commanding personality, as he advances up the ranks. As Australia's chief serviceman at signing connected with the South East Asia Treaty Organisation in 1972, he looks every inch the statesman; serious, efficient, a man of few words.

Knowing him in his retirement, a pleasant, co-operative man, I find it hard to see him as the officer with a bulldog expression on the cover of *A Few Memories*.

There's inspiration for we lesser mortals when we note one aspect the photos reveal. For the sailor pictured in white shorts has the thin legs many of us have. And his hair had receded well before most of us.

In August, 1992, he was interviewed, a frail man approaching 80, before a TV camera, close by the big anchor commemorating HMAS *Canberra*, the ship from which he had been saved in the Solomons. The ceremony was by the Lake in Canberra.

Well, at least much of his story has now been told. Well had General Gration written, "We must read between these modestly written lines to appreciate how extraordinary a career is encompassed in these pages".

Reviewed by Larry Noye



*The guided-missile frigate HMAS ADELAIDE (FFG-01) berthing at HMAS STIRLING on October 5 on her arrival for basing in Western Australia. ADELAIDE has been homeported at Fleet Base West since October 30.*

*Photo: Vic Jeffery, Navy Public Affairs Officer (WA)*





## THE WRITING OF AUSTRALIAN NAVAL HISTORY

by

Tom Frame

*This is the transcript of a paper delivered by the author at the Naval History Workshop, Sydney 17-18 June, 1992.*

My broad purpose in this paper is to look at the practice of Australian naval history over the past century. I have four specific aims in doing so.

- First, to demarcate the area of our concern as naval historians. It would appear that seldom has the question, "What is naval history?" been asked or answered. This has had a great bearing on what has been written.
- Second, to propose a practical framework for understanding the progress of historical writing and to impose this on Australian naval writing.
- Third, to outline some recent developments in Australian naval history (defining recent as post 1980), particularly the move away from descriptive to analytical history.
- Fourth, to draw some conclusions from a survey of the past before making some observations on the likely shape and character of future writing.

### WHAT IS NAVAL HISTORY?

It is a pity that this question has not been the subject of more consideration in Australia. This is perhaps surprising, noting that it has certainly been a major issue in Britain with its longer and more fully developed body of naval history. It has prompted two crucial subsidiary questions which also affect content and style: why is naval history important?; and, how is it to be written?

There is no better description of naval history than that offered by Admiral Sir Herbert Richmond in a lecture given on 21 February 1939 at London University. I will quote him at length:

Naval history is a record, as accurate as it is possible to make, of the manner in which the Navy has, up to the present day, been used by the Statesmen of all the several periods to

achieve the national ends: of the methods of employment of the naval weapon in pursuance of those ends; and of the conduct of the operations which resulted from that employment. It includes the 'whys' of strategy in all its phases, from the political sphere to that of the minor strategy and tactics of fleets and squadrons: it includes the 'hows' of the actual performances; and, not less important, the 'whys' of success and failure. It embraces all of those elements which entered into the problems involved and determined the methods employed; elements of foreign diplomatic relations, of economics and commerce, of international law and neutrality, of positions, of the principles of war, of administration, of the nature of the weapon, and of personality.<sup>1</sup>

There, then, is its range. We expect our naval historian to trace for us the course of the war at sea, from its roots in Cabinet discussions and decisions to its ultimate branches in the resulting cruises and combats at sea, why and how those who directed the use of the Navy and those who conducted its operations employed the national weapon.

Note that Richmond's definition includes peacetime naval activity. If the narrow 'war only' conception of naval history was applied to the history of the RAN - and a brief observation of Australian naval writing suggests that it would demarcate a very restricted area of history. During its eighty years in existence, the RAN has been engaged in combat operations for no more than eighteen years. In this sense, the wartime experience is exceptional and unrepresentative of the RAN's overall contribution to national development and the experience of most Australians who have served in the RAN. That



most writing has focussed on the war years is quite understandable; That peacetime has been so ignored is not.

There is a need for continuing dialogue between historians on the range of Australian naval history as a means of guiding any future historiographical debate.

## ACCOUNTING FOR THE PROGRESS OF AUSTRALIAN NAVAL HISTORY

Before suggesting a framework which might help in explaining the historic character of Australian naval writing, I offer a general observation on what has been written.

Naval history began to emerge as a distinct field of historical research in Australia around 1980. As a component of the larger discipline of maritime history, more detailed accounts of the RAN were published when documents dealing with the period to 1950 became available and more readily accessible.

Prior to 1980, the written history of the RAN has passed through four phases with each covering a specific area of history. The *first*, predominantly written before 1939, dealt with Australian efforts to acquire an independent navy culminating in the establishment of the RAN in 1913. There was not a great deal of writing on the wartime experience or the 1920s, a situation which persists.

The *second*, written in the twenty-five years following World War II and principally for those involved, described aspects of the wartime naval experience with emphasis on major naval engagements involving the RAN's larger ships. It was in this period that the Naval Historical Society was established and G. Hermon Gill completed his second and final official volume on the RAN in World War II.

By that time, the principal events and major themes which had marked Australian naval development had been recorded. However, much of the history was descriptive and based on secondary sources, predominantly Gill. There was a marked absence of analytical or

comparative writing assessing the RAN alongside the similar navies of Canada and New Zealand. There was also a severe over-concentration on wartime operations with administration, logistical support and social aspects, largely ignored. The periods of peace had indeed become, as von Treitschke commented one hundred years ago, the empty pages of the history books.

The *third* phase, which ended around 1980, was characterised by a number of general works, predominantly "coffee table" books, which briefly covered Australian naval history.

We are presently in the *fourth* phase which has been characterised by the volume and the diversity of published works covering the entire period of naval activity in Australia. It must also be said that naval history has only very recently become an interest area for academic historians. In the past it has been resplendent with amateurs, and serving and ex-serving naval people with a range of special interests largely determined by their own experiences. This is starting to change.

A catalyst for this change was the Australian War Memorial's support of the inaugural Naval History Seminar in July 1989. Conducted in Canberra, it brought together naval historians from Australia, New Zealand, Canada, the United States and Britain. In addition to highlighting the importance and the value of comparative history, this seminar aimed to set an agenda for Australian naval history into the next century. The published volume produced by Peter Jones from papers given at the seminar, *Reflections on the RAN*, has emerged as a milestone work and met with great enthusiasm from historians. This workshop is a continuation of an expression of self-consciousness within naval history.

Although this briefly outlines the content of Australian naval history, it explains very little. The character of naval history has been determined largely by methodology and this is a better conception of its dynamism. This brings me to a conceptual framework.

There is a view that history is characterised by a



well-known taxonomy, passing through at least three well-defined stages. In the *first* stage, history is written by the victors or survivors, largely from published sources, within a framework of 'conventional wisdom' shared by the participant writers.

In the *second* stage, the conventional paradigm handed down from the participant writers is challenged, often *a priori*, by a later generation of non-participant writers.

In the *third*, non-participant writers not only challenge the received paradigm, but perceive the evidence, and the questions to be asked of it, in entirely different ways from those of the earlier generations of participant writers.

The first stage is more likely to be flawed in that it is motivated by a desire for self-justification. At either the second or third stages, the historian is able to draw upon a wider range of primary archival source material, if not every document that records the event or the period under review. Of course, progression through the stages is also determined by the range and depth of source material. It is difficult to write history when little evidence exists of what occurred.

Australian naval history is currently emerging as a distinct entity as a consequence of its passage from the first stage into the second stage of the taxonomy I have described. This is only a recent development, having been in the second stage for less than a decade. Although progress has been made, the future for naval history will be substantially affected by the availability of sources both in Australia, and in Britain where a great body of information about the RAN is stored.

Consequently, there have been two distinct trends. The first has been to take naval history from the periphery into the mainstream of Australia's general history. This has encompassed a vision of Australia as an island nation with a natural concern for the exercise of maritime power. In many ways it was also a challenge to expand the Anzac legends to include the sailor with the bushman.

Direct links are also established between broader national trends, particularly relating to local industry and science and technology, and the development of the RAN. In sum, it was a movement which sought to make room for naval history and the light it was able to shed on additional dimensions of the Australian character and experience of war.

The second trend revolved around filling gaps in the general histories while adding substance to those areas which had previously been bare. Detailed accounts have been written of naval aviation, dockyards, minor warships and classes, establishments and little known, or previously secret, wartime operations. The prevailing ship history fad gave way to more abstract accounts which looked at the RAN in new ways and were, at any rate, better formulated to providing useful analysis and insights. Histories based on extensive archival research emerged to challenge previously held interpretations.

## THE MOVE FROM DESCRIPTION TO ANALYSIS

What we need within Australian naval history at the moment is a keen observance of three imperatives. First, why is the history I propose to write important? Second, what is the problem or question it seeks to resolve or answer? Third, in what way does my area of research and writing influence other interpretations or assist in the understanding of allied areas of interest?

The second is probably the most important; what historical problem am I seeking to resolve. This must lead historians into broader areas of inquiry than has hitherto been the case and possibly challenged their methodology. This is an issue of continuing interest.

We can be guided, in part, by Admiral Mahan's summation of his own method. He held that, as a preliminary approach, the historian ought:

...to analyse his subject, to separate the separate parts, to recognise their interrelations and relative proportions of interest and importance. Thence would be formed a general plan, a rough model, in which at least there



should appear distinctly to himself what is the central figure of the whole the predominance of which before teacher and reader must be preserved throughout.<sup>2</sup>

It was to be expected, given the poorly developed body of written works, that historical study did not occupy an important place in the training and professional development of Australian naval officers, or prompt them to publish their own analysis of naval affairs. Naval training in Australia has traditionally not been strong on matters of method. This probably reflects the autocratic nature of naval thinking in this country; an attitude prompted by the absence of an accomplished critic or eminent scholar of naval affairs. The derivative culture and professional ethos of the RAN has emphasised the importance of 'what' rather than 'why'.

The conception of naval history as an analytical tool was for many years in Australia virtually unknown. From the period when the RAN College opened in 1913 until around 1960, cadet midshipman were taught to know the facts of British naval history focusing on Nelson's three great victories. Australian naval history was considered second-rate or ephemeral by comparison. But the nature of the history considered was of secondary importance. Cadet-midshipmen were not encouraged to draw inferences or to theorise. Officers of sub-lieutenant rank, who spent a period of training at Dartmouth, were encouraged to understand the principles of naval warfare as demonstrated within the prescribed text. Generally speaking, history was taught for the purpose of socialisation and enhancing *esprit de corps* rather than to produce junior officers with analytical skills.

What we need, particularly in institutions of learning, is a new attitude towards naval history which raises our expectations of naval history and its practitioners. In his famous book, *The Operations Of War*, Colonel E.B. Hamley observed: 'It is expected from those who now write about war that they shall be something more than mere chroniclers...while the student of military history feels that his reading can be profitable only in proportion to the means he may

possess of judging of the events of the past, and deducing from them lessons for the future' This observation was made in 1872.

But there are mitigating circumstances which ought to be remembered. It has been justifiable in the past to blame the narrowness and shallowness of naval history on the absence or accessibility of source materials. Historiographical difficulties were created by the decision of the Australian Commonwealth Naval Board to rely to a very large degree on Royal Navy shore infrastructure and staff work. As most of Australia's warships were acquired from British shipyards, the Admiralty acted for the Naval Board in liaison with shipbuilding firms and contractors. This distanced the Naval Board from much of the analysis that accompanied the formulation of a staff requirement, and subsequent initial system trials and validation. Having only a small Naval staff, the RAN also relied on British procedures and personnel for the trial and analysis of in-service weapons exercises until the early 1960s. Thus, much of the historical data was stored in Britain.

There has also been a reluctance by historians to draw upon a broader base of research, assuming the records exist. For instance, there is a need to look at financial outlays since the available resources has played a pivotal role in naval warfare waged by Australia. How have outlays on refitting and maintenance, personnel, operating costs and capital acquisition compared with other navies, such as Canada, for instance? How cost-effective was it to obtain equipment, ammunition and stores from Britain? The general nature of these questions highlights how little is really known about the RAN's past, and of how little use it has been in understanding the present.

Yet, where the relevant records definitely do exist, many questions remain unanswered. By way of some example: we have very little idea of the basis of the RAN's fuel policy and the impact of fuel stocks on the conduct of warfare. There have been few studies of the particular role of weather, tide, current, sea temperature and salinity on naval warfare in Australian waters. What of the relationship between Australian industry and



technological change in naval warfare? What of the provision and division of skills in the dockyards, in the employment of officers and sailors? What effect did the acquisition of ships designed for the Northern Atlantic region have on Australian operational efficiency in the South Pacific?

While I mentioned that it was possible to lament the availability and accessibility of source material in the past, much has changed and primary research is much easier than it was in the mid-1980s. The trend will no doubt continue as new collections become accessible and finding aids improve. We have the Australian War Memorial, Australian Archives, the Naval Historical Section in Navy Office and the various naval museum curators within the establishments to thank for that.

## THE FUTURE

The next decade is one of great promise and potential for Australian naval history. It will feature the publication of analytical and interpretative studies of the RAN with the prospect of attracting the interest of historians from general history. The Australian War Memorial and the Australian National Maritime Museum will, one imagines, play a leading role and bring to naval history the institutional backing it requires.

It is now possible to identify a large number of historians with very broad research interests who have published, or are intending to publish, major studies in Australian naval history.

- Peter Jones, John Mortimer and Hec Donohue are writing about strategy, diplomacy and procurement since 1900 in the official history of naval policy volume;
- Mark Bailey is researching naval control of shipping and convoy escorting from 1850 to 1945;
- Wayne Gobert's research into naval intelligence organisation and code-breaking is proceeding;
- Ray Jones continues to explain the history of naval aviation;
- Mark Taylor has been exploring the Australian-American naval nexus and the

historic roots of naval policy;

- David Stevens is looking at Japanese submarine operations in Australian waters and anti-submarine warfare;
- Eric Buckley has completed a study of AIO and radar in the RAN;
- James Goldrick's work on comparative naval history, particularly within the Commonwealth nations, is long overdue;
- Joe Straczek is the undisputed expert on colonial and coastal defences;
- Robert Hyslop is the pioneer of naval administrative history and one of only two naval civilians to have written about the civil side of the diarchy;
- Marsden Hordern's monumental research into early surveying and hydrography has opened up the 19th century for critical inquiry;
- Greg Swinden is following up his work on the RAN Bridging Train and the navy at Gallipoli with a history of the boys training ship *Tingira*;
- Tony Grazebrook's new book on the 1913 Naval College entry and the formation of an Australian officer class is important social history and will complement Greg's Swinden's work on the lower deck;
- Tom Holden is continuing with his research and publishing on the history of the Naval Legal Service;
- Jeffrey Grey is writing the official history of the RAN in the Vietnam Conflict;
- Barbara Winter has added to her work on HMAS *Sydney* (II) and enemy raider operations in Australian waters with her nearly completed work on wartime naval intelligence; and
- Bob Nicholls, continues with his biography of Admiral Creswell.

Notwithstanding all of this very fine work, there are three areas that desperately require attention. The *first* is the social history of the Navy; the second is the role and impact of technology; and, the third, biography. Let me speak about each briefly.

There is a need to know more about the Navy's people and the communities they have formed as a means of knowing more about the Service ethos. A writer in the British Naval Review



commented that:

The most important of all traditions is tradition of the spirit...the extraction of the best of what has 'made the Navy tick'. This must not be confused with traditions of method.<sup>3</sup>

Not much has been written about technology and the impact of introducing new equipment. As Clark Reynolds, points out:

The history and strategy of maritime empires have been shaped not only by geography and men but been built by naval technology as well. Indeed, the fact that a navy exists is a sure indication of civilisation and its growing technology. A full understanding of the technological element is thus crucial, because the misunderstanding of dominant weapons and other technical aspects of defence policy has often led historians and strategic analysts alike astray from the essential lasting principles of maritime power.<sup>4</sup>

The third area I mentioned was biography. Of course, military biography has been much abused and has earned the reputation of hagiography. But there is a need for good military biography as the *Harvard Guide to American History* outlines in general terms.

The relation of history to biography is inescapable. Despite the emphasis which present-day historians justly place on impersonal forces, history is, after all, a narrative of human beings. Man is necessarily the agent through which impersonal forces act, and he may even modify or redirect them. In this sense, Emerson spoke truly in saying: "There is properly no history, only biography. The increasing attention of biographers to men and women in non-political spheres has greatly enriched the historians' view of the past, and more such work should be done".<sup>5</sup>

If there is a general deficiency it is not one of subject but of scope. We need studies of greater breadth. Naval affairs contain larger trends and forces which transcend the defence and security field influencing our thinking. We can see in certain weapons, such as ships, a reflection of both the national character and the mood of the times. Thus, we ought to be mindful of these

trends.

## CONCLUSIONS AND OBSERVATIONS

In closing, I offer a number of conclusions and observations.

- First, Australian naval history has started to develop a self-consciousness as our presence here testifies. This is a milestone achievement and must continue in the form of regular seminars and sustained historiographical analysis.
- Second, Naval history is presently burgeoning and attracting many new people, particularly serving naval officers, as a function of this growth.
- Third, there is great public interest in the Navy at the moment and this has created a thirsting general and specialist readership. This situation ought to be exploited by people wanting to publish.
- Fourth, the Navy and its supporters, particularly the Australian Naval Institute, have shown a commitment to naval historical research and publishing. In the case of the RAN, that commitment needs to be formalised. Later speakers will comment on how this might be done.
- Fifth, work needs to be done by historians in all three stages of the taxonomy I outlined. Senior officers in particular must be encouraged to record their thoughts and experiences. Admiral Smith's recently released, *A Few Memories*, is a good sign that the ice is melting.
- Sixth, good progress is being made on archives and records, and more people ought to be encouraged to familiarise themselves with using primary sources.
- Seventh, the trend away from eulogising ship histories needs to continue. We have started to break the link between history and commemoration where history is seen as merely a family photograph album which belies as much as it reveals in its sympathy for the subjects depicted. Similarly, we need to ensure naval history is not written with a polemical purpose. The finished product can be used polemically, but that is a different matter.



I want to finish with something of a plea which reiterates a point I made earlier. In researching and writing about their chosen topic, Australian naval historians should, at the least, be conceiving of their published work as seeking to solve one or a number of problems. The problem could be defined as a series of inter-connected questions. At the very least, the historian must tell us what it is we want to know, why we want to know it, and how the completed study affects neighbouring areas of inquiry. That we are here today indicates an awareness that these questions *ought* to be asked and that they *need* to be answered.

- 1 Reprinted as 'The Importance of the Study of Naval History', *Naval Review*, Vol. 68, No. 2, April 1980; pp. 139-150.
- 2 Major Richard Smith, 'Mahan's Historical Method', *US Naval Institute Proceedings*, Vol. 90, No. 1, January 1964; pp. 49-51.
- 3 GAF, 'In which we have the honour to serve', *Naval Review*, Vol. 67, No. 2, April 1979; pp. 91-93.
- 4 *History and the Sea: Essays on Maritime Strategies*, (University of South Carolina Press, South Carolina, 1989); p. 5.
- 5 Oscar Handlin (ed.) et al (Atheneum, New York, 1970); pp. 8-10.







## DEFENCE INDUSTRY UPDATE

### WEAPONS DISCHARGE EQUIPMENT FOR AUSTRALIA'S NEW COLLINS CLASS SUBMARINES

Each of the new Collins class submarines is to be fitted with a Strachan & Henshaw weapons discharge system and submerged signal ejectors. The weapons discharge system consists of torpedo tubes, an Air Turbine Pump (ATP), discharge air equipment and a range of electronic and hydraulic control and operating equipment. The weapon is ejected by the introduction of pressurised water from the ATP into the torpedo tube via an inlet flap valve. The parameters which influence ejection include weapon type, submarine speed/attitude and air supply pressure. These are monitored to enable the precise air pulse for each situation to be selected and delivered to the ATP by a programmable firing valve.

Under the terms of the contract awarded to Strachan & Henshaw in December 1987 by Australian Submarine Corporation (ASC), over 65% of the total contract value is to be undertaken in Australia. To achieve this, Strachan & Henshaw placed a manufacturing contract with Australian Defence Industries for discharge equipment for five submarines and a design and manufacturing contract with British Aerospace Australia Ltd covering the electronic control equipment and associated software. In addition Strachan & Henshaw Australia Pty Ltd (SHA) was established to carry out local management of the Australian subcontractors. This role has now been extended to include assembly and test of hydraulic control equipment and provision of technical assistance to ASC - installation, setting to work, inspections, tests and trials. This arrangement has allowed Strachan & Henshaw

to exceed its targets for Australian content and has facilitated the transfer of relevant technical and management technology.



The torpedo tube equipment which has been built by ADI for installation in HMAS Farncomb, the second Collins class submarine, has been progressively delivered to ASC. The first set of major torpedo tube sub-assemblies being manufactured in Australia being formally presented to ASC and the RAN submarine project director, Rear Admiral Oscar Hughes (pictured above) at a ceremony, at ADI's Bendigo facility on the 1st of October.

It is the first time torpedo tubes for Australian submarines have been locally manufactured. A total of 30 tubes will be manufactured by ADI for British weapons equipment designer Strachan & Henshaw Ltd.

The managing director of Adelaide based SHA, Mr Adrain Needham has said that ADI and SHA were now exploring opportunities in the non-defence sector. Such opportunities included engineering infrastructure projects such as waste treatment, materials handling and port facilities. He has noted that both companies are hopeful of flow on benefits from their successful combining of skills on the submarine project.



Strachan & Henshaw is a world leader in the design and manufacture of submarine weapon discharge systems with proven systems in all of the latest Royal Navy submarine classes. ADI is one of Australia's leading defence companies. It provides a wide range of products and services to the Australian Defence Force including weapons; electronics; naval engineering; ammunition; training systems; logistic support; and clothing.

#### SEA GIRAFFE SELECTED FOR MALAYSIAN FRIGATES

Ericsson Radar Electronics' Sea Giraffe naval search radar has in international competition been selected for the Royal Malaysian Navy's two new frigates.

The multi-million dollar contract, signed by Ericsson and GEC Yarrow Shipbuilders in Scotland, covers delivery of two Sea Giraffe 150HC radars including Ericsson's high capacity three-lobe antenna. The radar, operating as the medium-range search and target indication radar, will be integrated in, the ship's command and control system for automatic target detection and cueing of surface-to-air and surface-to-surface weapon systems.

Delivery will commence in late 1994.

The Sea Giraffe 150HC is today the most common medium-range detection and designation radar on board new ships up to frigate size in the western world. Some 40 radars have been ordered by eight navies.

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The ANI awards prizes from time to time for specially-written articles.

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