

Journal
of the
Australian
Naval
Institute

Volume 22 Number 2
May/July 1996





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 the authors express their own views and opinions are not necessarily those of the Department of Defence, the Chief of Naval Staff or the Institute. The aim is to encourage discussion, dissemination of information, comment and opinion and the advancement of professional knowledge concerning naval and maritime matters.

The membership of the Institute is open to:

- *Regular Members.* Regular membership is open to members of the RAN, RANR, RNZN or RNZNVR and persons who having qualified for regular membership, subsequently leave the service.
- *Associate Members.* 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 Members.* Honorary membership is open to persons who have made a distinguished contribution to the Navy or the maritime profession, or by past service to the institute.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Australian Naval Institute is grateful for the assistance provided by the corporations listed below. They are demonstrating their support for the aim of the Institute by being members of the "Friends of the Australian Naval Institute" coterie.

ADI Ltd
Blohm + Voss
CSC Australia
Jeumont Schneider Division
STN Atlas (Australia)
Ansett Australia
Scientific Management Associates
Dawson Group

Rockwell Systems Australia
Stanilite Electronics
GEC Marconi
Westinghouse Electric
CelsiusTech
Thomson Sintra Pacific
Telstra

Journal of the Australian Naval Institute

ISSN 0312 — 5807

Volume 22 Number 2 May/July 1996

SPECIAL FEATURES

Malcolm Davis examines the prospects for Chinese and Korean national reunifications and their potential impact on the balance of naval power in the Asia Pacific region.

Also, we have a few more of Graham Wilson's 'ripping yarns' to bring naval history to life.

- 2 From the President
- 3 From the Editor
- 4 Ship Handler's Corner
- 34 Book Review

FEATURES

- 7 *National Reunification in Northeast Asia and the Naval Balance* —Malcolm Davis
- 15 *Economics and India's Naval Expansion* —Matthew Gray
- 19 *Defence of Australia 1994: Advocating an Australian Maritime Strategy* —D.A. Creagh
- 24 *Liberalised Social Values and Tomorrow's Navy* —Alan Hinge
- SPECIAL FEATURE:** *Naval History comes alive! A Selection of Graham Wilson's Writings....*
- 38 *Bluejackets versus Indians: USS Decatur at Seattle -1856*
- 41 *Conduct Most Unbecoming: Strange Doings on Gayundah -1888*
- 46 *Collapse of Discipline: The HMAS Australia Mutiny -1919*
- 51 *Glory for the Australian Squadron: HMS Calliope at Samoa -1889*
- 55 *Remember the Australian Merchant Navy* —Charles Taylor
- 59 *Night Surface Battles in the Solomons* —Russell Dority



Cover: Full speed ahead - HMAS Westralia (Photo: LSPH Scott Connolly)

Layout & typeset by **figaro** COMMUNICATIONS Pearce ACT
Phone 06 286 7477
Fax 06 286 7275

From the President

An edited version of the President's address to the 1996 ANI Annual General Meeting

Let me welcome you here tonight for our 1996 annual general meeting. Tonight we will review where we have been over the past year, and perhaps more importantly elect our new council for the forthcoming year and outline some important matters to be dealt with in the near future.

First, let me review where we have been. 1995 turned out to be a year of consolidation in a number of areas. Most of you will know that I succeeded Admiral Oxenbould as your President mid way through the year. It gave me a great deal of pleasure to do so, and I would like to place on record tonight my appreciation to him for the work that has been done in enlivening the council, consolidating the institute's affairs, and perhaps more particularly arranging for the institute to be so closely associated with the enormously successful Seapower conference held in Sydney in November 1995. A special treat at the Seapower conference was the presence of Dr Norman Friedman from the US Naval Institute, whose visit to Australia was sponsored by the ANI. I think that all who attended the conference would have appreciated his excellent contribution by way of presentations and discussion points, as well as the ANI's part in making it so.

The other presentation of note during the last year was the Vernon Parker Oration which took place in Sydney in May. We were privileged to hear Mr Eric Grove speak on the subject of "Seapower in the New Century". Those who know Eric or his reputation will know that his presentation was well appreciated by an enthusiastic audience. I hope that the Institute will continue to be able to attract speakers of this quality for the Oration in future. Another person that I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge is Captain Ian Noble who cannot stand for election as an office bearer this time because of his forthcoming retirement. Ian has contributed much to the Institute over quite a long period, and I know that members would like me to thank him and wish him all the best in his future endeavours.

Our flagship so to speak, that is the Journal, has continued to improve in quality of presentation and content. The feedback we have received has been very good; the journal is proving to be an increasingly effective means of achieving our prime objective of promoting the advancement of knowledge related to the navy and also the maritime professions. I also take this opportunity of reminding members that the Australian Naval Institute Library is located inside the Defence library facilities in the Campbell Park Offices. Volumes from our collection are available to those who need them and we have been considering ways of advertising the ANI's contribution to the library in a more visible way. This ought to be pursued by the new council. The institute has also moved into the modern world by establishing a home page on the World Wide Web (www.Navy.Gov.Au/ani/home/html). Perhaps we may attract new members through this initiative over the next year.

Members will appreciate that an important work of the Australian Naval Institute each year is promoting in the RAN a professional interest in naval affairs. Accordingly, we invest in this effort by sponsoring a number of prizes and awards. Beginning in 1995 we began to sponsor prizes at the Junior Officers Staff Course and the Senior Sailors Administration and Staff Skills Course, as well as continuing to support the ANI Silver Medallion at the RAN Staff College. I am pleased to report that our Silver Medallists for 1995 at the RAN Staff College were LCDR D Hulse, USN, and Major D Creagh. From *Creswell* I can report that Junior Officers Staff Course prizes were awarded to SBLT J Milward, LEUT M R Whanslaw and LEUT G Camilos. CPOWTR K A McEwan, CPORST I R McNulty and CPONPC P Easthope received prizes for the Senior Sailors Course. From New Zealand our 1995 NZ Chapter prizewinner was Ensign Timothy Foote. On behalf of all members of the Institute I congratulate these prizewinners on their achievements.

I have received a report from CMDR Bruce Coffey covering NZ Chapter activities. Bruce reports that the New Zealand Chapter continues to function in a positive manner in Wellington and Auckland. There have been several meetings and a cocktail party at which some funds were raised in support of the Museum Trust. Membership of the Institute in New Zealand now stands at 109 which represents a significant percentage of our total number. There have also been meetings between the Chapter officers and the Navy aimed at proactively supporting the New Zealand Navy's objectives. We wish our members across the Tasman well in their endeavours, and I am hopeful that I might be able to visit New Zealand sometime this year.

Turning now to our financial affairs, I would like to note that by and large the institute has a sound financial position although, as members will see from the audit statements, more should have been done to obtain timely payments from the Friends of the Institute during 1995. Fortunately, our friends have recently given us undertakings about providing their support in arrears for 1995 and for 1996 as well. The Council has been looking at further ways of



strengthening the financial base mainly through additional business development in the form of Platinum and Gold memberships. These initiatives have not yet come to fruition but we are hopeful that we will be able to achieve good outcomes which will enable the institute to do more.

Looking to the future, I would like to report that the outgoing Council has been considering a number of matters which require early resolution by the incoming Council. Foremost is the need for a thorough review of our constitution. It needs updating to bring it into line with recent changes to the law in the Australian Capital Territory. Second, I believe the new Council should begin work on a new strategic direction for the institute; this is important and as we approach the year 2000 and the Olympics — both important milestones for the nation — we need to consider carefully what part the ANI should play within the framework of all the other activities that will be planned, as well as promoting the Institute's objectives in a professional sense. With regard to our Journal, the Council sees that we should try to consolidate on some very real gains in quality over the last couple of years. In particular I commend to the incoming Council as targets for 1996 the need to obtain more input from junior officers and our sailors in order to stimulate the debate about our profession and its relevance to modern times. We should also publish more short features which attract our readership and provide more "Illumination Rounds". Finally, we should explore in more detail personnel issues and matters such as training, support and the links between operations and support. I also advise members that we will need to find a new Journal editor before the year is out. Having said that, this is a good opportunity to record on behalf of the outgoing council our appreciation to LCDR Alan Hinge for his achievements over this past year.

This brings me to my final remarks. We are facing very interesting and challenging times ahead in the Navy as we approach the new Century. We also see clearly the need for there to be a focus on very high standards of leadership and debate as we grapple with new ways of doing business in almost every aspect of Navy life. Therefore, the Australian Naval Institute has a very important role to play in fostering debate and understanding of these big issues. It provides a forum for professional discussion; it can draw on the experience of the past and present, and try to mix that with ideas for the future. Above all, it gives us a real means of providing discussion of key issues in public — not only within Australia and New Zealand, but also with our professional colleagues in other countries. We need to be looking at ways in which the ANI's contribution will be timely, focussed and of enduring quality. This is an agenda to set which your new Council must attend with a real sense of purpose and dedication. This is quite a challenge. Finally, let me thank all of you for coming tonight. It has been my pleasure to deliver the President's report for 1995 and I look forward to our discussion towards the end of the meeting, and afterwards.

Chris Barrie

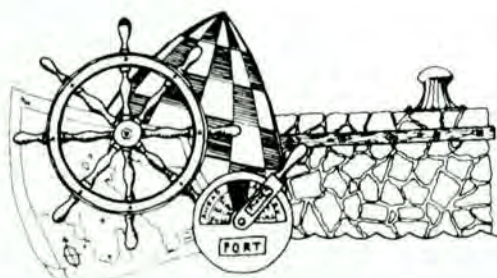
From the Editor

Readers are in for a rare treat in this issue of the journal. Our last two issues were theme issues that dealt with technical details of defence project management and Australian naval operations respectively. Consequently, the editorial board decided to commission Graham Wilson, our resident historical feature writer, to take us on a roller coaster ride through history in this issue. I thoroughly enjoy the way Graham homes in on relatively obscure historical events and paints them in living colour — from 'Blue Jackets fighting Redskins' at Seattle to HMS *Calliope* riding out the Great Hurricane at Samoa in 1889 you won't have to wonder why Graham now ranks among the very best historical writers in Australia. In fact, his overseas publications are going so well that the ANI may have to pay him more!

But the 'show' does not stop there. We welcome Charles Taylor and Russell Dority as exciting new contributors. Charles gives a cogent case for proper recognition of the Australian Merchant Navy's contribution in World War Two, and Russell tells us about the night surface battles of the Solomon Islands. Russell was introduced to the Institute by Vice Admiral Ian McDougall (ret'd) who encouraged him to write for us. Of course, current maritime strategic issues are the bread and butter of this journal and are never neglected. We have a major, topical article by Malcolm Davis on Chinese and Korean national reunifications and their potential impact on the balance of naval power in the Asia Pacific region. Matthew Gray, also from the ANU, then gives his views on economic factors and their effects on India's Naval expansion. We also have included the ANI Medallion winning essay on maritime strategy by Major D. Creagh. The medallion is awarded by the Institute for the best essay written on each RAN Staff Course.

Finally, the Editorial Board of the Australian Naval Institute is keen to print more, shorter maritime professional features and is especially interested in 'refloating' a regular column on ship handling stories. So, write in about challenges, shames and triumphs you have experienced or witnessed. And remember: No names; No courts martial! To spur your imagination a sampling of previous sagas is include on pages 4-5.

Al Hinge



TROUBLES WITH ENGINES

Incident One: ALL IN A DAYS WORK

At 1530 one Friday, a destroyer escort steaming off the east coast of Tasmania suffered a complete steering gear failure, and other defects led to the ship being limited to fifty per cent power while a full south westerly gale was in progress. As was customary during heavy sea conditions the course was being maintained by the automatic steering which copes with quartering seas much better than a human helmsman.

When the system failed the rudders seized in the hard aport position. Our fairly comfortable progress rapidly deteriorated as efforts were made to control the ship using main engines and the engineers struggled to return the rudders to amidships. This was achieved with great difficulty at about 1610, when a course for Sydney was resumed. We were steering with main engines but still with the limitations of much reduced power.

Most ships are very difficult to steer with quartering seas and a River Class ship is no exception to this general rule. With fixed revolutions on the port shaft it was necessary to vary the revolutions on the starboard shaft from maximum available to stopped at various times to maintain a reasonable heading. Generally, variations of 40 rpm either side of the mean was sufficient, with an occasional larger wave requiring greater power changes. Maintenance of heading required the full attention of the officer of the watch and, therefore, for the remainder of the passage to Sydney two qualified officers of the watch were employed with the second officer attending to all the other OOW duties involved. Conning the ship required intense concentration to detect and anticipate any swing and this duty was rotated every half hour.

During the first watch that evening it became apparent that the ship's own workshop capacity was inadequate for the task of restoring the steering system, and the ship would not have steering until after return to Garden Island Dockyard. However, an improvement in the situation occurred overnight when Gabo Island was rounded as there was considerable abatement in wind and sea. Nevertheless, the value of the stabilisers was once again demonstrated during the difficult hours after the steering gear failure. At one stage a minor electrical fault immobilised them for

SHIP HANDLER'S CORNER

10 minutes or so and during this period the ship tended to fall away from the face of the waves, making course maintenance practically impossible. Without stabilisers an alternative destination would have become necessary.

Naturally, entry into Sydney harbour with a 'broken wing' was made on Saturday afternoon when the small craft density was at its height! As the ship was still restricted to half power, tug assistance was requested for the entry and this came in the form of a large commercial tug and two smaller naval tugs. The large tug was most professional and secured himself from a single point to the DE's transom and proceeded to act as a very large and effective rudder. The two smaller tugs stationed themselves either side of the bow, in case any swing developed. In this manner the ship commenced harbour entry, but after turning into the Western Channel and with a 40,000 tonne container ship outbound, we were faced with the entire middle harbour yacht club racing fleet sailing across the bow at about 50 yards distance. The ship had to go astern to avoid collision and this action in turn caused the master of the large tug some considerable concern. Anyway, collision was narrowly avoided, the tug master placated and the entry resumed.

Abeam Chowder Bay the next concern was a large sailing ketch running free down the middle of the channel. No signals had any effect and she eventually sailed between the ship and the tug on the starboard bow. The skipper turned out to be a middle aged lady who was completely unmoved by the stream of invective directed at her by the crew of the tug while she cheerily waved a can of Fosters as she passed. Once again, it was disturbing to observe the lack of awareness of Rule of the Road seamanship and common courtesy which is so prevalent among small craft on the harbour. When I subsequently discussed these incidents with a prominent member of a Sydney Yacht Club he quite seriously proposed that the harbour should be closed to the navy and all commercial shipping at weekends! I have no doubt that this is a common viewpoint among yachtsmen.

The ship's unusual return to Sydney was concluded at 1700 when she, with the aid of the three escort tugs, completed a stern board at the EMS mooring without further incident....The first glass of beer tasted exceptionally good. I wonder why? (DDF)

Incident Two: **CROSSED WIRES**

The first ships of the Bathurst Class were built with 1750 HP engines and *Deloraine* was the first to be built at Morts dock with 2000 HP engines. This involved several structural changes in the ship and rearrangements which included pockets in the wing fuel tanks to accommodate larger boilers, change of rotation of propellers and some steering gear modifications because of an extensive rearrangement of bridge structure. Time came for trials and there was much discussion on shiphandling characteristics with the new propellers, and the civilian pilot was warned of the change of propeller rotation and the possibilities of misinterpretation of engine orders.

It was a fine calm day with the water of Morts Bay as smooth as an oil slick, when a small tug pulled the bow out before the main engines were ordered slow ahead with ten degrees of port rudder. As speed built up it soon became apparent that the ship was swinging to starboard. Was this the effect of propeller rotation? There was little time for discussion as successively increasing degrees of helm were ordered to correct the swing. The point of no return had come and before a change of direction could be achieved the ship continued to swing despite a crash astern order. A collision was inevitable with a Sydney ferry moored at its overhaul yard, but there was only slight damage on either side and mostly to the rickety wharf to which the ferry was secured.

Investigation showed that the steering gear rods in the rearrangement had been moved from one side of the ship to another. Another train of bevel wheels introduced a rotation which gave port indication on the bridge with a starboard rudder. The gear had been checked but not well enough, because when the orders were given at the basin trials to go hard over each way no one had bothered to ascertain whether the bridge and steering flat were synchronised port to port and starboard to starboard. (RFA)

SOFTLY SOFTLY WHEN DRIVING THE 'BIG 'UNS'

Possibly the RAN's most wayward handling vessel was the 26,000 ton oiler *HMAS Supply*. She could behave beautifully, but the constant variations in her draft and the consequent varying windage on her enormous sides occasionally combined with her single screw characteristics to make her a real 'bucking bronco' of a ship. Creeping slowly - always a wise precaution in her - towards our port side to berth at a fitting out wharf at Sydney one day, the crew of a wooden mine sweeper berthed at the extreme outer end of the wharf. All stopped work to watch us slide past. "OOH! Aint she big" seemed to be the feeling behind the admiring looks on their faces. But these looks soon turned to horror as they suddenly realised that *Supply* was moving sideways towards them at an alarming rate! A wooden minesweeper would crack like an egg if pressed too firmly by 26,000 tons, and the bigger ship had picked on that moment to start a crabwise sheer towards the smaller vessel. To go astern would only throw the stern violently to port, and the tug secured aft was already trying its hardest to hold the stern off, but seemingly to no avail. Adding to the tension, at Woolloomooloo, ahead of *Supply's* berth lay a large merchantman looming alarmingly close.

In retrospect the answer was perhaps obvious, but at the time it seemed a difficult decision to make: "Full ahead; hard aport"; and almost immediately as we lunged at the ship ahead the sheer was stopped and the minesweeper was saved. Then "Full astern; stand by both anchors (and hope that those fenders over the bows would not be needed). In fact, she settled very neatly into her berth, without having to use the anchors as a brake.

A simple enough story, but one that supports a softly-softly approach for big ships. Furthermore, although we didn't on that occasion use an anchor there were many times when in *Supply* we found that 'an anchor was as good as another engine'. (D.H.D.S)





We broaden your perspective

The BREVEL, a surveillance reconnaissance and target locating system of the latest generation for the German and French army, supplies reliable real-time image material even under extreme conditions.

The future-orientated BREVEL System is being realised in close relation between MATRA DÉFENSE and STN ATLAS Elektronik through their French-German joint company EURODRONE.

The extensive aerospace experience of two very competent companies has been combined in forming EURODRONE.

For further information please contact:

**STN ATLAS (AUSTRALIA)
PTY LTD**

A.C.N. 056 058 052
6/39 Herbert Street
St. Leonards N.S.W. 2065 Australia
Phone: 02437 - 4577, Fax: 02439 - 7576

EURODRONE

**Joint company of
MATRA DÉFENSE and
STN ATLAS Elektronik**

Siège Social et Bureaux
3, Avenue de Centre -
Les Quadrants - B.P. 612
78056 St. Quentin en
Yvelines Cedex - France
Tél.: (1) 30 12 96 96
Fax: (1) 30 64 44 03

Chinese and Korean National Reunifications and their impact on the balance of naval power in the Asia-Pacific region.

By Malcolm R. Davis

In the post Cold War era, the Asia-Pacific region is faced with a number of potential flashpoints that could result in conflict in the near to medium term. The main flashpoints include the Korean Peninsula, the confrontation between China and Taiwan, as well as the disputed Spratly Islands, and the confrontation between India and Pakistan over Kashmir-Jammu. A range of other more minor disputes over EEZs and territorial waters, ocean resource disputes, and problems with refugees and pirate activities also exist. Yet of all the disputes, the confrontation between North and South Korea and the confrontation between China and Taiwan are the two crises most likely to flare into war with little or no warning. Both of these crises centre around formerly unified states that have been divided into opposing sides as a result of the ideological confrontation of the now defunct Cold War. Thus reunification is a central issue in both situations. In the case of the two Koreas, reunification could occur as a result of the overthrow of the Pyongyang regime brought about either by economic collapse or defeat in a second Korean war. In the case of China and Taiwan however, current indications seem to indicate increasing support for independence in Taiwan that could lead to an attempt by China to use military force against what it perceives to be a rebellious province. Thus the two Chinas could be reunified by force. If a Chinese military campaign against Taiwan was seen to be a failure, especially if China sustained very heavy casualties in any attempted invasion of Taiwan, this could lead to an upsurge of widespread popular dissatisfaction with the Chinese Communist Party, and more support for a move towards democratisation — which as indicated below, would provide the conditions whereby peaceful reunification of the two Chinas could become possible.

This article seeks to explore how the regional balance of maritime power would be affected by the reunification of North and South Korea, and by the reunification of the Peoples Republic of China and the Republic of China (Taiwan). Furthermore the paper seeks to examine how neighbouring states such as Japan, and ASEAN would react as a result of the

change in the regional balance of maritime power. Finally the paper poses the question, would the change in the regional maritime balance of power be a stabilising or destabilising influence on the Asia-Pacific region as a whole?

The reunification of North and South Korea

Most Korea watchers feel that Korean reunification will occur either as a result of an economic collapse in the North leading to a popular uprising against the Communist regime that has been in power since 1945, or as a result of an eventual North Korean defeat should it launch a second invasion of South Korea. A third scenario — that of a North Korean victory in a second Korean War — is conceivable and needs to be examined, but given the North's severe qualitative military disadvantage with the South, and the fact that the United States is almost certain to intervene massively as a result of any invasion by DPRK forces, such a North Korean victory is unlikely without military support from either China or Russia, or use of weapons of mass destruction.

In examining the prospect of peaceful reunification, it must be stated that as a result of North Korea's moves to acquire a nuclear weapons capability, dialogue between the two Koreas has all but ceased to take place. There are no real discussions about any form of planned reunification that had been considered a possibility in the late 1980s. Now the focus in the South is on preventing a war with the North, and being able to manage the effects of any economic collapse in the North. Of particular concern is that the collapse of economic power in the North, and more recently major floods that wiped out much of the North's agricultural capability, could lead to instability as the food queues get longer, and living standards continue to drop. Such instability might be seen as a trigger for a North Korean invasion of the South in an attempt to divert the attention of the North Korean people from internal hardships. However if North Korean instability did not trigger a war with the South, but instead triggered a popular uprising which led to

the fall from power of Kim Jong Il and his Communist Party apparatchiks, and ultimately peaceful reunification with the South, this would leave the DPRK Navy virtually intact. In this case the South Korean Government would most likely acquire much of the hardware in the same way that the Federal German Republic acquired East German military hardware in 1990.

The military capabilities of the two Koreas.

Any discussion of how the ROK Navy would integrate the assets of the DPRK Navy as part of a Unified Korean Navy must deal with the issue from the context of the future development plans of the ROK Navy - both in terms of strategy and force structure, as well as a wider geopolitical perspective. To put it more simply, which way is South Korea heading as a maritime power — blue water Navy, brown water coastal defence force or something in between?

For most of the Cold War, the ROK Navy was perceived to be a coastal defence force. This focus on brown water operations was largely dictated by the fact that the North Korean threat has always primarily been an air-land rather than a maritime threat. Thus defence planners in Seoul focused on building up the ROK Army and relegated the Navy to a supporting role. Since 1953, the primary threat from the DPRK Navy has been the infiltration of saboteurs and spies into ROK territory via small sea vessels, and the hijacking of ROK merchant vessels. As a result, the ROK Navy was forced to focus on defensive operations to counter DPRK infiltration into its territorial waters. This tended to limit any focus on developing blue water operations and acquiring more substantial naval capabilities. Additionally, there has been little need to acquire a blue water capability as there is no significant North Korean sea-borne trade for the ROK Navy to interdict in wartime. Furthermore the US Navy has maintained a large naval presence in the region and this freed the ROK Navy to concentrate on coastal defence. In effect for most of the Cold War, the ROK Navy has always placed more emphasis on sea denial operations rather than sea control or power projection.

However this focus on inshore sea denial has recently given way to efforts to build up a more powerful navy equipped to undertake sea control operations and to ensure the security of the ROK's SLOCs and maritime approaches. This change in focus occurred in the late 1980s and has now taken form in the acquisition of the first of up to nineteen 3 900-ton KDX ASW frigates, as well as plans to acquire a number of 7000- to 8000-ton AAW destroyers later in the 1990s, which are seen as a parallel to the Japanese Kongo class AEGIS destroyers. These new vessels will replace the now obsolete Gearing and Allen M Sumner FRAM

destroyers, which are approaching an average age of 50 years. The new naval expansion program has also seen the acquisition of the first three of six Type 209/1200 SSKs and discussions on the acquisition of a larger SSK similar in size and capability to the Collins or Harushio class SSKs.

The new mission for the ROK Navy focuses on controlling the maritime approaches to Korean territory through developing a highly sophisticated surveillance and communications system to enable the early detection of any threat, and then defending those maritime approaches with a range of sea-based and shore-based naval and air assets. Furthermore, the ROK Navy seeks to be able to undertake sea control operations away from its territorial waters and maritime approaches. Such sea control operations might be undertaken jointly with Japan to defend both countries SLOCs against interdiction from any other regional maritime power, as both Japan and South Korea use the same SLOCs. As a result of this change, ROK naval forces could be required to be forward deployed into the Sea of Japan, the North Pacific Ocean, and the Korea Strait as well the Yellow Sea and East China Sea. Thus the focus for the ROK Navy has shifted from purely brown water sea denial operations to blue water sea control jointly undertaken with allies to ensure the security of SLOCs, and green water sea denial to ensure the security of the ROK's maritime approaches and territorial waters. Overall the new ROK maritime strategy remains defensive in nature, but the perimeter and effectiveness of that defence will be substantially extended as a result of the ROK's naval expansion program currently underway.

In the light of these plans for the future ROK Navy, the integration of former DPRK naval assets could prove difficult given that the DPRK Navy is a brown water coastal defence force. The DPRK Navy has a fleet of 25 diesel-electric submarines (SSKs) and around 50 midget submarines, 3 frigates (FFGs) and about 390 patrol and coastal combatants. It also has a force of 25 mine warfare vessels, as well as a large force of 231 amphibious craft. The DPRK fleet also has a small number of support vessels. The 21 Romeo class SSKs, which are manufactured in North Korea, would enhance the ROK Navy's ability to undertake submarine operations in defence of a unified Korea's maritime approaches, whilst the 3 FFGs (1 Soho class and 2 Najin class) and 46 PFMs all armed with SS-N-2C Styx SSMs would be of operational value close into the Korean coastal areas. In terms of air assets that could be employed by a Korean Navy, only the DPRK's 14 MiG-29 Fulcrum fighters and 36 Su-25 Frogfoot close support aircraft would be useful for maritime air defence or antiship missile delivery. The DPRK Air Force's 50 Mil Mi-24 Hind attack helicopters might be useful in an armed patrolling role over territorial waters. Finally, the DPRK does de-

ploy two regiments of shore based HY-2 Silkworm antiship missiles, which have a maximum range of 50 nautical miles. These could be deployed to defend key approaches to straits.

Perhaps a key concern of East Asian defence planners would be the status of any former DPRK nuclear weapons capability acquired by a unified Korean government. Current US intelligence estimates suggest that North Korea has the fissile material for one or two nuclear weapons, whilst estimates produced by South Korea, Japan and Russia suggest North Korea may have two to three weapons. Under the Agreed Framework negotiated between the United States and North Korea, Pyongyang does not have to give up its existing weapons, and furthermore, the North Korean Government can use any residual weapons grade plutonium to produce nuclear weapons (i.e. fissile material either purchased from the former Soviet Union, or from the 5-megawatt reactor at Yongbyon that has already been reprocessed, as opposed to the fuel rods which cannot be reprocessed under the Agreed Framework) — possibly as many as seven warheads, on top of the existing one to three warheads that actually exist now. Thus assuming North Korea sticks to the spirit and letter of the Agreed Framework and reunifies with the South, a unified Korea might come into possession of an arsenal of up to ten nuclear warheads, deliverable by Nodong 1 Ballistic Missile, or the longer ranged Tapeo Dong missile. Clearly from the perspective of a unified Korea's relationship with the international community, it would be best if any nuclear weapons capability were surrendered to the IAEA for destruction. Yet a unified Korea may face challenges within the region that could lead to the decision to maintain either an existing arsenal or the ability to reproduce one.

Challenges facing a unified Korea

The unification of the two Koreas would lead to the formation of a state with a population close to 70 million people, that suddenly would have combined industry and resources. A key challenge facing a unified Korea is how quickly could the South bring the Northern economy and industrial capacity back from collapse to stability and more importantly, productivity. How quickly could the North Korean people be educated into the benefits of a market economy, given that for the past fifty years, they have been essentially denied any access to the outside world. Because of this isolation, North Korea will most likely not adapt to a market economy and democracy as easily as most Eastern European states have, and until the people of former North Korea can learn how to embrace a market economy and democracy within a unified Korea, the initial impact of reunification can only act as an impediment or brake on the economic development in the South. This will have an obvious effect on the development of unified Korean military as money

normally allocated for defence spending will have to be allocated instead to national reconstruction in the North. Like Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, there will be a great deal of interest in foreign investment into the northern sector of a Unified Korea, particularly from Japan and China, and this may accelerate the process of transition. Providing political stability can be maintained through this period of transition from a centrally planned economy in collapse to a market economy in boom, a unified Korea will emerge as a major regional power rich in raw materials and possessed of advanced technology and a numerous and highly skilled population, and would change out of all recognition the complex of relationships existing in post Cold War Northeast Asia.

As a result of Korean reunification, it is highly likely that US forces currently deployed in and around Korea would be withdrawn, perhaps in a similar manner to the US withdrawal from bases in the Philippines. The primary role of US forces in Korea is to symbolise America's commitment to the US-Korea Mutual Security Treaty and to deter a North Korean invasion. If the North Korean threat were to disappear the US forces would have no *raison d'être*, and would be withdrawn from the peninsula. Any US military withdrawal will place more pressure on a unified Korea to increase its own military capability to compensate for the loss of US presence at a time when the economic pressure of reconstruction in the North would make funds for a growth in military capability scarce. Thus the economic challenge and cost of reunification may threaten a unified Korea's ability to quickly adapt to a new geostrategic environment that in all likelihood would not include a long term US presence.

Given current tensions over US basing issues in Okinawa and on-going trade tensions between Japan and the United States, as well as a growing isolationist movement within the US Congress, an elimination of the North Korean threat might be enough to lead to either Japan to call for, or the United States to decide to, withdraw forces from Okinawa and other Japanese bases. Under this scenario, US forces might fall back to Guam and Hawaii, leaving a power vacuum in the Asia-Pacific region. In effect the synergy of the disappearance of the North Korean threat, growing cracks in the US-Japanese relationship, and a growing isolationist movement in the US could lead to what was unthinkable a few years ago — a partial withdrawal of the US from the Asia-Pacific region. An emerging threat from China might counteract this trend somewhat, and any real aggression on China's part (say an attack against Taiwan or the Spratly Islands) could lead to a renewal of US-Japanese relations, and thus make a US withdrawal less likely. However uncertainty about US intentions in the future could still force defence planners in Seoul and Tokyo to consider acquiring a greater ability to project power throughout Northeast Asia.

With the future intentions of the US uncertain, and a unified Korea looking increasingly powerful both in economic and military terms, Japan would in all likelihood review its defence policy to take on a more assertive — though not necessarily aggressive tone. Sang-Yoon Bae stated recently: 'The security map around the Korean Peninsular has significantly changed since the collapse of the Cold War system. One consequence brought about by the end of the Soviet Empire, is an asymmetry in the sea power balance. The US has become predominant again on the ocean. Meanwhile, China and Japan are widely believed to be trying to get back into a symmetry, by replacing the former Soviet Union's position in the symmetry, with themselves. Any substantial development of a naval force in either country [China or Japan] would lead to a counter build up in Korea, which is very likely to end in a spiral-up arms race'

Clearly the emergence of a unified Korea as a major new economic power, that is able to compete economically and militarily with Japan could lead to eventual political rivalry between Japan and Korea by the early decades of the 21st Century. Yet a move by Japan and a unified Korea towards a more assertive role in the Asia-Pacific region could act as a deterrent against a hegemonic China, and thus become a stabilising force for the region, especially if Japan and a unified Korea closely cooperated and ensured defence transparency in their mutual build up with Southeast Asian states. However if Korean suspicions of Japanese foreign policy objectives were motivated more by Japan's past history than by the regional geopolitical situation at the time, the opportunity for Japan and unified Korea to create an effective conventional deterrent to China could be missed, and instead unified Korea's naval policy might be directed more against a newly assertive Japan.

In this case, the potential mine warfare and SLOC interdiction capabilities of former DPRK Romeo class submarines would be a destabilising force for the region, though not a very great threat given the obsolescence of the boats. The presence of 21 Romeo class submarines well suited for shallow water operations, would encourage a growth in ASW capabilities — both surface and submarine based — by Japan. The Japanese MSDF already is very well equipped to undertake ASW operations with a large submarine force and 74 P-3C Orion maritime patrol aircraft. Japan would also have to be concerned about a unified Korea's long range missile potential, and any weapons of mass destruction capability acquired by Seoul during reunification. This might encourage Japan to invest heavily in ballistic missile defences, and other means of deterrence if necessary. The potential for proliferation is obvious.

In summary, the acquisition by the ROK Navy of DPRK Navy vessels would strengthen a unified Ko-

rea's ability to defend its maritime approaches and territorial waters through the deployment of former DPRK Navy missile armed fast attack craft and frigates. Of more significance would be the sudden acquisition of 21 Romeo class SSKs which though old, are well suited to shallow water roles such as mine laying and anti-shipping operations. Other DPRK naval vessels such as the amphibious craft and non-missile armed ships would be less useful to the Korean Navy. Reunification is more likely to be destabilising in nature not so much because of the additional military capabilities acquired by a unified Korean Navy, but more so because of the medium- to long-term political impact of reunification itself. This could include short term economic hardship for a unified Korea, which may lead to increased economic tension between Japan and Korea, followed by political rivalry between the two states as Korea emerges from a period of national reconstruction to become a economic and military power that would be able to compete with Japan. Japanese concerns about former North Korean nuclear capabilities would also be a factor. Finally the impact of a reduction of the US presence in the region would only exacerbate any political rivalry between a unified Korea and Japan.

Fading prospects for the reunification of the People's Republic of China and the Republic of China (Taiwan).

Whereas the reunification of the two Korea's is entirely possible within the remainder of this decade, the peaceful reunification of China and Taiwan is far less likely to occur in the short term and may not occur at all. There is growing scepticism about the prospects for reunification within the Taiwanese population, with Taiwanese President Lee Teng-hui seeking greater international recognition for Taiwan's substantial achievements towards democratisation and economic growth. The Taiwanese opposition party, the DPP, will also continue to pressure the Government of President Lee to move down the path that ultimately leads to independence. A recently released assessment produced by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade suggests there are real doubts that Lee himself seriously considers unification a realistic prospect for the foreseeable future.

Lee is reflecting the general scepticism that is growing in Taiwan about the desirability of ultimately reuniting with China. The Taiwanese contrast their own burgeoning democracy and economic system, with all its flaws, with heavy-handed practices across the Straits. This scepticism will be further strengthened by China's handling of Hong Kong, which we expect will send discouraging signals about the true value of Deng Xioping's one-country, two-systems approach. The report states that Taiwan appears committed to pursuing greater international recognition.

For all the rhetoric in Taiwan about one-China, Taiwan's campaign for UN membership asserts in no uncertain terms the existence of two separate but internationally equal Chinas. This is a change from the past. In short, the domestic pressure on Taiwan politicians to be seen to be doing something to meet the popular aspiration for recognition and status due to Taiwan's achievements will not go away. Unless it can be convinced otherwise, Taiwan will continue to pursue greater international status.

From Taiwan's perspective, for a peaceful reunification to come about between Taiwan and China, it must be brought about through non-communist principles — in effect Taiwan will consider reunification with mainland China when and only when China ceases to threaten Taiwan with use of force, and when China has adopted democratisation as a principal national goal. Dr. Jason C Hu stated in July 1994: 'The Republic of China, on Taiwan, will not be intimidated and will not be held by Beijing to any Hong Kong type deadline for reunification. However, if Beijing modifies its attitude and the international community, likewise, stops treating the prosperous and democratic Taiwan as some sort of diplomatic leper, the cross-straits situation can become a "win-win" rather than a "zero-sum" game, and the cause of Chinese unification can be advanced peaceably and rationally. Our ultimate goal has always been to reunify China, but we also insist that China must be unified under a free and democratic system if it is to contribute to world peace'

In effect Taiwan's policy on reunification thus requires that China first move towards democratisation, and cease threatening Taiwan militarily, before any serious negotiation could begin. All indications suggest that a move towards democratisation by a post-Deng leadership in Beijing is not going to occur, and if anything, there may be a move back towards the policies of Mao Tse Tung. After the death of Deng Xioping, a new regime will come into power. The central question facing this new government is how long and to what extent Beijing can maintain explosive economic growth, whilst dealing with equally explosive social and political issues created by such growth, that threaten to undermine China's overall stability, and the rule of the Chinese Communist party. A wide array of social problems have been created by market socialism, including rising unemployment, massive income disparities between a small but powerful wealthy minority and a vast bulk of the population which lives almost in poverty, a severe dislocation of the rural population, soaring inflation, and an erosion of many social welfare supports. Another major problem facing China is the lack of a coherent means of handling political succession. According to Henri d'Antoine: 'Deng's death would leave a political vacuum which would lead to a scramble for influence and power and for position. Current political

certainities would no longer be certainities, raising the question of whether current economic policy certainities would remain firm'.

The man most likely to succeed Deng is the current Chinese President, Jiang Zemin, who appears to be foreshadowing a move away from economic reform, with recent calls for reforms to be slowed and for China to take a harder line in relations with the West, as well as pointing towards a need to have tighter government control over the media. In the process he is seeking to erode the influence of the family of Deng Xioping, thus making his succession to the post of paramount leader after Deng dies, more certain. At the same time, President Jiang Zemin is pandering to hard-liners in the military by taking a very aggressive line on the issue of Taiwan, as is Prime Minister Li Peng, who stated that 'China will use force if necessary to reunify Taiwan with China' in a recent statement on Chinese TV.

Thus it is increasingly likely that emerging dynamics within both Chinas could lead to a military clash between the two states in the near future, that would see both sides take heavy losses, including naval losses. As with the potential for instability in North Korea leading to a North Korean invasion of South Korea, it is conceivable that instability in China, perhaps created by a power struggle after the death of Deng Xioping, could lead Chinese Generals and hard-liner politicians to launch an attack on Taiwan if it continues to seek greater international recognition.

There is real potential for Taiwan's continued efforts to achieve international recognition of a far more independent status at some point to provoke China into a strong diplomatic and probably military response. The dynamics within the Beijing leadership on the Taiwan issue are such that it may well take huge economic and military risks, jeopardising China's development prospects, risking internal stability within the region, in order to respond to what it sees as provocative actions by Taiwan in the international sphere.

If Taiwan were to continue to seek international recognition, and China responded with military force against the island, Beijing's options could range from a full scale invasion at the top end of the spectrum, a naval and air blockade, the seizing of Taiwanese islands such as Jinmen, Quemoy and Matsu, the threatening of Taiwanese shipping and aircraft in the Straits of Taiwan and strategic approaches to Taiwan, through to probes of Taiwanese airspace and territorial waters, as well as aggressive military exercises off the coast of Taiwan at the bottom end of the spectrum. Yet a course of military confrontation with Taiwan is extremely risky. The PLA is still plagued by largely obsolete hardware left over from the days of Mao Tse Tung's People's War. Although the PLA, and its sister services the PLAN and PLA-AF are in the process

of a major modernisation effort, this will take many years before it results in China being equipped to fight a modern high tech war in the Asia-Pacific region. According to the DFAT report:

'...Expert assessments are that China would have only poor prospects of successfully invading and occupying Taiwan in the next two years. These prospects would diminish further in 1998 when Taiwan takes delivery of its F-16 and Mirage aircraft.'

In particular, the PLAN lacks the amphibious transport capability to deploy sufficient numbers of troops to Taiwan in a short space of time in order to overwhelm Taiwanese land defences. PLA amphibious forces would be deployed piecemeal, leaving them vulnerable to being destroyed more easily, unless China could secure air supremacy and sea control across all invasion axes. This would require China to concentrate a vast number of offensive aircraft and ships along China's eastern seaboard, and limited space in the Fujian military district would deny China the ability to exploit its numerical superiority in the number of aircraft. China would also encounter huge problems in ensuring any invasion of Taiwan had ongoing logistical support. As Taiwan's defence capability becomes more high tech, so the problems China faces in projecting massive military force across the Taiwan Straits will grow. Thus in effect China is rapidly losing any window of opportunity for a full scale invasion of Taiwan, and in any case, China would suffer heavy casualties in any attempted invasion, and such a move may backfire on a hard-liner leadership in Beijing, and only lead to its early demise.

A strategy of gradual escalation could be an alternative as such an operation could enable China to put immense diplomatic and military pressure on Taiwan, at minimum cost over a prolonged period. In effect Beijing could begin aggressive military exercises off the Taiwanese coast, that may see PLAN and PLA-AF forces probe Taiwanese airspace and territorial waters. At the same time, PLAN forces could harass Taiwanese merchant shipping in an effort to paralyse Taiwan economically. If Taiwan refused to back down from seeking international recognition, China could launch a full scale naval and air blockade around the island, whilst mobilising amphibious forces in Fujian, Zhejiang and Guangzhou military districts. These could then be deployed to capture Taiwanese islands as a precursor operation to any direct invasion of Taiwan itself, if such a risky military gamble was seen as necessary. Such a flexible response-style operation would avoid the massive casualties and huge logistical problems that China would encounter in any bolt out of the blue invasion of Taiwan itself, and could allow China to increase and decrease pressure on Taiwan at will, as well as have the advantage of time to plan operations more effectively and thus maintain the initiative.

Although China would have an overwhelming quantitative advantage in any conflict, Taiwan would be well equipped to deal with any threat (apart from nuclear attack) if a major crisis emerged. The Taiwanese Navy is rapidly emerging as one of the most modern maritime forces in the Asia-Pacific region. According to Gary Klintworth: '[Taiwan's] Navy is on the verge of being modernised as a small but powerful regional naval force with a blue water capability matched by few other Asian navies. With 41 surface combatants, the Taiwanese Navy is about three times the size of the Australian Navy and is, arguably, one of the most powerful regional navies in East Asia.'

Taiwan's Navy for many years has been composed of former US Navy ships from the Second World War. These included 14 Gearing class destroyers, 4 Sumner class destroyers and 4 Fletcher class destroyers, as well as 9 former US Navy frigates of which only 3 (US Knox class) were equipped with anti-ship missiles. However the DDs over the past decade have all been modernised and equipped to fire stand-off weapons (either ASROC or Hsiung Feng antiship missiles). The 3 Knox class FFs and most of the Sumner and Gearing class DDs have been equipped to operate helicopters. Of even more significance is the major naval modernisation program now underway. The Kwang Hwa I program will see the acquisition of at least eight Perry class FFGs with the possibility of a further eight ships at a later date. Two of these vessels have already begun operational service with the Taiwanese Navy. They are equipped with SM-1MR Standard SAMs, Hsiung Feng II antiship missiles (which are a Harpoon clone) and S-70C Seahawk ASW helicopters. In addition to the Perry class FFGs, the Kwang Hwa I program may see three additional Knox class FFs acquired. The Kwang Hwa II program will see the Taiwanese Navy acquire up to six French Lafayette class FFGs with an option for a further ten. These ships will be equipped with MM-40 Exocet antiship missiles. Taiwan has also expressed an intent to expand its submarine force, presently consisting of two old US Guppy class SSKs and two more modern Netherlands Zwaardvis class SSKs. Taiwan has approached ASC about the Collins class SSK, though it is unlikely the Australian Government would risk angering China by supplying Collins class submarines to Taiwan, and the Taiwanese Navy seeks 6 to 10 boats. Taiwan is also building up a significant amphibious force of 50 craft, including six new Yuen Feng class LPDs each of which can carry up to 500 fully equipped troops and has developed a Marine force of 31 000 troops as well as a Marine tank regiment. Taiwan has recently commissioned a helicopter support ship, with a displacement of 26,110 tonnes and equipped to operate an air wing comprising CH-47 Chinook and S-70C Seahawk helicopters.

In addition to the advanced Taiwanese Navy, the Taiwanese Air Force is also very well equipped. It has a

fighter force of 215 F-5E Tiger IIs and 94 F-104 Starfighters, and is beginning to deploy the first squadrons of 256 Ching-Kuo IDFs to replace the Starfighters and some of the Tiger IIs. In addition Taiwan has recently purchased 150 F-16 A/B Fighting Falcons from the United States and 60 Mirage 2000-5s from France, with a further 60 Mirage 2000-5s as an option.

In comparison, significant forces of the PLAN include 55 principal surface combatants, including 18 DDGs, all equipped with C-801 antiship missiles (an Exocet derivative); 35 FFGs equipped with C-801 and HY-2 antiship missiles; and 217 missile armed fast attack craft (FACs). The PLAN submarine force consists of 5 Han class SSNs (only two of which are equipped with C-801 antiship missiles), 1 modified Romeo class SSG equipped with C-801 antiship missiles and 42 SSKs (Improved Ming and Romeo class) though a substantial number of the Romeo class may be non-operational. China has just taken delivery of the first Kilo class SSKs from Russia, though it is doubtful these are in operational service. The PLAN lacks an aircraft carrier (though it is engaged in talks with Spain's Bazan Shipyards for the purchase of an 11,500 ton VSTOL CV similar to Thailand's new carrier), and its amphibious forces are limited in size and capacity, with only 46 LST's and LSM's forming the PLAN's major amphibious transport capability, this being insufficient to support the PLAN Naval Infantry which has a total force of around 8 divisions when fully mobilised.

PLAN surface forces are supported by up to 875 shore-based combat aircraft of the naval air force including 600 fighters (J-5, J-6, J-7 and J-8), and 100 Q-5 and 25 H-6 maritime strike aircraft. In addition, the PLA-AF has the ability to strike at targets on Taiwan using the Q-5 strike and attack Taiwanese Navy vessels with the H-5 and H-6 antiship missile armed maritime strike aircraft. PLAN forces can be given air cover by PLA-AF fighters including 500 J-7s, 100 J-8s as well as 24 Su-27 Flankers, and 24 MiG-31 Foxhounds.

It is difficult to ascertain whether a clear victor would emerge in any major maritime clash between China and Taiwan. Heavy losses on both sides would be certain though, and such a local war could dramatically change the regional maritime balance of power if both China's and Taiwan's maritime capabilities were reduced significantly. Thus it is quite possible that reunification by force of China and Taiwan could see both navies significantly reduced in size and it is highly unlikely that the Taiwanese naval forces and maritime air forces would be left intact for China to acquire, assuming it was ultimately victorious. Depending on what Taiwanese naval and air assets remained intact at the end of a conflict, China could conceivably acquire naval technologies that could be incorporated into the PLAN, but it would be pure speculation to consider what sort of technologies the

Chinese might acquire, and whether such technologies would really enable them to quickly recover from whatever maritime losses the PLAN and PLA-AF had suffered during the war.

Certainly any Chinese aggression against Taiwan would be certain to encourage regional states to increase their defence spending to counter further Chinese aggression. In particular Japan and the ASEAN states would see a Chinese move against Taiwan as an example of possible future Chinese behaviour in regards to the Spratly Islands, the Senkaku Islands and Natuna Island. A Chinese move against Taiwan is more likely to unite Southeast Asia into some form of multilateral alliance as a counter against perceived Chinese aggression in the future. This could translate into the accelerated growth of ASEAN navies, and the Japanese Maritime Self Defence Force, with Japanese acquisition of SSNs and VSTOL Carriers becoming more plausible.

A Chinese attack on Taiwan would also encourage the US Navy to remain in the region as a counter to any future attempts at aggression. The US Government has not made it clear what response it would take in the case of a Chinese military attack on Taiwan, but it is required by law to consider any threat against Taiwan as a threat to the peace and security of the whole region. Any US withdrawal after a successful Chinese attack on Taiwan would give the appearance that the US was ceding Eastern Asia as a Chinese sphere of influence - a perception that would only encourage China to pursue other claims, and create massive instability throughout the entire Asia-Pacific region.

Furthermore, China would have to contend with occupation of a conquered Taiwan, the pacification of the Taiwanese people who would be hostile to Beijing, the rebuilding of Taiwanese economic and industrial infrastructure, and the substantial international political fallout certain to result from any attempt by China to undertake reunification by force. There would be adverse economic consequences on the Chinese mainland because there is substantial Taiwanese business investment in the south east of the country that would disappear. This would lead to further economic and social dislocation of the Chinese population in that area that would stimulate further opposition to Beijing's rule, thus introducing the potential for a local political backlash against regional Communist Party bodies.

Thus it is far from clear that a high-cost military victory through reunification by force would translate into a positive political and economic effect on China's overall stability or strategic power. Although China could acquire some Taiwanese naval technology as war booty it is impossible to speculate what this could include and how it might assist China's maritime

growth into a blue water naval power. It is more likely that the high costs of any military clash — in terms of losses in personnel and equipment, the regional and global political fallout, and the economic and political backlash within China itself — may result in any attempt at reunification by force emerging as a strategic mistake of major proportions.

Conclusions

The increasing likelihood of economically-induced instability in North Korea leading to reunification with South Korea after the fall of the Kim Jong Il regime, and the increasing potential for war between China and Taiwan as a result of instability within China, and Taiwan's quest for greater international recognition, would lead to dramatic changes to the balance of maritime power in the Asia-Pacific region. In the case of a reunification of the two Koreas, a unified Korea would initially face a period of low naval growth due to its need to introduce the North to a market economy, but eventually — perhaps by the turn of the Century — a unified Korea would emerge with a very strong economy and a strong military capability — notably a large submarine capability acquired through the integration of the North's Romeo class SSKs. This could either lead to growing rivalry with Japan, which would see a unified Korea as a direct competitor in economic and military terms, or if cooler heads were to prevail in Seoul and Tokyo, the potential for the two states to together undertake a more effective conventional deterrent of a hegemonic China. Were a war to result from a North Korean economic collapse — that is if Kim Jong Il's regime decided to invade South Korea to distract the North Korean people's attention from internal problems — then it is likely that the military potential of any unified Korea (be it controlled either from Seoul or Pyongyang) would be considerably reduced, and the regional influence of such a post-war state would be very considerably constrained as a result of post-war reconstruction. Given the weakness of the present North Korean economy, it is quite likely that any Pyongyang-controlled unified Korea would be a short-lived state.

Given that peaceful reunification between the two Chinas appears increasingly unlikely as a result of the lack of any progress towards democratisation on the mainland, and the move towards greater international recognition on the part of Taiwan, a military resolution to the issue of China-Taiwanese relations appears more likely. If China and Taiwan eventually confront each other in a military confrontation, it is quite likely

that both sides will suffer heavy losses, including losses of naval vessels, and maritime aircraft. Thus a war between China and Taiwan would restrict China's ability to project power throughout the Asia-Pacific region for some years — it would in effect significantly slow down China's long-term defence modernisation program, and conceivably, if the war went badly for China, could result in even greater instability throughout China, that would restrict China's role throughout the region greatly. Furthermore, it is impossible to predict whether China, having eventually defeated Taiwan at great cost, would gain any real military benefit from what was left of the Taiwanese Navy, much of which would probably be either destroyed or removed from the theatre of operations when victory over PLA forces clearly became impossible. It is difficult to see how PLA forces could capture Taiwanese naval assets such as the Perry and Lafayette class FFGs intact during any military conflict across the Taiwanese Straits.

A decision by China to use military force against Taiwan would create great alarm in Tokyo, Seoul and the capitals of the ASEAN states. Thus strategic co-operation between a unified Korea and Japan against a China weakened militarily by a high intensity local war against Taiwan is plausible. Furthermore the ASEAN states, Australia and New Zealand are more likely to accelerate moves towards greater defence cooperation after a Chinese military assault against Taiwan, and the US is more likely to see the need to keep a substantial military presence within the region, even if the North Korean threat disappeared after Korean reunification. Thus China would face an Asia-Pacific region galvanised by the need to cooperate militarily to deal with any future Chinese aggression. This would no doubt increase Beijing's sense of vulnerability — of being contained and encircled — and would more than likely result in even greater Chinese defence spending, and possibly closer strategic ties with the Russian Federation.

Clearly then a peaceful reunification of the two Koreas and a reunification by force between the two Chinas could have quite drastic strategic implications for the entire Asia-Pacific region. Were such events to occur in quick succession, the potential for power vacuums, instability and rapid military growth throughout the entire Asia-Pacific region would increase. Given the state of the economy in North Korea, and the growing tension between the two Chinas, such a dramatic scenario could easily become reality in the near future.

About the author

Malcolm R. Davis holds an M.A. in International Relations and Strategic Studies from Lancaster University in the United Kingdom, and a B.A. in Politics from the Flinders University of South Australia. He is currently undertaking postgraduate studies towards an M.A. in Strategic Studies at the ANU's Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, and is a regular contributor to the journal *Asia Pacific Defence Reporter*.

Economic factors in the Indian naval expansion

by

Matthew Gray, Australian National University

A great deal has been said and written about the Indian naval expansion, which began in the late 1960s, expanded rapidly after the 1971 Indo-Pakistan war, and continues to the present day. Much of the discussion concentrates on India's strategic concerns and ambitions as a source of the expansion, without considering the role of economics and trade. To be sure, India's geo-strategic position, and its well-established search for regional and international prestige and large power status, are important, if not dominant, factors explaining the emergence of Indian naval power, but alone do not fully identify the motivations of Indian defence planners and politicians over the last quarter century.

The economic and trade considerations in military policy and planning are many, and in fact historically have often dominated strategic planning, in India and throughout the world. Early and middle Indian military history contains many examples of economics, trade, and wealth accumulation dominating military policy and strategic behaviour.¹ Many conflicts in Indian history found their source in the economic, trade, and territorial ambitions of empires and regions. India's long history of being attacked, looted and colonised by external powers is also a result of economic factors; most conquering powers looked to India as a source of natural and human wealth which could be exploited for profit.

A discussion of the economic sources of India's naval expansion has been largely absent from both journalistic and scholarly analysis of the expansion. That India is a growing economic power in South Asia and the Indian Ocean, with increasingly large and extensive economic interests to protect, makes the relationship between economics and military power in contemporary India all the more important. The purpose of this paper is to briefly consider the role of economic factors — the protection and expansion of domestic economics, international trade, and public capital, for example — in India's decision to expand its naval capabilities. This paper does not attempt to argue that economic factors have been dominant over strategic ones, but rather it aims to shed some light on an aspect of recent Indian military history which has, unfortunately, been given too little attention by observers and scholars of modern India.

THE ORIGINS AND AIMS OF THE INDIAN NAVAL EXPANSION

The events which sparked India's naval expansion had only a peripheral relationship with economics. The expansion began in earnest after the 1971 Indo-Pakistan war², although a small expansion of naval power occurred after the 1965 Indo-Pakistan war. The 1971 war was fought over the issue of independence for East Pakistan (now Bangladesh), unlike earlier ones which were fought over territorial disputes. After a crackdown on dissent and opposition by Pakistan in the east, a flood of refugees entered India, sparking off the war. Clearly, however, Indian strategic planners and politicians saw other benefits in East Pakistani independence; Pakistan would be weaker if divided into two, and India would no longer have to face the problem of being flanked on both sides by its main adversary.

The Indian navy, although small in 1971, performed very well in the conflict; it successfully blockaded East Pakistan (making it impossible for Pakistani forces to resupply, support or withdraw its troops), and it launched a crippling attack on the Pakistani navy at Karachi. Pakistan — including its economy and trading capability — was paralysed during the war, illustrating to Indian defence planners the potential of naval power.

Equally important as a source of the Indian naval expansion was the decision by the United States to send a carrier battle group to the region. Under a 1959 agreement, the US was obliged to assist in Pakistan's defence against external threats. The move was seen in India as both a strategic threat and as an insult; the Indians felt that US involvement in the war reeked of gunboat diplomacy and neo-colonialism, and that US dominance in the Indian Ocean carried with it an economic threat as well.³

Moves were made immediately after the war to create "a force equal in size and competence to the naval forces of any one of the superpowers now formally operating in the area".⁴ India purchased submarines, frigates, missile boats, and helicopters. Port facilities were upgraded and improved, and new facilities were also constructed. The expansion continued throughout the 1980s, with India acquiring nuclear submarines and a second and third aircraft carrier. Invest-

ment in advanced technology, and in research and development, also increased, with the aim of achieving defence self-sufficiency.

Although the economic aims and roles of the Indian navy are often overlooked, they are, in fact, of considerable importance. The Indian navy has, at present, five main aims, of which two are directly related to economic interests, and a further two are partly of an economic nature. The aims are:

1. Protecting the mainland and the island territories of India
2. Protecting Indian's territorial waters, Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and off-shore assets
3. Protecting India's sealanes of trade and communication
4. Safeguarding India from 'gunboat diplomacy'
5. Safeguarding India's interests in contiguous waters⁵

More specifically, India has a number of specific economic concerns, which a strong navy is designed to protect and sustain. They can be placed into two broad categories; the protection of the domestic economy and economic assets and capital, and the protection of commercial shipping and sea lanes. Both categories shall now be considered in greater detail.

THE INDIAN NAVY AND THE DEFENCE OF ECONOMIC ASSETS AND ECONOMIC CAPACITIES

India is rich in natural resources, and in times of war, the navy is planned to play a crucial role in the defence of these assets. The first and second aims of the navy (above) both give the navy a duty to protect Indian land-based natural resources, ocean resources, and the economic assets, or capital, needed for production.

The Indian economy was worth around US\$295 billion in 1990, and was expanding at the impressive rate of 4.5 percent per annum.⁶ India's economic growth during the 1980's averaged 4.9 percent.⁷ Per capita income has increased from US\$90 in 1964-65 to US\$350 in 1989-90.⁸ Indian spending on technology, research, and other modernisation has also greatly increased, with the benefits being applied to both military and non-military purposes. The large growth in the size and diversity of the Indian economy over the past three decades has allowed for the costs of expanding naval power to be more easily absorbed. It has also created a reason for increased naval strength; the larger the economy, the more assets, capital, and resources there are to protect.

India's economic assets, such as businesses, social overhead capital, and government infrastructure, have improved and expanded considerably in recent dec-

ades. Many of these would be targets during a conflict, and many, especially those along India's coast, would need to be defended with the use of naval power.

An equally important role for the navy in wartime would be to protect India's natural resources; those both on land and at sea.⁹ On land, India has considerable reserves of copper, nickel, tin, and cobalt, as well as a large agricultural sector. At sea, there are a number of living and non-living resources within India's EEZ. Non-living resources include tin, titanium, monazite, ilmenite, rutile, and manganese on India's continental shelf, and a limited amount of oil and natural gas. The Indian coast is also rich in living resources, with the towns and villages along the coast often relying heavily on these for sustenance and outside income. The Indian Ocean contains about 12 million tons of fish and other seafood, and protecting India's share of these resources is another task of the navy.

Although studies on the expansion of Indian naval power usually concentrate on larger vessels — aircraft carriers, submarines, destroyers, frigates, and naval air power — there has been an equally significant expansion of coastal forces. The growth in the number of escorts, patrol boats, mine-sweepers, and landing craft is evidence of the importance being placed on coastal defence, and on the defence of natural resources and coastal economic assets. It is clear that coastal forces have been expanded at a rate similar to larger vessels (See table after footnotes).

THE NAVY AND THE PROTECTION OF SEA LANES AND COMMERCIAL SHIPPING

Another role of the Indian navy, and a source of its expansion, is the protection of Indian sea lanes and its commercial shipping, the importance of which has grown considerably in the last few decades. The growth in India's trade with the rest of the world, its regional power status (in both geo-political and economic terms), and the fact that the overwhelming majority of international trade is carried by sea, accounts for the importance of naval power in India's foreign trade and international economic relations.

India's foreign trade is significant, especially with Europe, the Middle East, and Asia. In 1993-94, India's merchandise exports is estimated to have totalled almost US\$22.3 billion, with imports estimated at about US\$26.5 billion.¹⁰ Among India's imports are items necessary for the conduct of war and the maintenance of the domestic economy; oil, oil-related products, defence equipment, high technology products, and large, 'big-ticket' items, in particular. This trade would need to be protected in times of war.

It is important to note that India's two main potential adversaries in the period since 1971 have been Paki-

stan and China, states which possess considerable offensive naval capabilities and could conceivably seriously disrupt Indian economic activity during times of war. Submarines, which provide perhaps the most formidable offensive capability available to a navy, are possessed by both China (with 94) and Pakistan (with 6). India has 17.¹¹ Pakistan and China both have more destroyers than India, and significant numbers of other long-range vessels as well. India's naval expansion can therefore be traced, in part, to the emergence of long-range and offensive naval capabilities in the Asian and Indian Ocean regions.

Indian success at blockading Pakistan's major ports during the 1971, which caused Pakistan considerable economic loss and inconvenience, is a clear example of the use of naval power to conduct economic warfare. That Pakistan lacked the naval power and resources to combat the Indian blockade highlights the desirability of naval power during a war, even one where the majority of fighting is land-based.

THE NAVAL EXPANSION AND THE BENEFITS FOR THE INDIAN DOMESTIC ECONOMY

Finally, India's naval expansion carries with it the possibility of benefits for the domestic economy, some of which may provide a motivation for the expansion.

The contribution made by the expansion to employment in India is one example. Unlike many military expansion programs, the Indian naval expansion has been largely financed by economic growth, rather than by increased taxation. This means that, in contrast with other states, the Indian naval expansion has not had too greater a negative effect on investment and private sector employment. In fact, a considerable number of new jobs have been created because of the growth in the size of the navy; the number of people directly employed by the navy has increased from 16,000 in 1965 to about 55,000 in 1994, and is projected to reach as much as 80,000 by the middle of the next decade.¹²

Further, because of Indian attempts to realise military self-sufficiency, considerable sums have been spent by the government in the private sector on research and development. Such spending not only reduces the strain on India's current account, but many of the projects undertaken for military purposes can also have non-military applications with tangible benefits for the domestic economy.

One example of this is India's missile program, which was part of the space program established in the early 1970s. Although the program placed an emphasis on military development, several benefits have since passed on, or may pass on in the future, to the domestic economy.¹³ The missile technology which India

developed was applied to providing distance education by television, and to map parts of the countryside and its weather patterns for agricultural purposes. In the future, the space program may allow for mineral exploration to be undertaken from space. The most obvious non-military benefits of the space program, however, are increased skilled employment, and, through cooperation with other states, technology transfer to India.¹⁴

CONCLUSION

There is some difficulty in determining the exact relationship between the Indian naval expansion and economic factors, as the naval expansion is still under way, and the Indian economy is still growing at a steady pace — although at 4.2 per annum, somewhat slower than in previous years.¹⁵

The future expansion of the Indian economy will, to a large extent, determine the future growth of the Indian military, including the navy. One estimate of future economic growth expects the Indian economy to be worth over US\$2000 billion by 2020.¹⁶ Such a figure would see it, in terms of size, surpass the British or Italian economies, and would undoubtedly allow India to continue to expand its naval forces at some speed. India may, in fact, achieve the 'super-power' status that many envisage for it by 2020, especially if even higher levels of economic growth encourage India's politicians to expand defence expenditure beyond its present proportion of Gross National Product (GNP). If the naval expansion continues to be funded by economic growth rather than by increased taxation, it is difficult to imagine large scale opposition to a project which is overwhelmingly supported by India's most politically active social classes and institutions.¹⁷

This article has attempted to briefly illustrate some evidence which supports a relationship between economics and the Indian naval expansion. Its aim has not been to argue that economics is the dominant factor accounting for the expansion — there is little doubt that geo-strategy and India's search for power status are the most important factors — but rather to discuss an important aspect of the Indian naval expansion which has been given less attention in the past than it deserves.

¹ For more details, see Ranabir Chakravarti, *Warfare for Wealth: Early Indian Perspective* (Calcutta: Firma KLM Private LTD), 1986.

² On the 1971 war, see G. W. Choudhury, *India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and the Major Powers: Politics of a Divided Subcontinent* (New York: Free Press), 1975. For a United States perspective on the war, see Henry Kissinger, *The White House Years* (London: George Weidenfeld & Nicolson Ltd), 1979, Chapter XXI.

³ The importance of the US intervention in the Indian Ocean region during the 1971 war, as a source of the subsequent naval expansion by India, is discussed in Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, (hereafter, *Senate Standing Committee, FADT*), *Australia-India Relations: Trade and Security* (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service), 1990.

⁴ Comment made by former Indian Chief of Naval Staff, Admiral A. K. Chatterji, in P. Lewis Young, India's Nuclear Submarine Acquisition", *Asian Defence Journal* (11, 1988), p. 14.

⁵ Lt. Sanjay J. Singh, "The Indian Navy is No Threat", *US Naval Institute Proceedings* (3), 3, March 1991, p. 75, quoted in Marcus B. Zinger, "The Development of Indian Naval Strategy since 1971", *Contemporary South Asia* 2, (3), 1993, pp. 340-341.

⁶ This amount is drawn from figures in Robert W. Stern, *Changing India: Bourgeois Revolution on the Subcontinent* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 1993, p. 216 (Chart 7).

⁷ Paul Kennedy, *Preparing for the Twenty-First Century* (London: HarperCollins Publishers), 1993, p. 164 (Table 6).

⁸ M. Ghaffar Chaudhry, "Transformation of Agriculture, Food Self-Sufficiency and Prospects for Surpluses: The Case of South Asia", *Contemporary South Asia* 3, (1), 1994, p. 38 (Table 1).

⁹ On the natural wealth of the Indian Ocean, including that within Indian territory, see Bradley Hahn, "Indian Ocean: Sea Lanes Becoming More Vulnerable, More Important", *Asia-Pacific Defence Reporter* XVII, (3), September 1990, pp. 8-11.

¹⁰ Figures drawn from Robert Cassen, Vijay Joshi &

Michael Lipton, "Stabilization and Structural Reform in India", *Contemporary South Asia* 2, (2), 1993, p. 180 (Table 3).

¹¹ See Zinger, op. cit., p. 350 (Table 3).

¹² *Asia-Pacific Defence Reporter 1994 Annual Reference Edition* (hereafter, APDR 1994 ARE), p. 115-116.

¹³ On India's space and missile program, see Elizabeth Clegg & Michael Sheehan, "Space as an Engine of Development: India's Space Programme", *Contemporary South Asia* 3, (1), 1994; S. K. Gosh, "India's Space Programme and its Military Implications", *Asian Defence Journal* 9, 1981.

¹⁴ Technology transfer has already occurred between India and the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany), the United States, and France. See Clegg & Sheehan, op. cit., p. 33.

¹⁵ APDR 1994 ARE, pp. 115.

¹⁶ This figure is in constant 1980 dollars, but assumes (probably a little optimistically) a growth rate of 7 percent per annum between 1985 and 2020. Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000* (New York: Random House), 1987, p. 455.

¹⁷ One expert has said of the naval expansion and India's middle and professional classes, "India is a great power with a burgeoning middle class — a middle class that is anxious to shed the image of beggar India That middle class will applaud any expansion of the Indian defence forces." Senate Standing Committee, FADT, op. cit., p. 69. Further, the Indian government is eager to keep in favour with the middle class, which is politically astute and active. On the classes in India, and their role in politics, see Stern, op. cit., pp. 84-102, 202-221.

The Expansion of the Indian Navy

SHIP/VESSEL TYPE	1971	1990
Aircraft Carriers	1	2
Cruisers	2	0
Submarines	4	17
Missile Destroyers	3	5
Frigates	9	21
Corvettes	0	8
Coastal Vessels	6	27
Amphibious Vessels	3	18
Mine Warfare Vessels	8	22

Source: Marcus B. Zinger, "The Development of Indian Naval Strategy since 1971", *Contemporary South Asia*, 2/3/1993, p. 344 (Table 2).

The Defence White Paper 1994:

Advocating a maritime strategy for Australia

by

Major D A. Creagh

'The dominion of the sea...is the best security of the land.'

—Thomas Conventry

Australia is an island nation. Australia's area of direct military interest constitutes about ten percent of the earth's surface and to a large extent is maritime in nature. The country's geo-strategic setting is both unique and enduring, the oceans surrounding Australia provide a natural security barrier as well as being the major avenue for foreign and domestic commerce. Australia's economic interests are inextricably entwined in the marine environment. Indeed, more than ninety percent of Australia's trade by volume is seaborne. Coastal shipping is essential for the movement of liquid fuel and other bulk commodities such as iron ore, bauxite and cement and is vital to the support of some of the nation's remote northern settlements.

The lack of common land borders, an abundance of natural resources and a large land mass have in the past tended to give Australian's a deceptively continental outlook on defence related issues. Traditional military ties with allies, and Australia's experience from two world wars have further strengthened this outlook. The waters that surround Australia however, provide certain security advantages in the form of a formidable barrier and a medium through which any potential adversary must pass. This is recognised in Australia's current defence strategy, which emphasises the importance of the sea-air approaches. *Defending Australia, Defence White Paper 1994* (DA 94) states that: 'as an island continent, the primary focus of our defence effort is on our sea and air approaches, which can be turned to our decisive advantage'.

An essential element of this strategy therefore, must be the manner in which Australia intends using the sea. DA 94 advocates a strong maritime emphasis for Australia's concept of depth in defence. It can be argued therefore, that a predominantly maritime strategy has been adopted for the defence of Australia's sea and air approaches and ultimately for the defence of Australia itself. The adoption of such a strategy takes advantage of Australia's unique geo-strategic circumstances and in addition, recognises the importance of Australia's maritime environment and maritime interests to the country's security.

The aim of this paper is to demonstrate that DA 94 is pursuing a maritime strategy in order to defend Australia's national interests. Some recent historical back-

ground is provided to demonstrate that the move towards a maritime strategy has in fact been a natural evolution in Australian strategic thinking and one that continues to evolve. Australia's ability to apply a maritime strategy is examined, as is the relevance of such a strategy to Australia's strategic circumstances. Finally, the paper will highlight why a maritime strategy provides the Australian Defence Force (ADF) with the greatest degree of flexibility in the execution of its allocated tasks.

Scope

It is important to realise that the adoption of a maritime strategy is not necessarily advocating the development of a dominant naval arm in the ADF. Indeed, in the Australian context, the naval force both at sea and ashore, and the air and land forces are all inextricably intertwined. Should Australia ever be invaded, (given the size of its coast and the relative strength of Australia's naval and air forces this will always remain a possibility) there will always be a requirement for land forces. As such, this paper will concentrate predominantly on an examination of the naval and air aspects of DA 94 in order to highlight the development of Australia's maritime strategy.

Defence White Paper

Before examining the development of a maritime strategy, it is necessary to first examine Australia's current strategic guidance as defined in DA 94. Australia's current strategic guidance is the result of careful planning designed to ensure the ADF has the level and mix of capabilities necessary to achieve defence self-reliance. Australia's defence force is determined by the country's unique strategic geography and by the nature of capabilities that can be credibly used against it. Australia's location, size, population and infrastructure has provided both strategic advantages and challenges. Planners have attempted to use these strategic advantages in a manner that, in order for a potential adversary to attack Australia, he would first have to project and sustain forces across the sea. A primary objective in defending Australia is to prevent hostile forces from reaching mainland Australia or from launching successful attacks against Australia's territorial interests in her sea and air approaches.

In order to achieve this objective, elements of the ADF are equipped and manned in order to:

- be capable of patrolling the sea and air approaches;
- respond in a quick and decisive manner to potential or emerging threats; and
- protect shipping, territories and resources in these approaches.

The ADF's capabilities for such maritime operations are a combination of aircraft, ships and submarines fitted with appropriate sensor and weapon systems. The allocated tasks themselves reflect the strong maritime emphasis that underpins Australia's concept of depth in defence. The question remains however, as to how did Australia's move to a maritime strategy evolve?

Australia's move towards a maritime strategy

Since 1945, Australia thought more about land operations in Korea, Malaya and Vietnam and of maritime operations in the context of co-operation with allied forces in combat areas far from Australian shores. For many years there was a heavy reliance placed on the concept of forward defence. Forward defence was associated with the 'domino theory', a belief that Australia's security was best achieved by keeping the communist threat as far from Australia as possible. During this period, Australia relied for the defence of its territory and major interests upon the maritime power of first, Great Britain and then the United States of America.

President Nixon's Guam doctrine however, forced Australia to finally accept responsibility for its regional security. For the first time, Australia had to examine its geo-strategic environment from a perspective of having to defend it in the first instance with its own integral defence forces. Two significant considerations emerged; firstly the extent and importance of Australia's own maritime interests and secondly, the significance of the seas and oceans as a natural barrier for any adversary wishing to attack Australia or her territories.

It is quite remarkable that Australia, the world's largest island nation and one almost entirely dependent on the sea for international trade, never saw herself as a maritime nation. Additionally, these same oceans, seas and the air gap above them, were now among the geographic factors deemed as critical for the defence of Australia. In order to achieve defence self-reliance and to address Australia's economic, diplomatic and defence interests in the region, Australia steadily progressed towards the application of a regional maritime strategy.

This move has been particularly evident since 1987

when the 1987 Defence White Paper stated: 'by its very nature, the defence of Australia and its territories emphasises marine warfare capabilities. The ADF must be able to conduct maritime operations to prevent an adversary from substantial use or exploitation of our maritime approaches'. DA 94 is a further recognition by Australian defence planners of the significance of the maritime approaches and this recognition expresses most clearly, why Australia is pursuing a maritime strategy for the defence of its national interests.

APPLYING A MARITIME STRATEGY

Seapower

Having examined Australia's move towards a maritime strategy, it is now appropriate to examine whether Australia is in fact capable of pursuing a maritime strategy. Classical theories of seapower generally refer to three elements essential to the attainment of seapower: a viable merchant marine, secure bases and the fighting instrument. Australia has limitations, in all three, however, it has both the capacity and potential to further develop them. Given the volume of seaborne trade both to and from Australia, it is unlikely the country will ever aspire to move more than a small portion of its trade in nationally registered shipping. The important point to note of course, is this decision is based on one of policy and not an inability to expand the nation's merchant shipping element.

Potential also exists to further develop bases. Although present capacity is relatively small by international standards, Australia has the necessary expertise and capacity to construct and support modern vessels whether they are merchant ships or instruments of war. Although small in number, Australia's fighting instrument is the most developed of the three elements and will probably remain the prime expression of its seapower. One of the principal tasks of Australia's seapower will be to exercise sea control.

Medium Maritime Power Theory - Influencing Australian Strategic Thought

The classical theorists are not the only benchmark able to be used to determine whether Australia has the capacity to pursue a maritime strategy. The work of Admiral Hill, as articulated in his book *Maritime Strategy for Medium Powers*, is not only more recent but is perhaps more relevant to Australia's situation. In it Hill argues that in order to pursue a maritime strategy a medium power must possess two essential qualities. First and foremost, a medium power's strategy must be an extension of its national objectives; a nation's vital interests must be defined in order for them to be protected.

Significantly, in Australia's case, the relationship between the country's national interests and its defence policy are articulated in DA 94. To protect these vital interests Hill stresses the importance of a medium power maintaining ownership of its territory, 'territorial integrity demands the security of frontiers whether land or sea, and the military is prominent'. The influence of Hill can again be seen in DA 94 as the document identifies the significance of Australia's sea-air approaches and the vital role the ADF plays in securing these approaches, Australia and her interests.

The second essential quality Hill refers to is the requirement for a medium power to possess a military force capable of undertaking the wide range of political, diplomatic and military objectives of their government. The superpower allies can no longer be relied upon in the first instance. A medium power such as Australia must have sufficient military capability to protect its own vital interests. A medium power must also possess the military capacity to operate in the different levels of conflict; those levels being: normal conditions, low intensity operations, higher level operations and general war.

Again, the influence of Hill can be seen in Australia's defence policy. DA 94 states that Australia's defence posture gives primacy to three key tasks:

- the capacity to provide timely warning of significant developments in Australia's strategic environment;
- maintaining a force capable of defeating current or planned capabilities which could be credibly used against Australia; and
- maintaining the adaptability to expand or redirect defence and national effort in response to developments in regional capabilities and higher levels of conflict which could emerge in the longer term.

DA 94 itself is a recognition by strategic planners of the importance of possessing and developing those qualities required of a medium maritime power. In particular, the requirement for clear national policy and its relationship with defence capability is articulated. DA 94 also recognises the requirement for a defence force capable of undertaking a wide variety of tasks across the spectrum of conflict. As articulated by both the classical maritime theorists and Hill, an essential element of a maritime strategy such as Australia's, is exercising sea control. The ability of Australia's maritime forces to use the oceans surrounding the country for its own purposes (sea assertion) whilst denying that use to potential hostile interests (sea denial) is critical for the successful execution of a maritime strategy.

Australia, to varying degrees, has both the classical elements of seapower and the qualities required of a medium power wishing to pursue a maritime strat-

egy. Conscious of the country's shortcomings in some areas, DA 94 again demonstrates the recognition by its strategic planners of the requirement to continually review Australia's strategy and to provide the ADF with the capabilities required to defend the country's vital interests.

By way of example, Australia is currently constructing the ANZAC class frigates and the Collins submarine. Two Training Helicopter Support Ships have been purchased which will further enhance the defence force's capability to conduct joint amphibious operations. The continued modernisation of F/A 18 Hornet, P3-C Orion and the F-111 aircraft further develop their capacity to patrol in and fight the battle in the sea-air approaches. The acquisition and continual improvement of such weapon platforms highlight the importance of the sea-air approaches to Australia's national and defence interests.

The relevance of a maritime strategy to Australia

The ADF's allocated tasks and roles also highlight the maritime nature of Australia's strategy for its defence. The ADF is structured in order to carry out a wide variety of operational roles. These roles and the operational concepts that support them, recognise the key features of Australia's geo-strategic environment and any contingencies that may arise there. These roles include:

- intelligence collection and evaluation;
- surveillance of maritime areas and northern Australia;
- maritime patrol and response;
- protection of shipping and offshore territories and resources;
- air defence in maritime areas and northern approaches;
- defeat of incursions on Australian territory;
- protection of important civil and defence assets, including infrastructure and population centres; and strategic strike'.

A closer examination of these roles highlights the significance of the sea-air approaches, the distinctly maritime nature of Australia's region and the vital role naval and air assets will play in executing many of the ADF's allocated tasks.

Intelligence Collection and Evaluation

Sound and timely intelligence is in many respects the first layer in Australia's depth in defence as it provides the government and military commanders with early warning of potential threats. Maritime forces, in particular ships and aircraft, are inherently mobile and possess the capacity to cover great distances. Their ability to observe events throughout Australia's area of

strategic interest enhances its knowledge of the regional environment. When strategic circumstances demand it, surface ships and submarines provide flexibility due to their ability to conduct sustained intelligence collection operations and capacity to cover long distances from their bases. Submarines have a further strategic advantage in that they can capture intelligence covertly regardless of the level of conflict. The ability of maritime forces to maintain a presence in Australia's maritime approaches is a significant strategic consideration.

Maritime Surveillance

DA 94 highlights the importance of the ADF being able to detect, identify and if necessary respond to sea and air activity in the sea-air approaches. Indeed, this can be related directly to the protection of Australia's national interests. Surveillance of the northern and north-western maritime approaches is vital for the early detection of any potential adversary's activities, however, the enormity of these approaches makes this task a formidable one. Assets, whether radars, ships, submarines, fixed-wing aircraft or land based coastal watchers; will all have an important role to play in the performance of this task.

Maritime Patrol and Response

DA 94 stresses that the ADF must be able to conduct sea denial operations to prevent an adversary using or exploiting Australia's maritime approaches. The unpredictable nature and military potential of such an adversary requires the ADF to possess a flexible, well-balanced array of forces able to locate, identify, track and if necessary engage targets. The continued modernisation of present weapon platforms and the planned acquisition of other weapon systems is indicative of the recognition by Australia's strategic planners of this requirement. The ability of the ADF to conduct aggressive maritime patrols in order to locate potential adversaries and deny them access to Australian territory, is central to Australia's concept of depth in defence. This capability is important regardless of the level of conflict. Significantly, the ability to restrict the type of force landing in Australia would make the land defence of its northern region easier.

Protection of Shipping, Offshore Territories and Resources

The protection of shipping, offshore territories and resources is the most demanding task faced by the ADF and could require the sustained deployment of forces over extended periods. Due to the vast expansion of ocean surrounding Australia and the relative size of its navy, the protection of maritime commerce would involve the protection of critical shipping and not sea lines of communication. Protection of offshore territories and resources would require the involvement of all three services of the ADF. Strategic air assets guarantee swift

response, whilst naval forces provide the capacity to move large quantities of stores and follow on forces. The success of such operations will be determined by the ADF's capacity to sustain deployed forces and to protect merchant ships using them. This will be dependent on the ADF's capacity to conduct sea assertion tasks in the sea approaches.

Strategic Strike

Where a situation requires it, the government must have the option to strike at an adversary's bases and communications in order to either control the threat of further conflict or encourage negotiations by peaceful means. Maritime forces provide Australian planners with a wide range of options. Strategic air missions aside, the covert use of submarines in conjunction with special forces or the overt use of surface ships can also be used for strategic strike missions. The various ADF assets provide the government and military commanders with a wide variety of options and as such, flexibility in response.

Support of Land Forces

The use of land forces in conjunction with Australia's unique geographic characteristics is in many respects, the last layer in its concept of depth in defence. In such a scenario, naval forces can play an important role in supporting the conduct of land operations in areas such as the transportation of troops and equipment by sea. The movement of resources into Australia from overseas whether by sea or air also needs to be protected. Whilst moving towards defence self-reliance, Australia will always remain dependant on overseas allies for certain capabilities and thus, the safe passage to Australia of such capabilities must be guaranteed. Maritime forces are critical for this task.

Peacetime Activities

The ADF has the capacity to contribute to a positive security environment through the support of national foreign policy and military diplomacy. Although not a force determinant, this task is particularly important at the lower end of the conflict spectrum. ADF involvement in regional security for example, in the form of goodwill visits by naval ships and RAAF P-3C surveillance flights over the South China Sea and Bay of Bengal, contribute to a favourable strategic environment. The involvement of ADF forces in United Nations peacekeeping tasks further highlights the important role military capability has to play in the pursuit of Australia's international interests.

Australia's Maritime Strategy - An Assessment

Thus far, this paper has examined the nature of Australia's current strategic guidance, and the country's move

towards a distinctly maritime strategy. Australia's ability to be a medium maritime power was examined as was the influence of both present day and traditional maritime theorists in the development of Australia's own maritime strategy. There was a recognition by Australia's planners of the significance of Australia's geo-strategic circumstances and the ability of a maritime strategy to utilise these circumstances in Australia's favour. This recognition was initially muted in the 1987 Defence White Paper and more recently with the publication of DA 94. A careful examination of the ADF's roles highlighted the maritime nature of those tasks. The question remains however, as to how relevant is a maritime strategy to Australia's circumstances and the ADF's allocated roles?

This paper has argued that many of the ADF's allocated roles are maritime in nature and as such reflect the commitment by Australia's strategic planners to develop Australia into a medium maritime power capable of executing an effective maritime strategy. The weapon platforms acquired or in the process of being acquired, further highlight this commitment. In the Australian context, this maritime strategy recognises that the role of the military is to not only defend the nation and its vital interests but also to promote Australia's security interests. Clearly, the most important factor underpinning Australia's security is the role of the defensive shield provided by the surrounding oceans and the air above them.

Whether Australia is dominating the sea-air approaches in the defence of Australia or deploying assets to promote regional security, the ADF must have the appropriate equipment to undertake these tasks. The principal exponents of a maritime strategy, maritime forces, by their very nature offer the government and military commanders flexible and manoeuvrable instruments with which to achieve political-military objectives.

In defending Australia, a maritime strategy has two significant advantages. First, it uses Australia's geo-strategic circumstances as factor that enhances Australia's ability to defend itself. The sea-air approaches are the first line in Australia's concept of depth in defence. Should the situation ever arise, Australia must have a military strategy that allows it to defend these approaches. Australia's present strategy, a maritime strategy, has been developed to achieve this.

The second advantage is a maritime strategy recognises and allows Australia to play a vital role in promoting regional stability and preventing conflict in its region of interest. Maritime forces provide the Australian Government with a flexible response. They can also be used in a constabulary role where they police Australia's sovereign territories and interests, demonstrating the nation's ownership of them.

They can be used for the promotion of confidence and security building measures within the region, or to participate in United Nation tasks in support of Australia's initiatives as an international citizen or as a member of the United Nations. Finally, and as a last resort, maritime forces can be used as instruments of war. They are a symbol of Australia's preparedness to defend itself, its offshore territories and interests.

Conclusion

As an island nation, the oceans that surround Australia have always been important in maintaining the nation's sovereignty and its economic well being. Australia's area of strategic interest is predominantly maritime in nature. The use of the sea plays an important part in regional interests as well as being a major source of food and a potential source of natural resources. It can be argued that the sea-air approaches to Australia are critical to the defence of the nation's vital interests.

After a long period of indifference towards the maritime environment, Australia has come to recognise the importance of the use of the sea with regard to its national objectives. In the past twenty five years and, in particular, since the release of the 1987 Defence White Paper and DA 94, a predominantly maritime strategy has been adopted for the defence of Australia and her national interests. This maritime strategy provides the foundation for the sensible use of Australia's unique geo-strategic circumstances. A maritime strategy is not advocating the domination of seapower in Australian defence thinking. It does however, properly reflect the importance of Australia's maritime interests, the impact the marine environment has on Australia's security and the critical role the ADF and in particular, its maritime forces play in defending the sea-air approaches.

A maritime strategy and the forces required to execute such a strategy provide the Australian Government and the ADF's military commanders with considerable freedom of action. Maritime forces because of their traditional versatility, controllability, accessibility and sustainability are able to undertake tasks across the spectrum of conflict. Although not a force determinant, the role these forces also play in Australia's foreign policy cannot be under-estimated. They are a visible sign of the maritime strategy Australia has adopted and a symbol of the country's commitment to the defence of its territories and offshore interests. Central to this strategy and a factor which will remain relevant for many years yet, is Australia's ability to defend the sea-air approaches. A well structured maritime strategy supported by an appropriately equipped defence force will ensure Australia has the capacity to defend its vital interests into the twenty first century.

SEX, DRUGS & SEAMANSHIP!

Liberalised social values and tomorrow's Navy

by Alan Hinge

In May 1995 a US Navy Board of Inquiry voted unanimously to discharge a Lieutenant Commander who told his commanding officer he believed it was wrong to lead women into combat. Once his views were made known, the CO refused to let the officer lead his helicopter detachment which was preparing for a possible deployment to Haiti, and the officer was formally accused of failing to support and carry out defence policy.¹ Ironically, when the accused officer had joined the navy his currently held views were firmly endorsed by his service and the State; now his 'values' and the conclusions drawn from them have become politically incorrect in the space of a dozen years. This episode is a conspicuous example of the potential for tension between so called traditional values and liberalised values in modern armed forces.

Values are the principals and attitudes we think are right and important; they are the benchmarks we all use to decide the nature and extent of changes we should make. Our naval value *system* is not an accident; it is an order of standards of conduct and performance developed, accepted and practised by most members of the service over a very long time. Consequently, the debate on liberalisation of traditional service values and attitudes related to sexuality and gender, for example, remains highly emotive, and this article examines the likely impact of liberalised social values on the navy and suggests how the navy should react in four particular cases of liberalisation.

Liberalisation of Social Values

Since the 1960s civilian values and expectations have had an increasing impact on service attitudes, identity and 'ways of doing business' and the Royal Australian Navy's insulation from the problems of a rapidly changing society has worn very thin in the last decade. The behavioural rules, or goalposts 'outside' continue to change, and the navy faces the challenge of adapting to the increasingly diverse values and attitudes of contemporary Australian society, while ensuring its own cohesion and operational performance in the long term.

The key change in Australia's social value system comes from transformation of our society from one with conservative, conformist values - which basically

existed until the 1960s - to a fluid society adopting a 'liberal' value system based on pluralism and the almost sacrosanct rights of the individual. Liberalism is a social philosophy that favours progress and reform, particularly in relation to maximising *individual* freedom, choice, reward and progress. It involves toleration of ideological and religious diversity and avoids strict codification of behavioural norms.² By giving humans the widest freedom to choose, less repressed and uptight individuals will build a better society. Therefore, the processes of liberalisation involve developing, promoting and implementing policies that enhance individual freedom and choice in a broad range of areas including sexuality, drug use, employment of women and expression of attitudes to authorities that interfere with freedom and choice.

Liberalisation has eroded the desire to conform to long established social norms and emphasises self fulfilment, egalitarianism and self expression. Generally uncritical acceptance of rules and the status quo is no longer the norm as we move into an age of ambiguity, and liberalisation has blurred our once clear and fairly rigid value system of loyalties to a clear social hierarchy: God, King, Country/Flag, family and Commanding Officer. We are told by the media and various 'feel good gurus' that these loyalties must come second to the quest for personal growth and fulfilment.³ With the 'cult of the individual' prevailing, materialism seems to have beaten idealism in the last part of the 20th Century, and the 'Ends orientation' of yester-year has been replaced by the 'Process orientation' of today. Ends orientation involved the postponement of immediate rewards for long term beneficial outcomes - promotion, super-annuation, consummation on the wedding night and heaven. But, today's process orientation involves a strong element of 'Live now; pay later', when work and leisure should provide immediate 'kicks' and gratification - If it feels good do it!....The ethos of the so called 'Gimme' generation. Consequently, ideals of civic responsibility and institutional loyalty have been diluted and respect for authority of position has been eroded. These changes have been quantitatively reflected in such things as substantially reduced concern among youth for the underprivileged as well as a marked decline of youth involvement charity work.⁴



THE LIGHTER SIDE OF LIBERALISATION: lack of experience of the full implications of gender and sexual liberalisation in the Navy means that in a decade or so we will have to ask ourselves — Have these liberalisations enhanced social integration and cohesion in the Navy generally or have they improved cohesion in one group at the expense of alienating others? (Pic by LSPH Scott Connolly)

Generally speaking, today's recruits will be products of a 'liberal upbringing' and have been brought up in what some would call a permissive society that has developed a high tolerance to what once would have been condemned as disrespectful, ill mannered, unhealthy or even deviant behaviour. This high tolerance exists partly because once absolute moral principles, institutions and beliefs - marriage, fidelity, chastity, abhorrence of homosexuality, strict honesty, respect for elders and even honour - have been modified by so called 'situational ethics', where an action is now more or less judged only by its effect on one's self and others. Consequently, some traditional service values and patterns of behaviour could be increasingly questioned by members of the so called 'Gimme Generation'.

Traditionalist Views of Change

Most in the Navy are not narrow minded or simplistic in their outlook, in fact most would describe themselves as even handed and 'liberal'. But they do not share reformist liberal perceptions of just what constitutes *real* progress and genuine reform in society.⁵ Many are angry at what they see as a 'triumph of style over substance' in navy management, and believe that liberalisation of society's values and the navy's eventual absorption of these changed values will continue to adversely affect discipline, cohesion and ultimately operational performance. Traditionalists are critical of what they see as the navy's slavish reflection of society's diversity and values and ask: Do we really want our navy to be a microcosm of tomorrow's society? Who really wants the navy to reflect the growing self indulgence, doubt and confusion in Australian society? Who really wants civilian attitudes towards work, decision making and personal standards of dress and behaviour to become part and parcel of being in the service? Furthermore, they could present the case that public confidence in the navy will continue to erode and if the service becomes a 'microcosm of society' - a troubled society with burgeoning family breakdown and youth homelessness, shocking suicide rates, very high levels of drug abuse and violent crime.

The silent majority of naval personnel- the forgotten people - believe there is nothing to be ashamed of in not wanting to expose women to the bloody shock of combat; they see nothing to be ashamed of in being disgusted by the act of sodomy; they see nothing to be ashamed of in opposing the use of mind numbing, mood altering marijuana or in accepting their careers as vocations rather than short term contracts. Those that subscribe to traditional values related to gender, sexuality, drug use, discipline and attitude to work could also argue that continuing to accommodate social fashions will ultimately lead to loss of naval identity through trying to be something 'we' are not. In summary, many in the navy resent the service caving

in to the 'change bandwagon' and liberalisation. They believe that the navy's future lies in moving away from sycophantic accommodation of social fashion and reasserting core navy values.

Setting Baselines - The Enduring Naval Values

In sociological jargon the Navy is a special social 'niche'. It has a unique physical and social 'geography' in which traditional roles, relationships and rationales provide an interpretive context within and through which navy people understand their experiences. As people enter the service they find they are expected to act in certain ways and perform certain activities in a naval culture that has developed from a range of sources over centuries.

Primarily, naval culture has been moulded and reinforced through the activities of - for the most part - exemplary, often heroic individuals who rose to lead their services successfully in war. These individuals have been seen to epitomise and define what is expected and 'good' in a navy because their experience and judgement in peace and war has been seen to contribute to the navy's survival. Over a long period of time their values are transmitted through a multitude of written, spoken and informal means, and these 'transmissions' give meaning to naval existence through shared understandings of the 'right' ways of behaving, developing and changing over time.

One such 'transmission' is the Chief of Naval Staff's 1994 'Future Directions Statement'.⁶ In the Statement, the navy's *Vision* is: *to enjoy a worldwide reputation for excellence with a well equipped and professionally manned force sustained by a highly supportive nation which is proud of its navy.* The Statement then defines nine key objectives that contribute to realising this vision and achieving the mission of protecting Australians and their interests at sea. These objectives are to:

- Achieve outstanding operational efficiency (Obj.1)
- Offer challenging and rewarding careers (Obj.3)
- Develop a powerful navy capable of serving national interests at sea (Obj.6), and
- Earn and retain public support (Obj.7)

Objectives that contribute to these objectives are:

- Recruit, train, educate and motivate the right people (Obj.2)
- Be seen as a caring employer (Obj.4), and
- Achieve world class management and leadership skills (Obj.5)⁷

The key *enabling* objective for the RAN Vision is in fact Objective 2: Recruit, train, educate and motivate the right people, for without the right people none of

the other objectives can be achieved - but who, exactly, are the *right* people; just what is the 'right stuff' for the modern navy? The Future Directions Statement goes on to spell out what it expects of its people in terms of personal qualities that are valued - Valued service people are those who can exhibit physical and moral courage, professionalism, loyalty and dedication; in short, people that can achieve outstanding operational efficiency and develop a powerful navy capable of serving national interests at sea. Moreover, the statement clarifies just what the navy means by courage, professionalism, loyalty and dedication.

Courage needs to be demonstrated in the face of adversity, and includes physical courage to face danger and discomfort as well as moral and ethical courage to exhibit honesty and truthfulness. Professionalism is developing first class competence and applying skills at the highest levels to fight and win at sea, and also make sure those at sea have full support from shore. Loyalty is all about trust and mutual respect throughout the naval community; it is the tie that binds the navy 'team' together through acceptance of higher authority *and* showing respect for subordinates. Dedication enables wholehearted, unreserved commitment and adaptation to develop professionalism and achieve navy's mission.⁸

These core values of courage, professionalism, loyalty and dedication are the behavioural benchmarks or measures of effectiveness by which appropriate accommodation with social change can be determined. They are benchmarks which are solidly based on the need for uncompromising professionalism at sea and we can now look at four specific areas where these values can be upheld at the same time as accommodating social change.

Values related to Discipline

Today, striking the right balance between individual choice and the best interests of the service has become one of the biggest challenges for navy's leaders. The 'good old days' of Kangaroo Courts under the Naval discipline Act and practically absolute control over personnel are over; reasons for action, consistency of process and a high degree of consultation and consensus will be increasingly expected by personnel at all levels.⁹

Levels of freedom and choice for naval personnel, especially ashore, cannot be too far removed from society or few will join. Increased personnel choice covers a wide spectrum: from standards of single accommodation, keeping alcohol in rooms and entertaining guests of the other sex 'in the lines', right through to introducing flexitime, permanent part time work and *work from home* routines. Of course, as we liberalise away from traditional naval routines and behavioural expectations and trust individuals more,

abuses are possible. However, obligations of trust are two way things: The trade off for less control from the 'system' is more self discipline from the individual, that is, the price of more freedom, choice and trust for the service person is a strong obligation to live up to the confidence the system has shown in the individual.

The navy's insistence on more self discipline at all levels must be guided by prescribed and accepted principles based on clear and good reasons. These reasons must be linked directly to behavioural impact on others and eventually to achieving the navy's mission and objectives. Chief among these reasons is the need for individuals to take on high levels of personal responsibility for performance in the navy workplace. The naval workplace is no place for 'situation ethics', only honesty, truthfulness, professionalism and commitment to the 'team'. These expectations must be transmitted during initial training and reinforced by fair and comprehensive reporting systems and a robust divisional system throughout careers. In terms of upholding and reinforcing the four navy core values in a practical sense, a certain amount of *deprogramming* and *resocialisation* may have to be done in convincing new recruits that the Navy's values, goals and ways of doing things are *vital* important. Recruiting, initial training and advanced training programs need to systematically transmit values and goals to the next navy 'generation', even if these programs need to be extended by weeks.¹⁰ Similarly, our reporting systems and divisional organisation must reinforce core values and goals throughout careers using more formally allocated time for divisional responsibilities and employing much higher quality and systematic performance feedback. But, most importantly, navy leaders should set the example of courage, professionalism, loyalty and dedication and be promoted *and* posted as role models on this basis.¹¹

Maintaining naval discipline in the liberal 'age of the individual' involves a four step process that upholds and reinforces the navy's core values throughout careers. First, make reasonable rules; clearly explain them and why we have them. Second, stick to the rules yourself and make sure they apply to *everyone*. Third, and most importantly, make sure leaders set the standards of courage, professionalism, loyalty and dedication. Fourth, err on the side of harshness towards personnel who are *consistently* unprofessional in their conduct.

Values related to Drug Use

The liberal principle of giving humans the widest ability to choose may eventually lead to decriminalisation of marijuana and even heroin on a national basis. Unless Navy arguments on the basis of reduced operational performance are backed by solid scientific evidence, discrimination against users would be illegal.

Navy's benchmark values are based on the need for uncompromising excellence afloat: Professionalism, Courage, Loyalty and Dedication. But these values have to be practised *everywhere* as well as preached!



PROFESSIONALISM AT SEA: HMAS TOBAGO

The Four-Step 'Value Maintenance' Process—

- 1. Make reasonable rules and explain them.**
- 2. Stick to the rules yourself, whether you are a seaman or an admiral.**
- 3. Ensure all leaders set the standards of professionalism, courage, loyalty and dedication.**
- 4. Do what is necessary. Err on the side of harshness against hypocrisy, unprofessionalism and lies.**



...in an Indian Ocean swell during exercises

(Photo by LSPH Peter Lewis, RAN)

Therefore, carefully establishing causal links between drug use and inadequate performance is the key to managing any liberalisation of drug laws as they impact on the navy.

Traditional blanket arguments made by the military against the use of drugs will not stand up to scrutiny in the long run. For example, during the Vietnam War several generals attributed apparent lack of professionalism and commitment to soldiers coming from a 'drug ridden and permissive society'.¹² This assumption was proved wrong by comprehensive research which found that there was no significant evidence to suggest that contemporary sociological pressures (Cohort Effects) were primary causes of the poor performance of the army. On the contrary, three major reports found that disciplinary and performance problems were for the most part *internally generated*.¹³

Navy has a long experience of dealing with drug abuse in terms of alcohol abuse, and the same system can apply to marijuana and heroin. The differences in these abuse situations are in terms of *degree* and not in *nature*, because substance abuse situations rarely lead to a sudden, catastrophic collapse of the individual in the workplace. There is invariably a deterioration in the individual's performance and personality over time. A vigilant divisional system, accurate reporting and frank counselling should identify those that cannot meet the navy's objective performance requirements of professionalism and dedication as a result of the abuse of drugs such as marijuana and heroin. Once again, the navy *already* has the rules and procedures to manage the effects of even the most extreme liberalisation of society's drug laws. It is a matter of doing what we are supposed to do, but better!

Values related to Gender

Growth in female work participation arose from increased control of fertility, rapid economic growth and increased education. The female participation rate in the navy now exceeds 14% (1 in 7) and this will continue to increase, furthermore, the trend to send women to sea is irreversible and reflects society's values of providing equal opportunity for women and eliminating discrimination.

Traditional values and attitudes concerning women at sea were epitomised by the superstition that it was 'unlucky' to have them on board at all. More charitable rationalisations included sparing them the rigours of sea life for which they were physically unequipped and the bloodiness of combat for which they were mentally unsuited. All this may have been true in a ship of the line even forty years ago, but times have changed and the physical nature of naval warfare, seamanship evolutions and work at sea has changed. Requirements for strength and prowess with a cutlass, truncheon or dirk in eyeball to eyeball confrontations, or loading eight

inch shells by hand have changed, and physical employment at sea is now quite different. For example, a warship's executive officer suggested in an article that many common objections to women at sea, such as lack of sufficient physical strength are ill founded, in fact he mentioned several advantages of having women at sea, suggesting that '... a mixed gender environment encourages a more mature level of behaviour, particularly among the more junior members of the ships company. *Sydney's* experience at sea is that there are fewer incidents of extreme (and usually alcohol related) behaviour ashore'.¹⁴

The officer, whose ship saw a Gulf deployment and use of women crew members in boarding parties, went on to emphasise that good management was essential to the success of having women at sea. This involved maintaining established behaviour protocols, having the right facilities, having sufficient numbers on board to avoid attracting special attention to them, and this included distributing women to all departments.¹⁵ Consequently, with almost 300 women at sea, and many more hundreds having completed sea postings, there is mounting evidence suggesting that women in naval combatants that have been given appropriate training, objective assessment and equal treatment can be just as professional, loyal and dedicated as men at sea.¹⁶

Of course, fraternisation and harassment issues need to be continually worked on and good management comes into play here also. Introduction of the 'No touch' rule and Good Working Relationships Project are examples of the sound management of liberalisation.¹⁷ Again, the same criteria for upholding and reinforcing the navy's declared and defined core values apply: Make reasonable rules and explain them properly; stick to the rules and make sure they apply to *everyone*; insist on all leaders setting the example of courage, professionalism, loyalty and dedication and err on the side of harshness against personnel - male or female - who are *consistently* unprofessional in their conduct.

Values related to sexuality

The navy, with some reluctance, accepted the government's decision to allow avowed homosexuals into the service and this remains a highly emotive issue which is probably a case in point of the tension between liberalised and traditional values.

Integrating homosexuals who meet navy's objective selection criteria as productive team members should not prove a problem if rules and established behaviour protocols are applied. For example, Navy's sexual harassment rules - if applied consistently by fair and impartial leaders - protect the heterosexual and homosexual alike from persecution and can ensure the maintenance of good order and discipline. Naval leaders should make it perfectly clear by word and deed that homosexuals will be judged strictly in accordance with navy's per-

formance criteria and their abilities to 'do the job', as will the other members of the team. In this way a leader's personal beliefs and intellectual position on homosexuality can be maintained without compromise, and navy's missions can be achieved, even if the leader considers homosexuality offensive.

But how does a heterosexual service person work with a homosexual when he or she personally believes that homosexuality is indecent and not simply an alternative sexual preference? The person working with a homosexual should be encouraged to maintain the self discipline to avoid *hyper vigilance* which can lead to reinforced prejudice, alienation of the homosexual and reduced group cohesion and productivity. Sexuality should not be made an issue in the workplace, and adherence to navy's non harassment /discrimination regulations must be maintained with impartiality and rigour. Of course, this includes situations where the homosexual is at fault, and justice must be seen to be done by all members of the team. Again, reasonable rules are there for everyone, but what is far too often lacking is the moral courage to use them.

Conclusions

Norms, rules and laws are central elements of any successful social organisation, but a fundamental lesson of history is that civilisations, societies and institutions rise and fall depending on their ability to change, that is, according to their response to new physical, technological and social conditions. The silent majority in the navy, as with society in general, are sometimes portrayed by 'liberals' or social reformists as really arguing against any form of organisational modernisation. Indeed, some features of our naval identity seem so *natural*, taking on lives of their own and they often offer a healthy resistance to adverse change. But resistance to change cannot be total and automatic. Benefits of organisational modernisation and liberalisation cannot be ignored, and times arise when the current relevance of certain traditional procedures, values and attitudes must be questioned. Nevertheless, the silent majority in the navy are correct in assuming that values, rules and expectations we often take for granted in our Navy are not merely accidents of history. Naval patterns of behaviour have emerged over time as solutions to the problems of na-

val life and as patterns that yield the best people and procedures to survive and prevail in that stern court of the last resort - War. Our curious amalgam of custom, tradition and ethos transmitted from naval generation to naval generation gives us a unique identity, and the CNS Future Directions Statement defines benchmark values - Courage, Professionalism, Loyalty and Dedication - from which to help judge the appropriate nature and extent of our social adaptation and accommodation. These values and expectations must be 'transmitted' throughout the training process and reinforced by fair and comprehensive reporting systems and a robust divisional system throughout careers.

Simple, tried and true methods exist for upholding and reinforcing the navy's core values: Make reasonable rules and explain them properly; stick to the rules and make sure they apply to *everyone*; insist on leaders setting the example of courage, professionalism, loyalty and dedication and err on the side of harshness against personnel — male or female; seaman or admiral — who are *consistently* unprofessional in their conduct. However, it is important to bear in mind that, because of lack of experience and objective evidence of the full implications of sexual and gender liberalisations in the navy, an additional standard will have to be applied to changes associated with them: In a decade or so we will have to ask ourselves — **Have these liberalisations enhanced social integration and cohesion in the navy generally, or have they improved cohesion of one group at the cost of alienating others?** Only time will tell.

The Navy has shown that it can react in a positive manner to liberalisation of social values; there is no need to build philosophical ramparts against social change. However, the key to our future is not through slick social adaptation, but through intelligently and systematically upholding today's declared values - the things we know are important. The price of not doing so is loss of our identity. These core values are assessable benchmarks which are solidly based on the need for uncompromising professionalism at sea. Furthermore, they are compatible with the highest performance which our society has and will *always* expect of its outstanding institutions. Society will not condemn us for having and upholding these values; it will applaud us!

(Footnotes page 34)

About the author

Lieutenant Commander Alan Hinge holds a Masters Degree (MA) in Strategic Studies and a BSc (Physics), both from the ANU. In 1984 he became the first junior officer in the ADF to be awarded a Defence Fellowship, and since then has had forty articles published in professional military journals in Australia and overseas. These articles have covered a wide range of topics, from leadership and adventurous training to naval operations and project management. He has also written a book on mine warfare; edited two others on project management and is a contributing author to the Australian Dictionary of Biography. He has won ten major prizes in international essay competitions and has edited this journal during 1987-88 and 1994-1996. He is currently Co Director of the Australian Defence Studies Centre's Defence Industry and Logistics Program, and in June 1996 he takes up the inaugural CDF Scholarship. His topic is: Achieving More Cost Effective Defence Preparedness in the Post Cold War Era.



A wintery swell did not prevent the Royal Australian Navy underway replenishment ship HMAS WESTRALIA and the guided-missile frigate HMAS ADELAIDE from carrying out a light jackstay transfer in the Indian Ocean earlier this year.

(Photo by LSPH Peter Lewis, RAN)



NOTES

¹ See 'Politically Incorrect View Ends a Career', Associated Press Story cited in the *Canberra Times* of 21 May 1995, p.7

² Note that the term 'Liberalism' as used in this essay relates to the broad philosophy only, and *not* a particular political party or its interpretation of the philosophy.

³ Excellent descriptions of the changes in modern society, particularly as they impact on youth, are given in Santrock, J.W., 'Life Span Development' (Wm.C.Brown Publishers, Dubuque, 1992) and Heaven, P.C.L., 'Contemporary Adolescence: Social - Psychological Approaches' (MacMillan Educational Publishers, Melbourne, 1994)

⁴ Figures are given in Santrock, op cit, p.437

⁵ 'Progress' is defined as movement forward toward a desirable place or objective, or an advancement towards maturity. 'Reform' is improving an existing institution, practise or belief or correcting an abuse. It also involves giving up reprehensible habits or immoral lifestyles. Consequently, what is progress for one, for example the acceptance of homosexuality as a legitimate sexual orientation, is seen as a retrograde step to the streets of Sodom and Gomorrah by another. Perceptions of progress or just what constitutes liberalisation depend on one's values and morality.

⁶ CNS' Future Directions Statement- A Navy publication dated December 1994

⁷ Ibid, p.1

⁸ Ibid, p.2

⁹ Some have a negative attitude to the Defence Force Discipline Act (DFDA) and still look fondly back to the Naval Discipline Act. It is true that the DFDA is an administrative nightmare in some cases, but it was a necessary move in the

right direction to put *consistent* justice in the term military justice. Justice is fairness which is guided by prescribed and accepted principles. Often, under the NDA, justice was quick and effective but it was also sometimes inconsistent and 'personality driven'. Therefore, the DFDA could be seen as a 'positive liberalisation'.

¹⁰ See Jagtenberg, T and D'Alton, P 'Four Dimensional Social Space' (Harper Educational Publishers, Sydney, 1992) for an extensive discussion of the resocialisation processes in 'Total Institutions' (in which category the Navy sits). The disproportionate advantages of even marginal extensions of initial training in total institutions are considerable. Teamwork, experiential learning activities and correct role modelling are crucial with today's youth.

¹¹ Jagtenberg and D'Alton emphasise the importance of outstanding role models for the young during the resocialisation process. In this author's view, the Navy has not been good at carefully selecting the best role models for training establishments.

¹² Gabriel, R. and Savage, P, 'Crisis in Command: Mismanagement in the Army' (Hill and Wang, NY, 1978) p.54

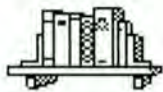
¹³ See Ibid p.54. The first report was commissioned by the Military Assistance Command Vietnam, in 1968. The other reports were undertaken by the US Army War College. See 'Study in Military Professionalism' (US Department of Defence, US Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, 1970)

¹⁴ Jones, P, 'Women in Surface Combatants' *Journal of the Australian Naval Institute*, Vol 19, No 4, November 1993, p.23

¹⁵ Ibid

¹⁶ On 23 October 1995 a total of 295 women were occupying billets at sea (Source: DNMP)

¹⁷ Jones op cit, p.27



Book Review

Dacre Smyth, *Pictures In My Life: An autobiography in oils*, published by the author, 1994, pp 130, 83 reproductions of paintings and pictures, index, hardcover.

Pictures In My Life is an exceptionally well-presented, high-quality book which has recently been written and published by artist and retired naval officer, Dacre Smyth. It is Dacre Smyth's tenth book of paintings and it not only shows many decades of his art but also encapsulates his life using a novel combination of paintings, poetry and prose. Dacre Smyth has had an exceptional and, some might say, privileged life. It was a life that I enjoyed reading about. His experiences serving his country in both war and peacetime not only provide the reader with a personal insight into the many important events in which he participated, but they also tell the reader much about the life of a naval officer. His many anecdotes bring colour to an interesting story and provide the reader with glimpses into the author's personal life. By telling his story, Dacre Smyth also gives those interested in his art a greater understanding of his work.

The sheer scope and variety of artwork throughout the book is impressive. Dacre Smyth's oils range from dramatic battle scenes through to picturesque, family portraits. He also includes the works of other artists, associated with his family, throughout the book. The colour separators and printers have done an outstanding job with the artwork in the book and the finish throughout is of a very high quality. Dacre Smyth uses his paintings to great effect to illustrate the events and many of the personalities that he writes about. The book begins with a genealogy of Dacre.

Smyth's family. Dacre Smyth's father, Major-General Nevill Smyth, was a distinguished British cavalry officer who was awarded the Victoria Cross in the Sudan, commanded the First Australian Brigade at Gallipoli and then the Second Australian Division in France and Belgium. He was knighted after the First World War and married Evelyn Williams, the daughter of a Welsh baronet, Sir Osmond Williams. The Smyths emigrated to Australia in 1925 where Sir Nevill took up the merino sheep station, Kongbool, near Balmoral in Victoria's Western District. After two years on the property, Dacre and his elder brother Osmond were sent to board at Geelong Grammar.

The book is an autobiography and it therefore follows the life of its author. Consequently, in describ-

ing the contents of the book, it is necessary for me to outline some of the more important events in Dacre Smyth's life—almost 40 years of which was spent in the Navy. In September 1940, Dacre Smyth joined the Navy as a Special Entry Cadet Midshipman and began what was to become a most remarkable and successful naval career. On 15 May 1941 Dacre Smyth joined his first ship — HMAS *Australia* — under the command of Captain R R Stewart RN. Whilst in Australia he participated in the Battle of the Coral Sea before travelling to England to undertake courses in Navigation, Gunnery, Torpedoes and Signals. Following First-Class passes in these courses, and unable to get an immediate passage back to Australia he served for a short time against the Germans in Motor Torpedo Boats before he found himself re-appointed to Australia as an officer of the watch.

Dacre Smyth left Australia in November 1943 to take up an appointment as Gunnery Officer in *Danae*, a British cruiser of World War One vintage, which operated in the Indian Ocean and later supported the Normandy landings—of which Dacre Smyth provides an excellent first-hand account. Late in 1944 Dacre Smyth joined the destroyer *Norman* which operated with the British East Indies Fleet and later the British Pacific Fleet. *Norman* was off the Japanese coast when peace came on 15 August 1945. Dacre Smyth remained in the Navy after the war and was First Lieutenant in *Queenborough* before moving across to commission *Murchison*. *Murchison* later became part of the occupation force in Japan. Early in 1947 he was given his first sea going command, the corvette *Latrobe*, which operated out of Flinders Naval Depot taking recruits and Cadet-Midshipmen on training cruises.

Following his time in *Latrobe*, Dacre Smyth was selected as the Aide-de-Camp to the Governor General, Sir William McKell. After a year in the position, Dacre Smyth felt he had better return to sea to be brought back down to earth as he had begun telling Admirals and Ministers of State what to do. In March 1949 he joined *Bataan* as First Lieutenant and again served with the occupation force in Japan before *Bataan* sailed to patrol the Korean coast after the North Korean invasion of the South. He writes poignantly of the terrible conditions the ships operating off Korea experienced and he is able to give a first-hand description of the dangerous evacuation of Chinnampo on 5 December 1950.

In 1951 Dacre Smyth was appointed to the Naval College to supervise the new scheme of Intermediate Entry Midshipmen. The following year, having been promoted to Lieutenant-Commander, he married Jenny Haggard, the grand-daughter of Sir David Syme who had been proprietor of *The Age*. He writes that Jenny coped nobly with naval life—a naval life that they shared together for 26 years from 1952 and which included five children and 23 house-moves. Until

purchasing their current residence in Toorak in 1976, the Smyths had never lived in any one house for more than two years!

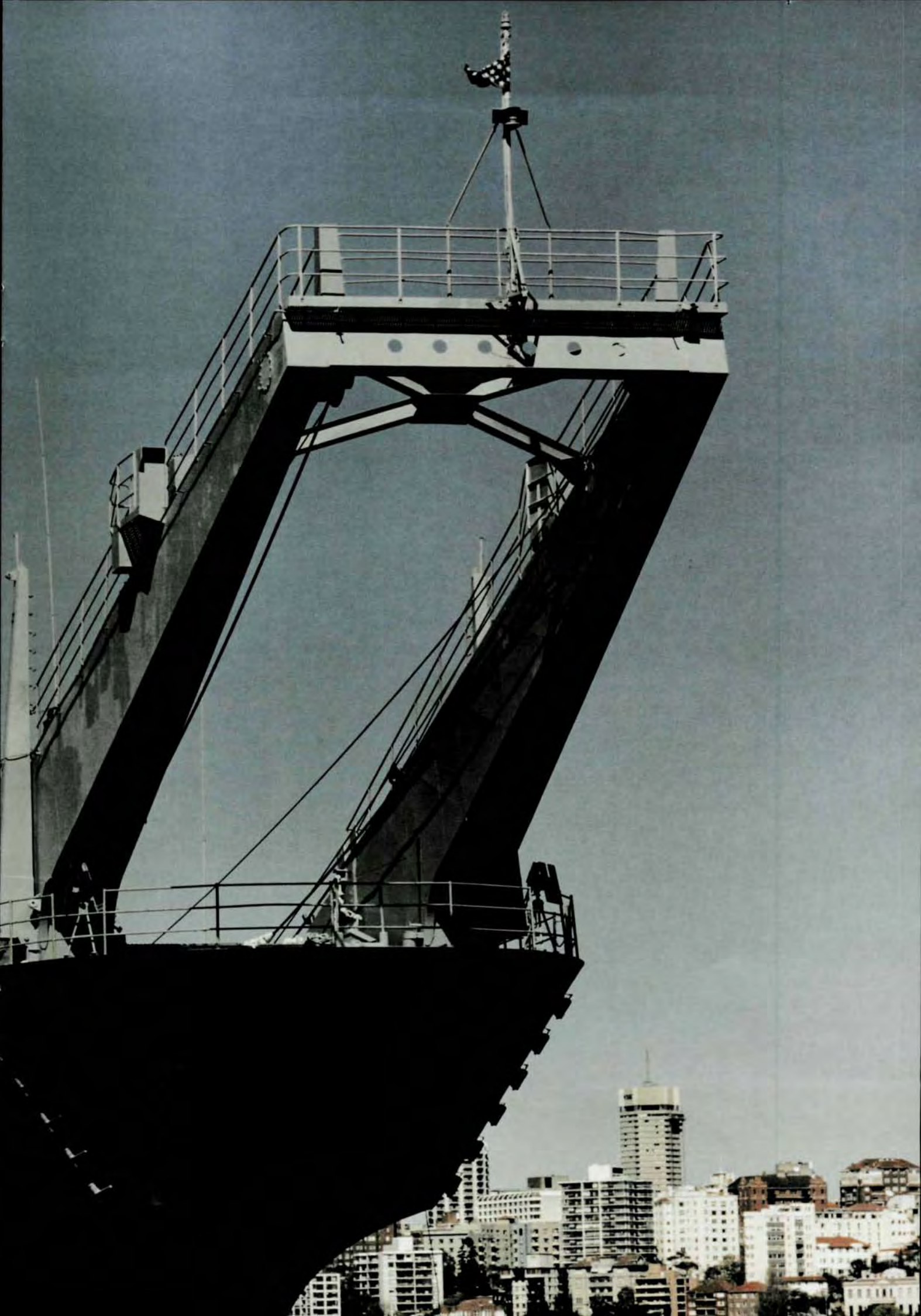
Highlights of Dacre Smyth's subsequent naval career included command of *Hawkesbury*, followed by many shore jobs on the Dry List (an idea he found 'ill-conceived' and for which he blames Henry Burrell) until 1967 when he took command of *Supply*. He left *Supply* in 1970 with the ship winning the Gloucester Cup as the Navy's most efficient ship. One of Dacre Smyth's most interesting jobs whilst on the Dry List was command of the Naval College at the end of 1963. Dacre Smyth notes that he was the first 'non-13-year-old-entry' to command the College and mindful of the 'silly things' that had occurred when he was there, he issued an instruction that no initiations were to be inflicted upon the new cadets. A mix-up occurred and, on the night of the *Voyager* disaster, an initiation ceremony did indeed take place. After a dramatic night having to deal with survivors of the disaster and the media, Dacre Smyth learned of the initiations and he gave the senior cadets an emotional dressing down which he hoped would put a stop to such practices for all time.

He completed his career in the Navy in 1978 following a second posting as Commodore Superintendent of Training and Naval Officer in Charge, Victoria. He was not promoted to Admiral believing that he had been given the 'kiss of death' with his 1956 placement on the Dry List. He felt that his appointment as an Officer in the newly introduced Order of Australia in 1977 was a bit of a consolation prize for not getting promoted. He continued painting in his retirement and he subsequently published a number of fine books of his work. He even tried (unsuccessfully) to gain pre-selection for a Liberal seat but quickly grew tired of party politics and resigned from the party. In *Pictures in My Life*, he gives a comprehensive account of the many charities, organisations and activities that he has been involved with since his retirement.

If I have one criticism of *Pictures in My Life*, it is of Dacre Smyth's attempt to write a four-line verse of poetry to accompany each of the paintings he reproduces in the book. While some of the verses are interesting and add to the work, many appear to be placed in the book simply to keep with the structure of the work. The verses are poorly constructed with the poet aiming simply to rhyme the first and third and second and fourth lines. Sometimes the verses appear rather childish compared with the well-written text and beautiful, evocative paintings. I feel that most of the verses would have been better left out. For all that, it is a minor criticism compared to the overall quality and value of the work. *Pictures in My Life* is more than the story of a distinguished Australian naval officer. In the book, (*Continued P 59*)

HMAS MANOORA





Bluejackets Versus Indians

USS *Decatur* at Seattle - 1856

by

Graham Wilson

The Indians had been gathering around the small settlement of Seattle all morning, trading shots with the defenders and massing for a final assault. Finally, at midday, the attack came as over 200 warriors surged out of the tree line to the north of the town and raced towards their objective. Between the Indians and their goal stood a handful of American servicemen, fourteen blue clad men under a young lieutenant, deployed in a pitifully vulnerable line.

At first glance, the opening of this obscure little action in January 1856, one of any of a hundred forgotten fights during that period of American military history known as the Indian Wars, was so typical as to be unremarkable. What did make *this* action remarkable, however, was the fact that the blue clad Americans who grimly stood their ground that day were not soldiers, the famed "blue coats" of Hollywood myth, but rather "blue jackets", sailors of the US Navy.

What, the reader is probably wondering, were sailors of the US Navy doing fighting Indians ashore in an out of the way and isolated corner of the United States? For the answer to that question, read on.

The Yakima War

The United States went through a period of immense expansion during the first half of the 19th century. Spain ceded the northern part of Upper California (modern day Washington and Oregon) to the US in 1819 and the area was organised as the Oregon Territory. Louisiana and Florida had been acquired earlier, from France and Spain respectively, and the rest of Upper California (today California and part of Nevada), Texas and New Mexico (modern day Arizona, part of Nevada, New Mexico and part of Utah) followed.

Unfortunately, along with vast new territories, the US also acquired some 200,000 Native Americans or Indians (for convenience I will use the latter term) who generally were not too happy at having their ancestral lands taken over by white interlopers.

That area of the Oregon Territory which is today the state of Washington was separated and organised as the Washington Territory in 1848. Settlement of the territory was slow but steady, a fairly constant stream

of settlers from the Mid West making their way up the arduous Oregon Trail, drawn by prospects of settling in rich virgin farm and timber lands.

Of course, the original inhabitants, the Indians, were already there. Originally welcoming the newcomers, very soon many Indians began to chafe against the influx of settlers. In 1854, the US government negotiated a treaty with the thirteen north western tribes who collectively made up the Yakima Nation. Under the terms of the treaty, the tribes were to confederate and move onto a reservation on the Olympic Peninsula. Before ratification of the treaty, however, a number of tribal leaders led their people in revolt against the treaty which they saw, probably not incorrectly, as being designed to destroy their traditional way of life. The resulting hostilities, which lasted from 1855 - 58, became known as the Yakima War.

One of the white settlements threatened by the Indians was the small saw milling and fishing town of Seattle which had been settled by immigrants from Illinois in 1851. While many of the Indians in the region, especially those under Chief Seathl of the Puget Sound tribes and after whom the town was named, remained peaceful, a substantial number of disgruntled warriors gathered around another chief named Leachi. The hostile Indians began raiding outlying farms and settlements and eventually threatened the town itself. Fearing not unjustly for their very survival, the people of Seattle sent a desperate plea for help to the governor of California.

The US Navy to the Rescue

One immediate problem facing the American authorities in the prosecution of the war against the Yakima was the scarcity of available troops. The tiny (16,000 - 17,000) man pre-Civil War US Army was far too small for the size of the country. This is especially so when one considers that over 50% of the army's strength was tied down on static garrison duties in the settled eastern states, leaving only about 8,000 men for the rest of the country.

California and Oregon Territory were not without troops of course, the California garrison consisting of a regiment of infantry (3rd US Infantry), most of a regiment of artillery (2nd US Artillery) and both of the army's dragoon regiments (1st and 2nd Regiments of US Dragoons - two-thirds of the army's cavalry).

Unfortunately, these troops were spread across California, Texas, New Mexico, Colorado and Kansas in small and isolated garrisons. The same was true of the garrison in Oregon which consisted of the army's only other mounted unit, the Regiment of Mounted Riflemen, which was spread along the Oregon Trail in company and smaller sized posts.

While a penny pinching Congress was to eventually authorise an increase in the size of the US Army and send reinforcements, including militia volunteers, west to fight the Yakima, the people of Seattle needed help now and there just weren't any soldiers to send. In desperation, the governor of California turned to the US Navy and asked the Commodore Commanding the Pacific Squadron for assistance. In response to the request USS *Decatur* was despatched north to the rescue.

USS *Decatur* was a sloop of 566 tons and just over 118 feet long. She carried a crew of 145, including an 18 man marine detachment, and was armed with a battery of 14 32-pound carronades. In addition, she carried a Dahlgren 12-pound boat howitzer, suitable for landing party work, and enough rifles, muskets and cutlasses to arm the whole crew. At the time that she was sent north to Seattle, *Decatur*, which was named after the early American naval hero Stephen Decatur (1779-1820), was under the command of Commander Guert Ganservoort, USN.

Decatur arrived in Puget Sound and dropped anchor off Seattle on 21 January, 1856. Informed that the town was threatened by hostile Indians who were building up for a major attack, Commander Ganservoort immediately established a routine of bringing the civilian women and children aboard before sunset each day for protection. At the same time, he deployed the bulk of his crew ashore to defend the small, vulnerable perimeter of Seattle during the hours of darkness.

On the morning of 26 January the crew men who had been ashore the previous night were just being re-embarked for breakfast when a civilian hurried aboard with the news that the Indians had surrounded the town and were preparing to attack. Ganservoort immediately sent his men ashore, leaving only enough hands to man the guns. Civilians were hastily evacuated back aboard *Decatur* and the Hudson Bay Trading Company bark *Brontes* which was anchored near *Decatur*.

In total, 96 sailors and marines were sent ashore under the command of five junior officers. One party under the command of Lieutenant Dallas was deployed to the vital south western part of town where a sand bar running across the swamp at the edge of town provided an ideal avenue of approach for an attacker. Dallas deployed his men in a hen-house and a hayloft facing the swamp and covering the sand bar. A little

further to the north, a party under the command of Lieutenant Drake took up position among some felled trees and stumps to cover the eastern approaches. To the north-west, sailors under the command of Lieutenant Hughes took up positions in and around a small inn. The ship's marine detachment, under the command of Orderly Sergeant Carbin, manned a blockhouse on the northern edge of town. A ten man crew under the command of Lieutenant Morris man-handled the boat howitzer south down to the edge of the swamp.

It is obvious from the deployments that Commander Ganservoort, probably acting on the advice of locals, expected the main attack to come from the south, over the sand bar. The defence of the northern approaches was left to Orderly Sergeant Carbin and his marines in the blockhouse and to a party of 14 blue jackets under the command of Lieutenant Phelps. As Phelps's party was moving into position near the road leading into town from the north, they caught sight of a large party of Indians massing for an attack. Although vastly outnumbered, Phelps ordered a charge and with himself at their head with sword drawn, his sailors crashed into the surprised Indians with bayonet and cutlass. The Indians were thrown into confusion by the audacious attack and Phelps made use of this to withdraw to his original position.

As Phelps hastily reorganised his meagre force, the battle began to the south. Due to the size and location of the well armed defending forces, the Indians, who were estimated to number between 700 to 800, were unable to cross the sandbar, despite several gallant and determined attempts. Besides the rifles of the sailors and the boat howitzer, the Indians had to contend with long range shelling from *Decatur* which swept them from the sandbar and drove them back to the trees.

Unable to force the southern approach, the Indians gradually shifted their forces to the north and Lieutenant Phelps' sailors and the marines in the blockhouse came under increasingly heavy fire. Suddenly, at about midday, the firing ceased and the voice of the Indian leader could be heard shouting commands.

Hearing Leachi issuing orders to his warriors, Phelps realised that the Indians were preparing for an all out assault on the northern flank and he quickly arranged his men as best he could to repel the attack along the lake road. Unfortunately, due to circumstances, his best was very little and consisted of deploying his men in a fragile and frighteningly vulnerable line. In his own words, Phelps later stated that he only had time "to impress their minds with the certainty of our scalps ornamenting an Indian wigwam in the event of any weakness on our part.....when the ship's bell announced the hour of noon, and down came the Indians".

As the Indians rushed down towards them, the fate of Seattle rested on Lieutenant Phelps and his 14 men. No other forces were in position to assist him and if his line were broken, the Indians could surge through into the town to take the defenders in the rear and destroy the settlement. The Indians charged to within about 20 yards of the sailors and fired a ragged and ill-aimed volley which, amazingly, caused no casualties. Phelps and his men stood firm and replied with a well aimed and well disciplined volley of their own. Although only delivered from 14 rifles, the volley stopped the Indian charge and forced them to seek cover. Grasping his opportunity, Phelps, who seems to have been an impetuous young man, ordered a second volley and followed it with a charge. This was too much for the by now thoroughly shaken Indians. Individually very brave, the Indians lacked the group discipline to face a charge and, although they outnumbered their assailants by a factor large enough to annihilate them if they so chose, they instead broke and fled.

Seattle was saved. With pressure relieved in the south, the boat howitzer was now moved north to support Phelps, but the noon fight was the climax of the battle. Many Indians remained in the trees around the town and kept up a steady fire but return fire from the sailors and marines, as well as from *Decatur*, convinced the Indians not to venture into the open. With the Indians driven off and his guns commanding the town, Commander Gansevoort began withdrawing his men back to the ship. Although exhausted and hungry, not having slept or eaten for over 24 hours, the sailors fell back in good order. By 1600, only the marines remained in place in the blockhouse. A couple of half-hearted attempts were made by the Indians to mass again to move into the town, but each time this happened, carronade fire from *Decatur* broke

up the concentrations. *Decatur* fired her final shot at 2200 and the Battle of Seattle was over.

Aftermath

The number of Indian casualties from the Battle of Seattle was never precisely known, but later estimates place them at about 30 dead and 80 wounded. On the other side, two civilian volunteers were killed and several wounded but the US Navy did not suffer a single casualty.

The Yakima War dragged on until 1858, earlier pitched battles such as that fought at Seattle being largely replaced by raids and ambushes. The final decisive engagement of the war was fought between US troops and the remnants of the rebellious Yakima at the Battle of Four Rivers in September 1858. Following Four Rivers, the Yakima surrendered and in January 1859 the treaty of 1855 was ratified and the tribes moved onto the reservation, relinquishing their fertile lands to white appropriation. USS *Decatur* had remained in the vicinity of Seattle until 1858, ready to provide assistance again but the town was never again threatened.

Author's Note

Sailors of the US Navy had fought Indians before Seattle, notably in Florida during the bloody but inconclusive Seminole Wars. These actions, however, were always fought in company with the US Army. The Battle of Seattle is, to the very best of my knowledge, the US Navy exclusively fought a battle with Indians. If any reader has information on any other engagement fought exclusively between the US Navy/Marines and Indians, I would be delighted to hear from them via the editor.



LUCKY LAST WARNING!

If you think this issue of the journal is good, don't risk missing out on the next issue. The ANI membership list is being purged of non paid up members in June, so, make sure you are paid up! Look at the top left hand corner of the address sticker on the back cover of your journal. Make sure the first figure is 96 or 97 or 98 (depending on how many years membership you have paid for). If the figure is '95' you need to renew by filling in the Application Form in the brochure included with this journal and forwarding it as indicated. Cross it 'RENEWAL'. At \$25 per year, \$48 for two years or \$65 for three years membership of the ANI, this represents exceptionally good value!

Conduct Most Unbecoming

Strange Doings Aboard Her Majesty's Queensland Ship *Gayundah*

by

Graham Wilson

On a spring afternoon in Brisbane in October 1888, twenty armed policemen, under the command of the Commissioner of Police, marched down Edward Street and deployed to take up positions in Queens Park. This police activity, which quickly drew a large crowd, was not an exercise but was in deadly earnest. But the target of their actions was not a criminal gang nor a riotous crowd, rather it was the gunboat *Gayundah*, flagship and pride of the Queensland Marine Defence Force. The police were under orders from the Colonial Secretary to take the ship, by force if necessary, and to remove its captain from command.

At a remove of over a hundred years this incident, ludicrous enough at the time, now appears positively bizarre. How had this situation come to pass and what was the outcome? The aim of this article is to answer those questions and, in passing, to detail the career of HMQS *Gayundah*, one of the original ships of the infant RAN.

Colonial Naval Defence

Originally discovered, settled and explored by the Royal Navy, Australia, or rather the Australian colonies, relied comfortably for many years on the protection of the Royal Navy, safe in the knowledge that they were shielded by Albion's might. As the various colonies expanded in population and wealth, however, and as any threat of real invasion or attack seemed to recede into the distance, the colonial power began to make moves in the middle of the 19th century to withdraw its forces from the Antipodes.

The last British Army garrison, troops of the 18th Regiment of Foot (The Royal Irish Regiment) were withdrawn in 1870. Prior to that, in 1865, the British Government had passed an act to provide for the naval defence of the colonies by the colonies themselves, the *Colonial Naval Defence Act*. Although this act provided for the establishment of permanent and part-time naval forces at the expense of the colonies, it actually discouraged the colonies from obtaining and operating sea-going ships and was largely designed to ensure that the colonies would provide the Royal Navy with secure ports and bases in the event of war. This did not discourage several of the colonies, however, notably Victoria, South Australia and Queensland, from raising their own navies.

The act also provided for the continuing presence of the Royal Navy in Australian waters, the squadron of the Australian Station later to be joined by the Auxiliary Squadron. The former was strictly a Royal Navy unit under command of the Admiral Commanding the Australian Station. The second unit, also under command of the Admiral Commanding the Australian Station, was an element of the Royal Navy maintained on the Australian Station at the expense of the various colonies. A particular point about the Auxiliary Squadron was that under the act and the agreements stemming from the act, units of the squadron could not be deployed away from the Australian Station without the specific agreement of the colonial governments. The agreements also allowed for the recruiting of seamen from the colonies to man both squadrons if needed.

The Queensland "Navy"

Naval defence in Queensland was very much an on again-off again affair for many years, naval development going through fairly regular cycles of plenty and famine with invasion and war scares, usually involving the French or the Russians, seeing naval defences expanded and lavishly funded and then seeing funds and government support dry up when the furore of the moment had died down.

Finally, in 1882, following reports of increasing Russian naval activity in the Pacific, the decision was made to form the Queensland Marine Defence Force and the following year the Queensland government purchased a Thornycroft second-class torpedo boat which was to be named *Mosquito*. This boat arrived in Brisbane as deck cargo on 13 October 1884 and was forced to wait idle for a period until the Marine Defence Force could be organised to man her!

Mosquito, which distinguished itself on its very first outing on the Brisbane River by streaking off at full power in the wrong direction and dumping the official party overboard, was soon to be joined by a far more powerful sister. Anxious to increase the strength of its fledgling navy, the Queensland government made inquiries of the Admiralty regarding acquisition of two gunboats. As it happened, two "flat-iron" type gunboats (so called because in silhouette they bore an uncanny resemblance to that household appliance) were then building on the Tyne. Destined

originally for a South American republic, the two hulls were taken over by the Admiralty and completed for Queensland under the names *Gayundah* and *Paluma*, aboriginal words meaning Lightning and Thunder respectively. *Paluma* was offered to the Admiralty as a survey ship while still building and this offer was accepted, the ship's after gun not being mounted, a chart house being built in its place. Although operated by Queensland, *Paluma* was to spend a large part of her career conducting surveys for the Royal Navy, a co-operative activity which benefited both parties.

HMQS *Gayundah*

Gayundah, however, was another matter. Designed as a gunboat, that is exactly what she became. Weighing in at 360 tons, the ship was 120 ft (36.57 m) long with a beam of 26 ft (7.92 m) and drew 9 1/2 ft (2.89 m). As completed she was armed with one 8-in (203 mm) gun forward, one 6-in (152 mm) gun aft and four 1.5-in (38 mm) Nordenfeldts. With a bunker capacity of 75 tons of coal she had an economical cruising range of 800 miles and carried a complement of 55.

To command *Gayundah*, and the rest of the Queensland Marine Defence Force for that matter, Queensland secured the services of Commander Henry Townley Wright, an experienced officer who had joined the Royal Navy in 1859 and had seen extensive service afloat and ashore in China (where he received a mention in despatches for his services during the China War and later took part in the Perak Expedition) and in Africa where he held various appointments on the Cape of Good Hope Station and received another mention in despatches for service with the Naval Brigade during the Kaffir War. Commander Wright had been forced by age to retire on half-pay in 1881 and jumped at the chance of commanding the Queensland navy. For its part, the Queensland government congratulated itself on securing the services of such a distinguished and highly decorated officer. Unfortunately, their delight was eventually to be proved to be misplaced, as will be seen.

Commander Wright sailed with his command from Newcastle on 13 November 1884 bound for Gibraltar. From Gibraltar *Gayundah* steamed across the Mediterranean to Malta which was reached on 9 December. Bad weather on the way had forced *Gayundah* to shelter in Algiers for four days and resulted in her having to go into dry dock for repairs for three weeks at Malta. Commander Wright took the opportunity of attending a course on the Whitehead torpedo while his ship was in dock. *Gayundah* left Malta on 30 December, bound for Queensland via the Suez Canal with coaling stops at Aden, Colombo, Batavia, Thursday Island and Townsville. At the first three ports *Gayundah* took on extra coal as deck cargo to ensure that she had adequate fuel for the longer ocean legs of

her voyage. She eventually reached Brisbane on 27 March 1885 after a voyage of 134 days of which about 95 days were spent at sea, a fairly creditable record of seamanship and endurance.

Unfortunately for the crew, there was to be no rest following their long voyage as *Gayundah* arrived right in the middle of another Russian war scare and was immediately ordered to take part in joint naval and military manoeuvres then under way around Brisbane. Both the ship and her crew performed very well during the manoeuvres, *Gayundah* proving herself to be particularly well suited to operations in the estuarine waters around Brisbane. At the end of the manoeuvres on 7 April, *Gayundah* was finally able to go into South Brisbane Dock for a much needed clean and overhaul. She came out of dock on 10 April and entered into a round of coastal patrols and piquet duty until the war scare finally subsided in mid-May.

Lieutenant Hesketh's Unbecoming Conduct

Following the great Russian scare, *Gayundah* settled down to a routine of training cruises and inspections, managing to lead a very quiet life for a couple of years. During this period, Commander Wright apparently expended much energy in ensuring that both his ship and its men and those of the rest of his small command, both regular and reserve, reached as high a level of efficiency as possible. Then, in 1887, the court martial of Lieutenant Spencer Hesketh upset the quiet and ordered existence of the Queensland Marine Defence Force.

Lieutenant Hesketh had been commissioned into the Queensland Marine Defence Force in 1885 and was employed as First Lieutenant of *Gayundah*. Hesketh was apparently either not a good money manager or was somewhat profligate in his life style, as by the early months of 1887 he was in severe financial difficulties. While this had been developing for some time, Commander Wright was either not aware of it or was prepared to turn a blind eye to it until such time as he was no longer able to ignore it. This occurred when Hesketh borrowed 10 Pounds from a seaman and issued a bad cheque in return. This was too much for Wright who ordered Hesketh into close arrest and charged him with:

- Conduct unbecoming a gentleman in that he wrote a cheque for 60 Pounds on the Queensland National Bank, when there were no funds to meet it.
- Conduct prejudicial to order and discipline in that he borrowed 10 Pounds from a seaman.
- Conduct unbecoming a gentleman in that he gave in return a cheque for 10 Pounds dated 2 December 1886, and there were no funds to meet it.
- Conduct unbecoming a gentleman in that he wrote an order for the whole of his pay for February 1887

when it was already drawn upon to the extent of 16 Pounds.

Unfortunately for all concerned, especially Hesketh, the Queensland Marine Defence Force did not have enough officers to form a court-martial and Commander Wright requested that the Admiral Commanding the Australian Station convene a court-martial. Rear Admiral Tryon was aghast at this suggestion, claiming, quite correctly, that he did not have the authority to try an officer holding a colonial commission. There the matter should have rested except for one point - *Gayundah* flew the White Ensign. When *Gayundah* was building in the UK, the Queensland government had officially requested that the ship be allowed to fly the White Ensign, their request being made largely out of reasons of prestige and based on their interpretation of the *Colonial Naval Defence Act 1865*. The Admiralty had at first declined, citing as precedent an earlier refusal to Victoria of the same request. Queensland persisted, however, and eventually received an Admiralty warrant in September 1886 permitting HMS *Gayundah* to fly the White Ensign.

The warrant stated that "as the armed vessel *Gayundah*, belonging to the colony of Queensland, and her men" were placed at the disposal of Queen Victoria and accepted by her through the Admiralty Commissioners, she was granted the right to wear the White Ensign. Despite this wording, Tryon never attempted to exercise any control over *Gayundah*, regarding the warrant as principally a courtesy and when pressed stated that 'the vessel is not now and never has been held at the disposal of the Admiralty'. Hesketh's case was to prove the Admiral wrong as his initial refusal to convene the requested court-martial was not accepted and the Queensland government sought advice from its Attorney-General who gave as his opinion that, because of the Admiralty warrant to fly the White Ensign, Hesketh was subject to the *Naval Discipline Act 1865* and should be tried by a Royal Navy court-martial. When this opinion was forwarded to Tryon he again refused to convene a court so Queensland cabled its case to London where the decision was made to support the colonial view and Tryon received an Admiralty instruction directing him to convene the court-martial.

Eventually HM Ships *Rapid* and *Opal* of the Australian Station arrived in Moreton Bay and duly hoisted the Union Flag on 4 May to signify that a court-martial was sitting. Tryon was not the only officer to question the legality of his trying Hesketh. Edward (Ned) Charlton, destined to be an Admiral in the Royal Navy but then a junior officer serving on board HMS *Rapid* wrote a letter from Brisbane on 24 April 1887 in which he outlined the reasons for their presence and went on to state that *Gayundah* "does not belong to our service and we can't think how her officers come under the Naval Discipline Act. Admiral Tryon refused

to try him (Hesketh) but received an order from the Admiralty to do so as a test case."

By this stage, Hesketh had been confined to his very cramped quarters aboard *Gayundah* for 62 days. His first move was to challenge the competency of the court to try him as he held a commission signed by the Governor of Queensland and was not subject to the *Naval Discipline Act*. This quite valid objection was immediately overruled by the court. He next pointed out that earlier that year he had requested that a seaman aboard *Gayundah* be tried by court-martial for mutiny with violence. This request had been denied by Commander Wright who had dealt with the man summarily and awarded him 42 days in prison. Hesketh pointed out firstly that if the offending seaman was not tried by court-martial then he also should not be and, secondly, that as he had already spent more time in confinement than a convicted mutineer, then the court-martial proceedings were unfair. Again the court dismissed his objections and proceeded with the trial. Hesketh was eventually found to be guilty of the first and second charges and partially guilty of the fourth and sentenced to be dismissed from HM service.

If the naval powers that he had hoped that this would end the matter they were sadly mistaken. Both the government opposition and the press made much mileage out of the case, both parties railing against the "severity" of the sentence and the press in particular questioning just who was in charge of the Queensland Marine Defence Force, the Queensland Parliament or the Admiralty (shades of the HMAS *Australia* mutiny of 1919 — see page 46).

An interesting and sympathetic comment on the harshness of the sentence can again be found among the private papers of Ned Charlton who, on 11 May, wrote to a friend: "Hesketh was sentenced to be dismissed H.M. Service. The trial was most uninteresting and the poor devil was doing no worse than most of the people up there who live entirely on credit; will borrow a hat and mortgage it for a pair of boots". Poor old Hesketh appears to have been hoist on the double petard of the *Naval Discipline Act* and the *Colonial Naval Defence Act*, with a good dose of Victorian military morality thrown in!

Interest in and outrage, real or contrived, at the case continued to simmer but was to be overwhelmed later in the year by further events of a financial nature surrounding *Gayundah*, this time involving her captain.

Commander Wright's Improprieties

Commander Wright, as Senior Naval Officer, was head of a Queensland government department and therefore responsible for its finances. In September 1887, no more than four months after the scandal of

Lieutenant Hesketh's court-martial, a report by the Queensland Auditor-General stated that he had found a 'very unsatisfactory state of affairs' in the department. The Auditor-General's report alleged that Wright had incurred a total of 189/14/1 of funds which had been incorrectly disbursed. These funds were found to be for payment for lodgings ashore for Wright and his officers when the ship was taking its annual cruise north, although they had their normal accommodation ashore. The Auditor-General also took exception to Wright's use of departmental funds to purchase crockery for his personal use and wine for his personal table and the use of members of the crew as personal servants ashore.

But the point which most painfully stung the Queensland government was the revelation that the man whose professional services they had so warmly congratulated themselves on securing in 1884 was in fact an undischarged bankrupt who had pledged his Royal Navy half-pay to his creditors in England prior to sailing for Queensland. It was now revealed that Wright had not paid any money to his agents in two years and that, having been finally placed on the (Royal Navy) retired list, his creditors were beginning an action for bankruptcy to recover their money. The scandalised Queensland government, already disenchanted by Wright's financial mispractice, strongly suggested that he should resign. Faced with penury if he did so and secure in the knowledge that his appointment was not due to expire until the end of 1888, Wright refused, thereby antagonising the Queensland government even further. But although the government was not happy with Wright, they lacked either the will or the means to dismiss him and he continued to serve as both Commandant of the Marine Defence Force and captain of *Gayundah* - and also kept the crockery and continued to use his crewmen as servants, although the government did manage to arrange for the cost of his table wine to be deducted from his pay!

Thus matters progressed until September 1888 when Wright was finalising his affairs prior to leaving Queensland. He was entitled to three months paid leave and now inquired of the government (through his wife - one wonders at the state of communications existing between the Senior Naval Officer and his ministerial colleagues intimidated by this act) as to whether or not he could take his remaining pay as a lump sum. At first agreeable to this (probably because they were glad to see the back of the man) the government subsequently withdrew its agreement on the revelation that Wright did not intend to leave Queensland until 1889 and directed that he should continue to draw his pay at the normal intervals.

As Wright was intending to proceed on long leave, however, the government, anxious to be rid of him, ordered him to hand over *Gayundah* to Lieutenant

Taylor, former captain of *Mosquito* who had been promoted to First Lieutenant of the flagship following the demise of Lieutenant Hesketh. Taylor, who like the unfortunate Hesketh held his commission from the colonial government, was simultaneously ordered to take command and he penned a short but polite note to Wright to this effect.

Commander Wright was not having any of it, however, and immediately placed Taylor under arrest for technical mutiny. His reasoning was that the government's actions were tantamount to dismissal and that as he held an Imperial commission and his ship flew the White Ensign, the only person who could dismiss him was the admiral commanding the Australian Station. The situation quickly escalated as the Colonial Secretary, learning of Wright's actions, formally dismissed him on 24 October, 1888. But Commander Wright was not to be gotten rid of so easily and he had one trump card left to play - his ship. He called the coaling lighters alongside and sent orders for food and stores, apparently in the intention of taking *Gayundah* to sea where, once he was beyond the three-mile limit, he would no longer be subject to colonial control but would come under the discipline of the Royal Navy squadron instead. Wright could thus use the threat of sailing the ship in order to have his way with the government and at the worst he could actually carry out his threat and then lay his case before the admiral.

If Wright was planning to carry out his activities without the advance knowledge of the government, however, he was to be disappointed. As a result of his earlier misdealings, the Captain's delegation to purchase stores directly had been removed and the bills for the coal and stores he had ordered were tendered on the Colonial Secretary's office. The Colonial Secretary immediately sent a senior officer of his department to *Gayundah* to ascertain the state of affairs. On boarding the ship the officer, a Mr Ryder, discovered that Wright was ashore at the Naval Office and the ship was in charge of Sub-Lieutenant Russell (Taylor was also aboard but of course he was under arrest and therefore could not exercise the duty of officer of the day). Mr Ryder requested both officers to accompany him ashore to try to sort things out. Taylor refused as he believed to do so would be a breach of discipline and although Russell complied, it was only with a great deal of misgiving. As Ryder and Russell disembarked from the boat at the ferry landing, they were met by Wright who ordered Russell to return aboard under threat of dire consequences and sent Ryder on his way.

The ball was now in the Colonial Secretary's court and he immediately contacted the Commissioner of Police and requested him to "proceed on board the *Gayundah* and remove Captain Wright from the ship". As twenty armed policemen marched down Edward Street, a large crowd quickly gathered and took up

every available vantage point. The crew of *Gayundah* were at their normal stations and as the police deployed to take up firing positions covering his ship, Wright, who remained totally calm throughout the whole incident, casually asked his gunner: 'If I asked you to fire on Parliament House, where would you aim?' The unflappable Gunner Blake replied: 'About amidships, Sir'! Watching the drama unfold before them, many of the crowd speculated whether *Gayundah* would fire on the police and possibly even sail off as a pirate - terrific melodramatic stuff!

With his men deployed, the Commissioner boarded the ship accompanied by a police Inspector, the Colonial Under-Secretary and a magistrate and informed the cool and collected Commander Wright that he intended to take the ship, by force if necessary. In reply, Wright read his imperial commission aloud. A great deal of argument ensued but Wright never lost his temper and very astutely ensured that the government party admitted that his removal was by force. Having achieved this aim he went to his cabin and wrote a letter of protest, making sure that a copy was available for the press. He then piped all hands and read to the crew the government letters and his protest and formally released Lieutenant Taylor from arrest. This done, he took leave of all hands and departed the ship. As he was rowed away, Lieutenant Taylor read his commission to the crew as the White Ensign was hauled down and replaced by the Queensland Blue Ensign - to the great relief no doubt of the Queensland government, the Admiral Commanding the Australian Station and, doubtless, Lieutenant Taylor.

Afterwards

Luckily for all concerned, the affair had been concluded without violence or bloodshed, although probably to the great disappointment of the crowd. Commander Wright left the colony in due course and it has not proved possible to discover what became of him. Presumably he returned to England but that is only speculation. Lieutenant Taylor remained Commander of the Queensland Marine Defence Force until 1891 when he was replaced by Commander Drake. For reasons unknown, possibly because by his action in obeying Wright's order to return to the ship he was seen to have sided with Wright in the affair, the unfortunate Sub-Lieutenant Russell was dismissed from the service.

It was to be many years before *Gayundah* flew the White Ensign again. She continued to serve the Queensland Marine Defence Force, through good

years and bad, until Federation, at which point she became a unit of the Commonwealth Naval Forces and then the RAN and once again hoisted the White Ensign. During World War One, she served as a guard ship and as a mine sweeper, following which she was employed as a tender until she was sold out of the naval service in 1922. She saw long and faithful, though unspectacular, service as a sand and gravel barge on the Brisbane River until she met her end on 2 June 1958 when she was scuttled as a breakwater at Woody Point in Moreton Bay. A sad end for the one time flagship and pride of the Queensland Marine Defence Force.

Conclusion

The forgoing has been an account of two fairly amusing events connected with the early naval development of Australia. Both events were faintly ludicrous at the time while at this remove of history they appear downright bizarre. The thought of armed police deploying to support action by their Commissioner to remove the captain of the colony's flagship and commandant of its navy from his ship and office is quite amazing, as is the thought of the ship's Captain calmly discussing the possibility of firing on Parliament House with his gunner. The case of the unfortunate Lieutenant Hesketh is just as extraordinary and one cannot help but feel a fair amount of sympathy for the man. How he must have had the last laugh when Commander Wright's financial peccadillos came to light!

But ludicrous, ridiculous, amusing or bizarre, the events actually happened and are part of the rich tapestry of Australian naval history. *Gayundah* never fired her guns in anger and the fact that the highlights of her career were connected with the financial misdeeds of two of her officers must have been the cause of some embarrassment for all connected with her. Nevertheless, she was by all accounts a good ship and she served Queensland and Australia well for many years. Her memory deserves to live on and this article has been a small attempt to ensure that it does.

Afterword

I first heard the story of *Gayundah* and Commander Wright's threat to fire on Parliament House as a small boy from my father, then a recently commissioned from the ranks Sub-Lieutenant Supply Officer, as we were driving through Brisbane one night after visiting relatives on one of our interminable posting trips around Australia. The story stuck in my mind and I had always hoped to write something on it. Here it is.



The HMAS *Australia* mutiny - 1919

A SOLDIER'S PERSPECTIVE

by

Graham Wilson

mutiny -n. 1. revolt, or a revolt or rebellion, against constituted authority; esp. by soldiers or seamen against their officers. -v.i. 2. to commit the offence of mutiny; revolt against constituted authority.

Mutiny is a particularly evocative word, particularly so in the context of the profession of arms. There is hardly a word more likely to send shivers of apprehension up and down the spine of military authority than "mutiny". As can be seen by the above definition, drawn from *The Macquarie Concise Dictionary*, the standard dictionary of the ADF, the act of mutiny involves "revolt or rebellion" against constituted authority and the definition goes on to be quite specific in tying the act of mutiny into revolt by soldiers and sailors against their officers.

Australia has seen a number of mutinies, including the mutiny of the officers and men of the New South Wales Corps against the governor of New South Wales, William Bligh, in 1813, and the mutiny of a number of battalions of the AIF on the Western Front in 1918 in protest against orders to disband. One Australian mutiny, however, which has faded somewhat into the jumbled background of history is the mutiny aboard HMAS *Australia*, which occurred at Fremantle in 1919.

The *Australia* mutiny was quite notorious at the time of the event and was widely reported, becoming something of a *cause celebre*, as well as a point of some contention between the Australian and British governments and, especially, the Australian Naval Board and the Admiralty and the Australian Government. Despite being widely reported at the time, however, as stated in the introduction the *Australia* mutiny is largely forgotten today. Additionally, while the mutiny has been dealt with in a number of works, this treatment seems to have been mainly carried out by civilians and it would appear that it has not really been examined in detail by a professional military person. The aim of this article is to recount the details of the *Australia* mutiny of 1919 in order to acquaint readers with this important but largely forgotten event of Australian naval history and also to examine the incident from the point of view of a member of the profession of arms, rather than a lawyer, a bureaucrat or a civilian historian.

Background

When the Royal Australian Navy was formed in 1911 it

acquired three things, namely an act governing its administration, command and discipline (the *Naval Defence Act 1910*); a close link with the Royal Navy; and a flagship, the "Indefatigable" Class battle-cruiser HMAS *Australia*. Each of these items was to have a causative effect on the *Australia* mutiny.

The first legislation governing the Australian navy was the *Defence Act 1903*, an act to "provide for the *Naval and Military Defence* and Protection of the Commonwealth" (italics mine). Acknowledging the somewhat unwieldy artifice of lumping the Army and the Navy under the one act, the Commonwealth Government passed the *Naval Defence Act 1910*, which was subsequently replaced by the *Naval Defence Act 1911* and the *Naval Defence Act 1912*. Tellingly, all of the acts stipulated that at all times when on active service, members of the Australian navy were subject to the (Imperial) *Naval Discipline Act 1866* and this was to be the case at the time of the 1919 mutiny.

The Royal Navy Link.

From its very conception, RAN was inextricably linked with the RN and was to remain so for almost 50 years with most flag appointments and major ship commands going to officers of the RN during the period. Of even greater import to the incident under discussion was the fact that under Imperial legislation passed in 1911, the *Naval Discipline (Dominion Naval Forces) Act 1911* firmly placed the RAN under control of the RN and ensured that the *Naval Discipline Act 1866* applied to the RAN. This control and subjection to the Naval Discipline Act was confirmed by an (Australian government) amendment to the *Naval Defence Act*.

All of this ensured that, although in theory the RAN was an independent force, it was in fact merely an extension of the RN. This was further reinforced by an agreement reached at the Imperial Defence Conference of 1911 to the effect that in time of war (or earlier if the Imperial authorities considered it advisable (italics mine)), the ships of the RAN would be transferred to Admiralty control. The *Naval Defence Act 1912* specifically conferred on the Governor-General the power

to enact this transfer by Order In Council.

HMAS Australia.

The flagship of the Royal Australian Navy, HMAS *Australia*, had been laid down in 1910, launched in 1911 and commissioned into the Australian Fleet in 1913. A powerful unit, she mounted a main armament of eight 12 inch guns and secondary armament of sixteen 4 inch guns, four 3 pounder guns, five machine guns and two submerged 18 inch torpedo tubes. With a complement of 900, she was rated at 25 knots and had a cruising range of 6,300 miles at best speed (10 knots).

At the outbreak of the First World War, the ships of the Royal Australian Navy, which was also quaintly known as the Australian Squadron of the Royal Navy, were transferred to the RN by an Order In Council signed by the Governor-General. HMAS *Australia* sailed for the UK at the end of 1914 and she raised the flag of the Admiral Commanding 2nd Battle Cruiser Squadron on 8 February 1915 at Rosyth. She was to spend the war on long arduous patrols in the North Sea, missing the Battle of Jutland due to being in dock for repairs to damage sustained in a collision with another ship of the Squadron, HMS *New Zealand*, on 22 April 1916.

On 21 November, 1918, *Australia* was in the van of the port column of the Grand Fleet at the surrender of the German High Seas Fleet at Scapa Flow. With the end of the war, but with the peace treaty yet to be signed, *Australia* departed Portsmouth for home on 23 April 1919. By this stage, many of the crew had been away from home for four years and were eagerly looking forward to seeing *Australia* and their families. Sailing via the Mediterranean and the Suez Canal, *Australia* reached Fremantle on 28 May, 1919, a Wednesday.

The Mutiny

Australia dropped anchor in Fremantle harbour in the forenoon of 28 May to take on coal and supplies and conduct a port visit. It was planned to sail for Sydney the following Sunday, 1 June, and the Captain took the opportunity to give the crew liberty over the next four days. The crew were warmly welcomed and generously entertained by the citizens of Perth and Fremantle over the period from Wednesday to Saturday.

From later testimony, it appears that a rumour spread on the Saturday that the sailing of the ship was to be delayed until Monday, 2 June, to allow an open day to be held aboard the ship to give the ship's company a chance to entertain citizens of Perth and Fremantle in repayment for their hospitality. Whether the existence of this alleged rumour was true or not, the fact is that on the Sunday morning, as the ship was preparing to get under way, a delegation of crewmen, variously estimated as between 80 - 100 strong, many of them "dressed as libertymen", approached the Officer of the Day on the

quarter-deck. The captain, Captain C.L. Cumerlege RN, observed this gathering and directed the Commander to ascertain the reason for it. The Commander was informed through a spokesman that the men requested that the sailing of the ship be delayed for one day so that the ship's company could have the opportunity to entertain civilian friends aboard.

On being informed of this, the Captain advised the assemblage that it was impossible to accede to their request, which, in his words, amounted to a demand, and ordered them off the quarter-deck. At this, the men "straggled off the quarter-deck" but, as they did so, "a number of ejaculations of an insubordinate nature were.....made". Shortly thereafter, the Commodore Commanding HMA Fleet, Commodore (later Rear Admiral) J.S. Dumaesq, CB, CVO, RN, having come aboard and the last boat having been hoisted in, the Captain gave the order to let go aft. At that moment, however, he received a telephone call from the engine room advising him that the stoker's watch had left the boiler room. The Captain had no choice now but to delay the departure of the ship until such time as he could fall in the officers, chief petty officers and petty officers and tell off the necessary duty men for steaming the ship. Having done this, despite the efforts of those members of the ship's company who had attempted to stop the ship from sailing, *Australia* slipped from Fremantle and set course for Sydney.

An investigation was immediately launched by the Captain to identify the ringleaders of the mutiny and five men were duly identified and arrested. Seven other men were also arrested but were not identified as ringleaders.

The Court Martial

As required by the both the *Naval Discipline Act 1866* and the *Naval Defence Force Act 1912*, the Captain Cumerlege requested the convening of a court-martial to try the alleged mutineers via a "Circumstantial Letter". In this letter, he laid out the facts of the case and requested the convening authority, in this case the Commodore Commanding HMA Fleet (Commodore Dumaesq), to convene a court martial.

The request by Captain Cumerlege was duly received and acted upon and on the morning of 20 June, 1919, the Union flag was raised at the peak of HMAS *Encounter* in Sydney harbour and the signal gun was fired to indicate that a court martial was sitting aboard.

The rules governing the convening of a court martial were quite specific and included the following points:

- courts martial must consist of not less than five nor more than nine officers;
- only a flag officer, captain, commander, lieutenant-commander, or lieutenant of the Executive Branch

on full pay and at least 21 years of age could sit as a member of a court-martial; and

- a court martial could not be held unless at least two of His Majesty's Ships, not being tenders, and commanded by officers of at least the rank of lieutenant on full pay, were together at the time the court martial was held.

The court martial convened aboard *Encounter* consisted of the following officers:

Commodore J.C.T. Glossop, RN, HMAS *Penguin* (President);
 Captain F.H.C. Brownlow, RAN, District Naval Officer, Sydney;
 Captain J.F. Robbins, RAN, HMAS *Encounter*;
 Commander F.H. Brabant, RN, HMAS *Australia*;
 and
 Commander H.J. Feakes, RAN, HMAS *Tingira*.

Before the Court were five members of the ship's company of HMAS *Australia* (see end note) who stood accused, under S.11 of the *Naval Discipline Act 1866*, with "having joined in a mutiny not accompanied by violence". The full text of the relevant section of the Act is as follows:

S.11 "Where a mutiny is not accompanied by violence, the ringleader or ringleaders of the mutiny shall suffer death, or such other punishment as is hereinafter mentioned; and all other persons who shall join in such mutiny or shall not use their utmost exertions to suppress the same, shall suffer imprisonment or such other punishment as is hereinafter mentioned".

The essence of the charge against the five men was that (as ringleaders although not accused as such) they had resisted the lawful authority of the captain of HMAS *Australia* in that they had prevented him from taking his ship to sea. Under the Act, as shown above, the maximum penalty for a person found guilty of the charge was imprisonment. On the other hand, the maximum penalty for persons charged as being ringleaders of a mutiny was death. Prior to the court martial, the other seven men earlier arrested had been summarily dealt with by Captain Cumerlege for the lesser offence of not using their utmost exertions to suppress a mutiny. All had been found Guilty and had been awarded 90 days imprisonment.

The court-martial, before which all five accused pleaded Guilty, lasted for one day. During the trial, various pleas in mitigation were entered including:

- testimony as to the rumour of a delay in sailing from Fremantle outlined above,
- the youth of several of the accused,
- the previous good records of all of accused,
- the fact that one of the accused had been awarded the Distinguished Service Medal for his part in the

raid on Zeebrugge, and

- the extended period the men had been away from home.

Taking into account all of the evidence for and against the accused, as well as pleas of mitigation, the Court eventually reached a verdict of Guilty and awarded the following punishments:

- one Stoker - two years imprisonment with hard labour and dismissal;
- one Stoker - two years imprisonment and dismissal;
- one Able Seaman - 18 months imprisonment and dismissal;
- one Ordinary Seaman - one year's imprisonment; and
- one Ordinary Seaman - one year's imprisonment.

The Aftermath

Commodore Dumaresq reported the findings and sentences of the Court to the Naval Board on 25 June, 1919. As far as the navy was concerned, the incident was now closed, justice having both been done and been seen to be done. Unfortunately, many people in Australia, both public and private, did not see the matter in the same light as the navy. From the moment the sentences were handed down, cries arose from all quarters of Australian society, but especially the Opposition Benches of Federal Parliament, that justice had actually *not* been done. Opposition MPs questioned the government as to the possibility of appeal (R.B. Orchard, MP) and accused the navy of having "brutally and savagely sentenced" the five sailors (Cornelius Wallace, MP). In the Senate, the event from which the court martial sprung was referred to as a "so called mutiny" and here also the sentences were described as "savage".

From the end of June until October, the case was brought up frequently in Parliament and the Opposition made much political mileage from it. To the embarrassment of the Government, several of their own members joined in the calls for remission and clemency. As the RAN had been under Admiralty control, the findings of the court martial had to be sent to Britain for review. In the fullness of time, 10 September, 1919 in fact, the Admiralty replied to the request for review and agreed with Commodore Dumaresq that the sentences were not excessive. On the other hand, the Admiralty noted the youth of the offenders and advised that sentences should be suspended or remitted by half, with first releases to occur on 20 December, 1919.

This was not good enough for those calling for the release of the five prisoners and now Prime Minister Hughes and Minister for the Navy Cook found themselves under pressure from the families of the convicted mutineers, as well as from Parliament and the Senate. Finally, on 6 November, 1919, the Australian govern-

ment sent a telegram to the Secretary of State for the Colonies requesting "remission before Christmas of men involved" and asking "if Admiralty has any objections". On 13 November, the Secretary of State replied that the Admiralty agreed to the releases as proposed and on 22 November it was announced that all five men would be released on 20 December.

This announcement, the effect of which was that all five mutineers served sentences of six months and thus paid equally for the crime (except that one served his time at hard labour), finally succeeded in taking the heat out of the affair for Parliament. Trouble for the navy, however, continued, though internal now. When he read of the government's request and the Admiralty's decision, Commodore Dumaesq was outraged at what he saw as outside meddling in the affairs of the navy. While he indicated that he was prepared, with very ill-grace, to sign the Release Warrants for the five mutineers, he at first intimated and then outright declared that if the remission went ahead he would resign. His bluff, if such it was, was called by the government which remained firm in its decision to release the mutineers on 20 December and as a consequence Dumaesq submitted his resignation to the Naval Board on 19 December. His superior, Rear Admiral Sir Percy Grant, RN, First Naval Member of the Australian Naval Board, had already tendered his resignation on 14 December.

Grant and Dumaesq's major concern was that outside "meddling" would result in the erosion of discipline in the RAN and that as a result the RN would be unwilling to lend its best officers to the Australian service due to a conception that these officers would not be fully supported in the prosecution of their duties by the government. Copious communication flowed between Admiral Grant and the Prime Minister and Minister for the Navy throughout December 1919. As a result of this, the Naval Board, with the support of the Prime Minister, issued Navy Order No. 260 of 1919. This rather remarkable document, which was ordered to be displayed on all ship's notice boards and read to all men returning from leave, pointedly advised that the original findings and sentences of the court-martial of the *Australia* mutineers had been "just and necessary" and that their early release had been due to "clemency extended to all offenders, Naval, Military and Civil, on the very exceptional occasion of the signing of peace". The issue of this order, which some viewed as tantamount to a government apology to the navy, was enough to persuade Grant and Dumaesq to withdraw their resignations on 13 February, 1920.

The navy had one final word, however, with the issue of Navy Order No. 27 of 1920 on 25 February. This order, in the form of a Notice to the Fleet, advised of the government's concern at "acts of insubordination" which had taken place "in several of H.M.A. Ships during the past year" and underlined the need for regulations to be strictly adhered to in order to "permit of all grievances

being ventilated through the proper channels" and further advised that the "Government will fully support all just and proper actions taken by the constituted authorities to maintain the discipline of the Fleet".

A Military Perspective

Notorious at the time, the HMAS *Australia* mutiny and its ensuing court martial very rapidly faded from view. It is perhaps useful to look back now at the affair, and especially the court martial and its aftermath, from the point of view of a professional military man rather than that of a popular historian, a senior bureaucrat or a lawyer.

The finding of the Court, and the sentences awarded were consistent with both the *Naval Discipline Act 1866* and the *Naval Defence Act 1912*. When considering the sentences handed down, it is important to remember that under the latter Act, the RAN had automatically become part of the RN at the outbreak of the First World War and by law remained so until the declaration of peace. The latter event did not occur until the signing of the peace treaty at Versailles on 28 June, 1919, eight days after the court martial was completed.

Mutiny or Not Mutiny?

One question which immediately arises in the military mind is whether or not the mutiny was really a mutiny. Much political mileage was made by the Opposition following the court martial with reference to the "so called mutiny" and the "trivial nature" of the offence. Further to this, all academic comments on the incident which the author have read appear to agree on the point that it was to a certain degree inappropriate to regard the mutiny on the *Australia* as in fact a mutiny. There appears to be a consensus among these commentators that because the accused mutineers were Australians then the "so-called mutiny" should actually have been viewed as more of an industrial dispute and treated as such. It is of interest that the mutinies within the AIF on the Western Front in 1918 have been viewed by many, if not most, commentators (including the prolific Dr C.E.W. Bean and the quintessentially Australian Patsy Adam-Smith) in the same light. The logic appears to be that because Australians supposedly came from a "frontier society" where "Jack was as good as his master" and where the rough and ready common man was used to negotiating with his "boss" over wages and conditions and regarded the final resort of withholding labour as sacrosanct and entirely legitimate (which, in a purely civilian industrial context, it of course is), then incidents such as the AIF mutinies and the *Australia* mutiny were totally understandable and should have been treated as what the men regarded them as, i.e. industrial disputes.

Nothing, from my point of view as a professional soldier of almost a quarter of a century's service, could be further from the truth than this facile and smug

supposition. In the exact same way that the members of the mutinous battalions of the AIF on the Western Front refused direct orders to disband in September, 1918, the fact is that the *Australia* mutineers disobeyed direct orders and conspired to subvert the authority of the captain. All of these men were volunteers, all of several years service, and all of them would have understood quite clearly both the nature and the content of the rules and strictures under which they lived. The method of their approach to the captain of the ship with their request was totally inappropriate and contrary to both rule and custom. Having had their request denied, their further action in either suborning or coercing other members of the ship's company, namely the stoker's watch, to forgo their duty in an attempt to delay the departure of the ship amounted to exactly what they were eventually charged with, to wit, mutiny.

Having said that, the question arises as to whether or not the men involved were aware of the consequences of their actions. As to whether or not they were actually aware of the exact consequences, I cannot really comment. I can say, however, that they would have been fully aware of the fact that they were committing an offence and that some punishment must accrue from it. On joining his ship or on the occasion of the first commissioning of a ship, every man was read the so called "Articles of War", which were basically the offence creating sections of the *Naval Discipline Act 1866*. These Articles, a copy of which was also prominently displayed in an accessible part of every ship, dealt quite explicitly with mutiny and disobedience and outlined in detail the consequences of these offences. Thus, it is unlikely that any of the accused mutineers would have been unaware of the illegality of their actions nor of at least probable consequences.

A final point concerns the severity (or otherwise) of the sentences. Again, at the time of the court martial, both the navy and the government were accused of brutality and savagery in sentencing of the mutineers. In the cold light of reason, and bearing in mind the rules under which the RAN was then operating, I personally cannot help but agree with Commodore Dumaesq in his assessment that the sentences were quite lenient. All five men who were court martialled had been identified as ringleaders of the mutiny and by rights should have been charged as such under Article S.11 of the *Naval Discipline Act 1866*, a charge which carried the maximum penalty of death. For various reasons, the navy chose to charge the men with the lesser charge of "taking part in a mutiny", a charge which carried far lesser penalties.

I hasten to add that I am not personally advocating that the men should have been charged with the capital offence rather than the lesser one. I believe that the senior officers involved, for whatever reasons they did so, showed great leniency and magnanimity in the framing of the charges and am in total agreement with them. For, while I agree that mutiny is a serious offence, to a

military man one of the most serious, I also believe that the actions of the mutineers, while not in any way excusable, were certainly to some extent understandable, especially if liquor had been involved, a point on which the records are silent. To be charged with mutiny was bad enough; to be charged with a hanging offence as a result of a basically momentary lapse would have been dreadful and far worse than the men deserved. I am not a "Pom lover" by any extent of the imagination, but, even at this remove of history, I cannot help but applaud the humanity and generosity of the senior officers involved in the incident.

Conclusion

The "HMAS *Australia* Mutiny" happened over 75 years ago. At this remove of history and given the fact that the affair was totally non-violent and bloodless, it is difficult for a person giving the incident a cursory glance not to dismiss it as the "trivial matter" which the Federal Opposition of the day referred to it as. It is also difficult for a non-military person not to decry the sentences passed on the five court-martialled mutineers as overly severe. Finally, it is very easy at this remove of history to view the incident in an "us-against-them" or "Poms versus Aussies" light.

Having examined both the incident and the legal framework in which it occurred in some detail from the perspective of a professional soldier of many years service, I cannot agree with any of the forgoing contentions. The matter was not trivial, for mutiny never is a trivial matter; the sentences were not in my opinion severe for the five ringleaders could easily have found themselves on the gallows (a remote possibility I agree, but a possibility nonetheless); and I do not agree that the matter was an example of Australian bashing by the RN, except possibly in so far as the senior RN officers of the RAN were committed to ensuring that the high standards of discipline and conduct of the RN were developed and sustained in the very young RAN.

In conclusion, the HMAS *Australia* Mutiny was a very important event in the history of the RAN. Almost forgotten today, it is indicative of the painful growth of the RAN from a fledgling colonial force to the mature professional force it is today. It was my intention in writing this article to acquaint readers with the history of the event and to comment on it and I hope that readers have been both interested and informed by the result.

End Note: After some considerable effort, I was able to obtain the names and some details of the service careers of the five accused. I decided, after some reflection, not to use them in case publication might cause embarrassment and distress to the families of the men (a remote possibility but nevertheless a real one).

Glory for the Squadron

HMS *Calliope* in the Great Hurricane at Samoa 1889

by

Graham Wilson

By mid-afternoon of 15 March, 1889, it was apparent to all aboard the small fleet of British, American and German warships crammed into Apia harbour at Samoa that a major blow was in the offing. Already the German gunboat *Eber* had dragged its anchor and damaged its propeller when it touched ground during an earlier blow and the crews of the various ships began to secure for what they knew was going to be a severe storm.

Among the international flotilla making preparations was the cruiser HMS *Calliope*, a unit of the Royal Navy's Australia Station, normally based in Sydney. The question arises of course as to what a ship of the Royal Navy was doing in the primitive harbour of a distant South Pacific island in company with ships of the United States and Germany. The aim of this article is to describe the background to *Calliope's* presence and to detail her adventures during the great hurricane.

Towards the end of the 19th century, both Germany and the United States were expanding into the Pacific, vying with the traditional powers of France and Great Britain. While most of the island kingdoms had been well and truly staked out by the colonial powers by the second last decade of the century, Tonga and Samoa still remained unclaimed. Although a number of moves had been made to annex Tonga by various powers, the existence of a strong central government embodied in the person of King George Taupo, combined with British support, ensured that that particular Polynesian kingdom remained, at least nominally, independent. Samoa was a different question as its political organisation was based on a network of small kingdoms with power largely delegated down to the village level. At the top of the social structure was the, for want of a better term, "paramount king", the *tafa'ifa* or holder of the four main titles of Upolu, a position greatly coveted by the main ruling families.

This system resulted in almost constant warfare as the ruling families battled for control of the position of *tafa'ifa*. The situation presented by this constant state of civil war was totally inimical to the designs of the European powers, driven as they were by the triple imperatives of commerce, Christianity and coaling stations. The Europeans, in their pursuit of empire, both commercial and political, needed and desired a strong central government with whom they

could treat to ensure the security and safety of their traders and missionaries and which would assure them of access to coaling stations for their cruising squadrons.

By early 1889, the United States and Germany were at loggerheads over control of Samoa, both keen to acquire the rich copra plantations of the islands as well as secure for themselves a strategically located naval base. The Royal Navy, in the form of the Australia Station, had been most reluctant to involve itself in the confused situation in Samoa but had nevertheless, by force of circumstance, become involved over the years, notably in 1875 with the embarrassing intervention of the captain of HMS *Barracouta* in local affairs, then in 1880 during the Malietoa Affair and again in 1885 as a result of German meddling in the local political scene.

In 1889 the Germans had engineered a bloody civil war between the (pro-German) Tamasese and the Mata'afa, the latter of whom had emerged triumphant. Stung by the loss by their proteges to the Mata'afa and determined to redress the balance in their favour, the Germans despatched a squadron of three ships to Apia. This move was countered by the Americans who also sent three ships. While a conference was convened in Berlin to discuss the future of the Samoans, none of whom of course were invited, the German and American ships crammed into the harbour at Apia, maintaining an uneasy truce as their national representatives vied for control ashore. At the orders of the Foreign Office in London, the Commander in Chief of the Australia Station despatched a ship to Apia to observe proceedings and to represent British interests. Admiral Tryon originally sent the frigate *Lizard* but later replaced her with the cruiser *Calliope*.

HMS *Calliope*

The ship sent to replace *Lizard* was the almost brand new iron and steel sheathed cruiser HMS *Calliope*. Launched at Portsmouth in 1884, *Calliope* had a length of 235 ft, a beam of 44 ft 6 in and drew just under 20 ft. With a displacement of 2770 tons, she was rated at 4020 HPI and 14.6 knots from her single screw, carried an armament of four 6-in and 12 5-in guns as well as nine machine guns, and had a complement of 291. In common with most other steam powered ships of the time, she was also rigged for sail. At the time

that she sailed from England to join the Australia Station at the end of 1887, *Calliope* was under the command of Captain Henry Coey Kane who was also in command when she steamed for Apia in February 1889.

The Great Hurricane

Arriving at Apia, *Calliope* joined the other ships crowding Apia harbour. The Americans were represented by the cruiser *Trenton*, the corvette *Vandalia* and the sloop *Nipsic*, while the German ships present were the corvette *Olga* and the gunboats *Adler* and *Eber*. Besides the seven warships crammed into the harbour, there were eight merchant vessels of various sizes also at anchor.

Even in the best of conditions Apia harbour was (is) not a sailor's dream. At the time of the hurricane, its passage and anchorage were narrow and it was ringed by shelves and jutting teeth of coral. Captain Kane of *Calliope* estimated that the anchorage was sufficient for four ships. Yet on 15 March 1889, there were seven warships and eight merchant ships crammed into an anchorage which had been described as 'a known death trap in a heavy northern blow'.

There had already been some heavy weather before the 15th and, as earlier stated, the German gunboat *Eber* had damaged her propeller when she grounded after dragging her anchor several days previously. The propeller had not yet been repaired at the time of the hurricane and this was in the end to sign *Eber's* death warrant.

Throughout the day on 15 March, the weather had been worsening. At about 1400 the barometer plunged to 29.11" and the wind picked up. The local European residents were fairly complacent, advising the ship's captains that the hurricane season was over and that the storm would soon blow itself out. For reasons of national prestige and local dominance none of the ship's captains was prepared to leave the harbour. Captain Kane, however, was too experienced a seaman not to take precautions and he ordered *Calliope's* lower yards and topmasts struck and directed Staff Engineer Bourke to get up steam. His intention was to steam at anchor and ride out the storm in the harbour. This, however, was not to be.

Throughout the afternoon and into the night the wind continued to freshen from the north-east and by midnight was blowing a gale. The Vaisigano River which empties into Apia harbour quickly changed from a harmless trickle into a roaring torrent and swept into the harbour scouring all of the sand and mud out of the basin. With nothing for the kedge anchors to grab onto, they dragged helplessly across the harbour floor and the ships in the harbour careered wildly about the anchorage, crashing into each other.

At about 0800 on 16 March, the first ship, *Eber*, went down. Her damaged propeller rendered her attempts to steam into the wind ineffective and when her anchor cables finally gave way she was picked up by the towering seas and slammed stern first into a reef after which she went down stern first, taking with her her captain, *Kapitan-Leutnant* Wallis, and 72 of her crew. Prior to this, the American sloop *Nipsic* had lost her funnel in a collision with the German corvette *Olga*. Despite desperate efforts to maintain steam using barrels of pork as fuel, without a funnel this was impossible and *Nipsic* was eventually driven onto the beach. To the shame of the US Navy, most of the crew of the *Nipsic*, rather than attempting to go to the assistance of their fellow seamen, wandered off to various grog shops and taverns along the water front and proceeded to get drunk.

The other German gunboat *Adler* had also collided with *Olga* and had lost her bowsprit and now found her stern dangerously close to the reef. The American cruiser *Trenton*, which apparently suffered severe design faults and had been in danger of foundering all night, despite the efforts of 200 of her crew manning the pumps, had now lost her rudder and was blocking *Adler's* way to the open sea. Unwilling to suffer the fate of the *Eber*, *Kapitan-Leutnant* Fritze ordered his moorings slipped and allowed his ship to broach to and be driven up onto the reef. The concussion of slamming into the reef broke the gunboat's back but she settled securely on the reef and in the end only 20 of her crew were lost.

At 0845 *Calliope* collided with the American corvette *Vandalia*, carrying away the American's quarter gallery. A moment later she narrowly avoided being rammed by *Olga*. Captain Kane realised that he could not allow his ship to ride to the length of her cables due to the closeness of the reefs astern, while to run ahead would mean running down *Vandalia* and to remain where he was would risk another, possibly fatal, collision with *Olga*. It was, Captain Kane noted later with amazing understatement, 'the most ticklish position I was ever in'.

Faced with almost certain destruction if he remained at anchor, Kane was determined to escape from the harbour into the relative safety of the open sea. At his order the Engineering Department worked the engine 'red hot' then he slipped his cables and snaked past *Vandalia*. Unfortunately, the by now flooded, rudderless and engineless *Trenton* still blocked the passage, only a perilously narrow gap between wreck and the reef. The order to slip had been given at about 0930 and Kane later recorded that it was 'an anxious moment, for some time she remained perfectly still, moving neither way, and then gradually drew ahead, pitching tremendously, bow and stern in turns under water.' When Captain Kane gave the order to slip the anchor, *Calliope's* stern was a mere twenty feet from the reefs.

With her engines straining to produce every available pound of steam, *Calliope* struggled to escape the storm lashed harbour, her heaving boilers barely managing to move her forward at one knot in the teeth of the hurricane. With steerage way barely on, Kane at first doubted his ability to alter course to avoid the sinking *Trenton* but at the very last moment managed to pass under her stern in a feat of seamanship which excited the admiration of all who watched it. As *Calliope* inched past *Trenton*, the crew of the stricken American cruiser, in one of those acts of inspired madness which moments of extreme peril sometimes evoke, paused in their desperate labours to loudly cheer the British cruiser, a passionate salute to the skill and daring of one ship and crew from the crew of another ship who doubtless believed themselves to be doomed.

Clawing painfully past *Trenton*, the British cruiser slowly left the American behind as she steered for the harbour mouth by compass, the driving spray and mist having reduced visibility to a few feet and completely obscuring the harbour mouth. She eventually reached the open sea but was not to know this until next day. During the long painful haul out of the harbour in the face of the storm, it had taken *Calliope* over two hours to steam a distance of four cables (about 730 meters). 'Once outside', wrote Kane afterwards, 'it was nothing but hard steaming; if the engines held out we were safe, if anything went wrong with them we were done for'. *Calliope* remained under full power from 0930 until about 2000 that night, the ship just making steering way through a haze which reduced visibility to virtually nothing. At 2000 the sea fell slightly, allowing engine power to be reduced. By midday on the seventeenth the storm had reduced in strength to an 'ordinary gale' (Kane's words) and a brief sight of the sun confirmed that they had indeed escaped the harbour.

Meanwhile, back in the harbour all was chaos. Giving up the struggle against the storm, Captain Schoonmaker of the USS *Vandalia* attempted to run his ship onto the beach near the deserted *Nipsic* but at the last moment a huge wave caught the ship's stern and drove it onto the reef. Her head swung to starboard and she immediately began to fill and settle. As his ship began to go down, Captain Schoonmaker was swept overboard and lost. Some reports say he collapsed from exhaustion, others that he was killed by a deck gun which had broken free. Either way, his body was not recovered until some days later over nine kilometres down the coast.

By 1500, only *Trenton* and *Olga* were still afloat, the German ship repeatedly dodging the floundering American. Shortly after, *Trenton's* cable finally parted and the ship was driven stern first into the inner basin. At 1600 *Olga*, out of control, smashed into *Trenton's* quarters, first port, then starboard. In a last despairing attempt to save his ship, *Kapitan zur See*

von Ehrhardt managed to beach *Olga*, miraculously without losing a single life, although one American seaman had been killed on *Trenton* when *Olga* had smashed in one of her gun ports.

Trenton continued her rudderless voyage to the shore and lurched into the sunken *Vandalia*. As she struck fast, lines were thrown across from *Trenton* to the survivors clinging to *Vandalia's* rigging and they were dragged to (comparative) safety aboard the cruiser. In total, 43 members of *Vandalia's* crew, including the captain, were lost.

The force of the waning storm kept *Calliope* at sea until the morning of 19 March when she ventured back to Apia to try to recover her lost anchor. A scene of total desolation greeted her. *Adler* was high and dry, *Olga* and *Nipsic* beached and *Trenton* partly piled on the sunken *Vandalia* and herself partially sunk to the gun deck. Of *Eber* there was no sight at all. All merchant vessels were also sunk and the beach was strewn with debris. Unable to recover his anchor and in need of repairs which were unavailable in Apia, Kane decided to steam for Sydney. This decision was supported by the British consul who agreed that political matters were, for the moment, overshadowed.

Rescue efforts for the stricken ships had begun on the morning of 17 March even as the hurricane still raged. This rescue effort came from a totally unexpected quarter. Prior to the advent of the hurricane, the Samoan rebel leader Mata'afa had massed 6,000 men outside Apia preparatory to attacking the Germans. On hearing of *O le Afa*, the big hurricane, however, the rebels had thrown aside their weapons and streamed into Apia to offer their assistance. The first thing that they did was to assist the survivors of the *Nipsic* ashore. A party then tried to reach *Adler* stranded on its reef but were driven back by a group of fifty armed Germans who had been on the beach as a security party before the storm struck.

Somewhat understandably, the Germans thought that the Samoans were intent on finishing off the survivors of the *Adler* rather than rescuing them.

Later in the morning a party of Samoans did in fact manage to reach *Adler* and brought a safety line back to the beach but it broke. Numerous valiant efforts to replace the line by Samoans trying to swim out to the reef were defeated. Finally, the Chief of Apia commandeered a whale boat and with a crew of Samoans ventured out to rescue the sailors who had been clinging to *Adler's* rigging since 0800 the previous morning. They then rigged safety lines to the beach and for the rest of the day ferried survivors ashore. During these operations the only Samoan to die in the harbour, a man named Tui, was killed when a gun broke loose on *Adler's* deck and crushed him. In the words of Robert Louis Stevenson, the author of *Treasure*

Island, who was then resident in Samoa and was an eye witness to the events described, by their selfless effort 'the Samoans earned the gratitude of friend and foe.'

Afterward

Several months after the storm *Olga* and *Nipsic* were refloated, the German ship going to Sydney for repairs while the American went to Honolulu. *Eber* was gone completely, her wreck sucked out though the throat of the reef into the deep water outside. *Trenton*, *Vandalia* and *Adler* were stripped by wreckers and the hulks of the first two were eventually removed. *Adler*, however, remained on her reef for over sixty years. In 1956 she was covered up by landfill during a project to expand Apia's land area out over the reef. Local legend has it that this burial unleashed the hurricane of 1966, when the shrieks of the sailors stranded on *Adler* during the 1889 hurricane were supposedly heard in the wind.

Besides the warships, all of the merchant vessels in the harbour were also sunk or destroyed. A memorial to the German sailors who died is located on the coast road half way between Apia and Mulinu Point.

Captain Kane and his ship were a source of immense pride in both London and the Australian colonies, especially New South Wales, home of the Australia Station. Kane's report of proceedings was presented in London as a parliamentary paper. In the report Kane gave special praise to the conduct of the Engineering Department of *Calliope* and in particular to the work of Staff Engineer Bourke. This praise was seconded by the First Naval Lord, Sir Richard Vesey Hamilton and the Commander in Chief of the Australia Station, Rear-Admiral Fairfax. For his efforts Bourke was immediately promoted to Fleet Engineer.

The disaster drew attention to the great risks Royal Navy ships ran when carrying out requests to remain at Samoa and other islands in the South-West Pacific during the hurricane season. The experience at Apia

led to the Admiralty advising that such risks would only be sanctioned in the future if the Foreign Office was prepared to take responsibility for any losses that were incurred.

Calliope left the Australia Station at the end of 1889 returning to English waters. She remained on the strength of the Royal Navy for another twenty years, being finally sold out of the service in 1909 or 1910. Her steering wheel was presented to the government of Western Samoa in 1953 but now resides in a museum in New Zealand.

Conclusion

The fate of Samoa and its eventual history under the various rulerships of Germany, America, Britain and New Zealand is beyond the scope of this article. The aim of the article was to recount the story of *O le Afa*, the great hurricane of 1889 and to particularly detail the skill and gallantry of the captain and crew of *Calliope*, a ship firmly connected with the early naval development of Australia.

The hurricane itself was a tremendous disaster. Four warships were totally lost while 144 of their crewmen died. The death of the Samoan Tui brought this to 145 while two merchant seamen were also killed, bringing the grand total to 147. On the other hand, the hurricane did succeed, at least for a time, in defusing an extremely tense diplomatic and military situation, one which according to some commentators could actually have led to war. Had the colonial powers not been so concerned with squabbling over an 'unclaimed' portion of the South Pacific, it is probable that the warships would not have been in the harbour at Apia on that fateful day. Of all the players in the drama, the only ones to come out of it with any credit were *Calliope* and her crew and, most especially, the Samoans who caste aside their enmity and anger to go to the rescue of their enemies in their hour of distress. In the end though, as Robert Louis Stevenson wrote, 'not the whole Samoan Archipelago was worth the loss in men and costly ships.'

About the Author

Graham Wilson, the son of a retired RAN officer, was born in 1953 and enlisted in the ARA in 1971 after a short period of service in the CMF. Originally an infantryman, he served in Australia and overseas with the 5th and 5th/7th Battalions, the Royal Australian Regiment and as an instructor at the Infantry Centre. Corps transferring to the Australian Intelligence Corps in 1979, he has served in various intelligence positions in Canberra, Sydney, Brisbane and Port Moresby. Awarded warrant rank in 1984, he is currently serving with the Directorate of Security - Army in Canberra. Graham is married with three children and combines a life long passion for military history and militaria with a love of writing.

IN MEMORIAM—An Australian Merchant Navy

AUDI ALTERAM PARTEM

by

Charles R J Taylor

Historical aspects

In 1939 the majority of ships sailing Australian waters were on British, or other registries, mostly Dutch, Norwegian, and American. Only 195 ships were registered in Australia, their average age 18 years, and average tonnage 2104, a majority coal burners. Notwithstanding age and condition, 34 were to be necessarily commandeered by the R.A.N. as wartime auxiliary vessels.

Merchant ships manned with much smaller crews than warships, something like a sixth of the latter for a similar tonnage, and with proportionately fewer ranks such as deckhands, stokers, and stewards. After prerequisite service and training officers were skilled in navigation, marine, electrical, and refrigeration engineering; wireless operation, and catering. Most officers and cadet/ apprentices either from choice or necessity stayed loyal to a particular shipping company for long periods.

Australian mariners sought work on Australian vessels or those sailing under other flags. The common practice of signing on crew for a voyage only, meant that there could be spells of unemployment during which shore work might have to be sought, especially to maintain families. There was no medical test for physical or psychological fitness as required for service in the RAN.

Commonly, some alcoholics and social misfits found niches in a tough, but for them socially cocooned environment. At times these caused problems to the majority of worthy seagoing personnel.

Crew conditions were generally appalling. This was a legacy of the 'Great Depression', and years of penury and neglect in the shipping industry. Seamen who sailed in 'rustbuckets' were paid below the general level of industrial wages. There were some 'flags of convenience' ships—Panamanian and Liberian. Consequently, these conditions enabled militant communist elements to control the seamen's union, which drew membership from crews of Australian registered ships.

Merchant seamen were in all age groups from 14 to 65, even 70 years if duties could still be done. Those on Australian ships came within the industrial relations system, with other industries. Under this system industrial action was commonly used to bring negotiation to remedy shortcomings or seek improvement of conditions of service. Critical generalisations about this factor have often been made, using 'merchant seamen' as a generic term and pejoratively. Such views overlook that invariably there was a militant minority, some reasonable expectations, and that other industries were involved on broader issues across the industrial spectrum.

The Merchant Navy at war

The McGirr Enquiry concluded that 14,000 Australian Mariners served in WW2. In the absence of records, it accepted an estimate by the Registrar of Shipping that some 1500 served only on foreign ships. Alan Smith, a former deck officer, researched and found that a generous manning scale for the 161 Australian registered merchant ships needed some 4900 seamen. It follows that those not so employed necessarily sought berths on British or Allied ships, a large number serving with well known liner companies, many as regular employees known as 'companies men'.

Merchant ships were instant targets as war broke out, and throughout hostilities. In European waters "Athenia" was sunk on the day war was declared, "Avondale Park" and "Snelland" (Norwegian) late on the eve of VE Day. In the Tasman, Nigeria in June 1940, in the Pacific, "Jack Singer" (USA) was sunk 4 days prior to VJ day. In Australian waters first sinking was "Cambridge" (British) mined November 1940, the last "Peter Sylvester" (USA) torpedoed February 1945. Lloyds records several hundred ships sunk or damaged worldwide by underwater explosions over many years after hostilities ceased.

Government had to sort out the realities of merchant ships doing a job in a front line, taking into account shipowners concerns, a need to sustain trade with neutral countries without problems pertaining to combat-

ants ships, the crew 'hotchpotch' including some neutrals, notably from Eire, and the age range of mariners. Conscription was not a viable option. Shipowners managed their ships as agents for the government.

Notwithstanding arduous industrial working conditions at sea, long absence from home and a 7 day working week, seamen's wages were 4th down in weighted average weekly wages of 14 industry groups, and 10% below the book and printing industry. (McGirr). A war risk bonus was determined by the Maritime Industry Commission, as a 'wage of attraction' to keep and recruit crews for increased war needs. This way flow on and relativities problems might be avoided when it was removed. Contrary to a common belief, it was never intended to replace compensation for war caused injury.

Mariners pay was taxed at wartime rates, and had to be 'all found', such as victualling contribution aboard, working gear, uniforms, clothing, medical and dental costs, etc. When ashore there were no barracks, or canteen privileges, but living at wartime prices, and career training costs. Pay was only for time signed on ships articles, commonly just for the voyage, and it stopped the day a ship was sunk. Cadet Apprentices paid premium and got a pittance under indentures. When eventually the "war risk bonus" was removed, wages had to be brought up to prevalent industrial levels.

Mariners joined ships destination unknown until sailing orders became known at sea. They knew they sailed to face a searching enemy on slow vulnerable ships, at first unarmed. Eventually most merchant ships were armed defensively with limited artillery manned by DEMS personnel supervising merchant seamen gunners, usually after a short gunnery course. It is a matter of record, that these weapons were frequently used in defence of merchant ships under air or surface attack.

Many hazards were added to the normal ones of the sea. Ships sailed blacked out, without navigation lights, and without today's navigation aids. Station keeping in convoy was subject to various ships handling characteristics in all weathers, whilst maintaining zigzag course patterns. Loadlines were exceeded, and extra deck cargos carried. Quicker turn round demands restricted maintenance. Wartime cargoes often included volatile substances such as high explosive, ammunition, petroleum spirit, and deadweight cargoes such as ore, which minimised survival chance.

Strict radio silence caused problems with sickness or injury. Only passenger ships carried a doctor. Mariners knew that if their ship was sunk, ships in convoy could not stop to pick up survivors. Naval escorts, or a designated 'rescue ship' if present, would not if risks were deemed unacceptable. Sunk or shipwrecked sail-

ing independently, survival depended on seaworthiness of and provisions in lifeboats or rafts after attack, weather conditions, and effects of exposure. Rescue depended on whether it had been possible to transmit an SOS (and whether that SOS had been received), isolation of position, and chance.

Postwar survival

The *Seamens War Pensions Act* (1940) supposedly was intended to cover the gap between war caused injuries and work related injuries. It was grossly inadequate from inception, and many war caused injuries were never compensated. Stress and anxiety tensions were prevalent yet unrecognised for compensation, though veterans of the RAN and other services, made the point often to secure Repatriation compensation.

The fight to bring mariners under the Veterans Entitlement Act for equality of medical treatment and compensation, led by former mariner Bob Nelson, O.A., succeeded 50 years after peace was declared. It met resistance from many other veterans whose objections were largely based on resentment about deemed pay rates, and prejudice against 'civilians' being compared to them. They had little knowledge of the realities of a mariner's war at sea, neither did the civilian population, as such wartime news had been strictly censored.

These objections were echoed in the political scene, where opposing attitudes often reflected underlying views of industrial relations, ongoing interests of shipowners, and the stronger lobby of other veteran groups competing for Repatriation benefits. The McGirr Report shows deemed pay comparisons to be false, and irrelevant to the issue of compensation for injury.

LESSER COMMEMORATION ACCORDED FALLEN MARINERS

A basic commemorative principle is recognition of equality of individual sacrifice. It heeds neither rank, unit, service, nor manner of death. This is why war cemetery headstones are all the same. The Australian Merchant Navy Roll of Honour lists 647 known fallen mariners. To date they have been excluded from the cloister panels at the Australian War memorial. There was never a formal requirement for any entity to compile the roll, but the Australian War Memorial research department accumulated data from various sources, and the names are listed on an electronic scroll device. Visiting relatives of fallen mariners have difficulty locating the scroll located in a landing corner, especially when children play with it, and feel a sense of humiliation at this discrimination. The fallen mariners are named with fallen of other services on other war memorials in Australia, or in war cemeteries and on memorials overseas, principally in Singapore, Ja-

pan, Lae, Port Moresby, and London. On the cloister panels of the Australian War Memorial fallen DEMS gunners are inscribed, but not the mariners who fell alongside them on the same ships. Medical and military personnel aboard Hospital Ship *Centaur* are inscribed but not fallen mariners who crewed her. Of Australians lost on *Ceramic*, RAN personnel in transit and DEMS gunners are inscribed, not mariners in her crew nor some in transit after long service in the Atlantic.

'Tower Hill Memorial Roll of Honour' in London records Australians who fell on 'British or British government chartered ships' as 'Australian Merchant Navy'. For lack of records some who fell on British or Allied ships can never be identified as Australian mariners, but after 50 years it is not reasonable to use this as an excuse to withhold commemorative action for the known fallen. Indeed, completion of the present cloister panels was necessarily subject to an arbitrary cut off date, and the record can never be regarded as complete. Those named were either 'killed in action', 'died on active service or in captivity', or 'died of wounds' later. Fallen of the Merchant Navy predominantly were 'killed in action', and no record exists of those who died later of wounds.

OPPOSITION TO EQUAL COMMEMORATION OF FALLEN

There are some who advocate lesser or discriminatory commemoration for the Merchant Navy fallen. Principally their contentions derive from entrenched resentments over subjectively perceived differences in conditions of service. Nevertheless, it is pertinent and historically instructive to briefly consider their complaints. For example, that mariners were not under severe penalties of the Naval Discipline Act as RAN personnel were, and were permitted to leave the sea in war. In fact ships masters exercised disciplinary powers and did impose penalties for offences. Bad discharges ended or diminished chance of reemployment at sea as unsuitable. Mariners did indeed leave the sea, as did members of other services, for ageing, injury, health, and discharge as unsuitable. Some that exercised personal choice did so legitimately until the government that had not seen fit to conscript, legislated to make the Merchant Navy a reserved occupation. Mariners who had left to join defence forces were then discharged from them and sent back to the Merchant Navy. Many navy personnel never left the shore, whilst mariners could only serve at sea. That mariners voluntarily served in war with less severe enforcement is surely a matter for commendation.

The traditional 'pierhead jumps' for a minority of lower ranks figured in debate intended to influence government policy in regulation. Such 'desertions' have been quoted as reason to discriminate against

all mariners. These should be seen in the perspective of the crewing 'hotchpotch' referred to earlier, the general industrial background, and quantitatively against more than 6300 wartime sailings from Australian ports. Furthermore other services had defaulters, particularly absentees, so often repeat offenders with alcohol, domestic or personality problems, albeit in breach of stricter disciplinary requirements.

Australians mariners signed on ships of other registries in Australian ports to replace injured or sick crew. If the ship was sunk, or paid off abroad they were stranded overseas indefinitely. They had to seek their own repatriation, contending with wartime secrecy of movements of ships that might sign them on. If in the UK, or able to sign on a ship that eventually paid off there, with status as British subjects the Reserve Pool found berths for them. Still subject to secrecy of ports of call, they could only sign normal ships articles. If eventually they joined a ship that came to Australia, often after long voyages elsewhere, there was the unorthodox albeit less legitimate 'severance' method - so much for statistics!

It should be noted from economic and social history that for their peacetime livelihood mariners had served an industry in which working and living conditions were scandalous, and the lowest value placed on the dignity of the common man. Fifty years later it is germane to draw comparison with 'ships of shame' now sailing the high seas under various flags. Without conditioning by training, or an induced ethos of military service and associated community recognition it is not surprising that some had feelings of low self esteem, sought relief from wartime tensions in alcohol, and long held resentments were then so readily expressed in factious attitudes.

There has been resentment that political conflicts of unions versus management and government were allowed to continue in war. For example naval authorities announced an end to coastal convoys in late 1943. There had been many sinkings on the coast due to raider activity in 1940/41 and by submarines and aircraft in 1942/43. Behind the censorship and amongst themselves mariners knew losses continued on the high seas, for example, ships unescorted in the Indian Ocean. They were now peremptorily told to sail the east coast as primary targets without escort or convoy, outranged in speed, without asdic, without depth charges, in contrast to navy ships armoured and equipped for attack as well as defence. The union had not been consulted, and some labour was withdrawn effecting a number of ships in port. Significantly the dispute ended when due explanation was given. Merchant ships were in fact sunk after this in Australian waters, where a total of 105 wartime attacks occurred including the sinking of 6 warships and 48 merchant ships.

As McGirr points out industrial action in the interests of union members was not illegal, but in any case the majority of mariners were not involved as they were serving on ships at sea. The exercise of such democratic freedom and the politics of confrontation were still permitted across the industrial spectrum by governments conducting a war to prevent their being excised. In 1941 at the ACTU congress, union delegates resolved full support for the war aims and saw no reason to suspend campaigning for improved conditions in the workplace, with future peace in mind, when all returned servicemen would benefit from the outcome.

Non Combatants?

Some seek to differentiate mariners as 'Non combatants'. WW2 warfare superseded any concept of the exclusive nature of military service or battlefield. Merchant ships were fully integrated with other services for assaults on enemy territory, at Madagascar,

North Africa, Sicily, Salerno, Anzio, Normandy, South of France, Burma, and in the Pacific. They were attacked with every type of naval and aerial craft and weapon, and defensively fought alone or in convoys alongside naval escorts doing precisely that. The epic of Australian mariners who voluntarily crewed commandeered small craft in the islands campaign is only now coming to light. Military and nursing personnel who fell on Hospital Ship *Centaur*, were 'noncombatants'. Rescued oilcovered survivors defied such a precise criteria.

As for comparison of status, the Geneva convention and International law have been quoted as having given mariners superior rights to other services when captured. Experiences of 4500 mariners on prison ships and in prisoner of war camps completely negate such a hypothetical assertion. The instructions of Admiral Doenitz, the influence of the *Laconia* decree, and the Japanese atrocities in Indian Ocean sinkings are now matters of historical record.

CONCLUSION

In 1928, in recognition of the role of merchant seamen in WW1, the then Prince of Wales created, and later the Sovereign adopted the title 'Master of the Merchant Navy', and the merchant service of the British Commonwealth and Empire was given identity as 'Merchant Navy'. Australian mariners knew of the high Merchant Navy casualties that had occurred in WW1 in all oceans, and in particular by surface raider activity in Australasian waters. They were not trained for conflict, yet without such benefit continued to sail the ships and coped with a total war at sea, albeit by military thinking in ad hoc, not always so perfectly disciplined ways. In hindsight who can blame them for seeking in return, by today's standards, minimal improved conditions for their ongoing livelihood denied them for so long. The fact remains that they served their country at sea, never in doubt that they took their chance. Some fifty thousand merchant seamen of the western allies fell in WW2. The Australian Merchant Navy Roll of Honour is eloquent testimony to its contribution.

Emotive revival of resentments about mariners by an element opposed to equal commemoration is largely in ignorance of realities of the war at sea, and in disregard of the findings of the McGirr Report. It is but a regrettable commentary on, and a restatement of unwarranted attitudes that were projected for so many years in sordid competition for Repatriation compensation. The arguments are ingenuous, the attitudes vainglorious, and such have no place in the subject of commemoration of the fallen. The Australian War Memorial has a broader function than exclusive commemoration of the fallen of the defence services. The Australian War Memorial Act (104 1980) Section 5 provides for - "A national memorial to Australians who have died on or as a result of active service, or as a result of war or warlike operations in which Australians have been on active service." The broader community funds the Australian War Memorial, a national memorial to all Australians who fell in conflict. Merchant Navy Associations seek implementation of the basic commemorative principle of equal recognition for equal sacrifice by all individuals who fell serving their country.

Book Review *(From Page 35)*

Dacre Smyth writes about many of the events and people which are now important in the history of the RAN. More importantly, his art is able to capture many of the moods and developments within the Service which are not easily translated into words. Of course, the book is about more than the RAN and it includes

sections on Dacre Smyth's early life, his retirement and his family life. *Pictures in My Life* is a work well worth purchasing and enjoying for its fine writing and wonderful art.

Jason Sears

The Night Surface Battles of the Solomon Islands

by

Russell Dority

Dedicated to the memory of Electricians Mate, Second Class William A. Dority, USN

I first became interested in naval history as a young boy listening to my father's stories of the war. He was in the United States Navy having joined in 1936. He was at Pearl Harbour when the Japanese attacked. He was also in all of the early naval actions of the Pacific War, the raid on Wake Island, Coral Sea, and the attack on Guadalcanal. It was the battle of Savo Island that he spoke of most. He was an electrician and his job was to operate the 48" search light on board his small destroyer, USS *Helm*. He often spoke of the incredible fear of that night, the 8th August 1942. The crew had been at action stations for two full days fighting off the Japanese air attacks on the invasion transports that were anchored in the waters off Guadalcanal in what later become known as "Iron Bottom Sound". That night his ship was riding escort to the northern section of the guardforce consisting of USS *Astoria*, USS *Quincy* and USS *Vincennes*. His ship was riding on the port bow of *Vincennes*. He spoke of the exhaustion he was feeling, the heat and the almost constant action which had badly affected the ship's company. When the Japanese sliced through and attacked the force, he had a grandstand view of what happened although his ship didn't even open fire on the Japanese - all they saw was the blinding searchlights from the Japanese ships and their shells exploding on the American Cruisers. His ship blundered around amongst the wreckage of the American fleet before heading off to the Destroyer rendezvous north of Savo Island.

The naval battle of Guadalcanal raged for eight months. When the battle finally finished, there were at least two Battleships, 11 Cruisers and 27 Destroyers lying at the bottom of "Iron Bottom Sound". Of these losses, the Americans lost five Heavy Cruisers in comparison to the Japanese loss of only two Heavy Cruisers. Australia lost one Heavy Cruiser. The Americans lost two Light Cruisers, the Japanese lost none; the Americans lost 16 Destroyers and the Japanese lost 11 Destroyers - The Japanese coming off much better. If it had not been for the loss of two Japanese battle ships, the scales would have been very heavily tipped in favour of the Japanese.

My father's most vibrant memory of that night of 8 August 1942 was the total darkness and then the blinding fear as their ships were hit by the Japanese searchlights. But the strange thing is the Americans could see.

Most of the American ships were well-equipped with radar and the latest technology.

So why weren't the Japanese detected? And why if the sides were so evenly matched in ship numbers should one side have such a slashing victory and the other suffer such a humiliating defeat?

The Japanese did not have radar, so why would such a technologically advanced fleet as the Americans be defeated by a "theoretically" inferior enemy?

Let us look at the American and Japanese ships and the contrasts between the American and Japanese ships, weapons, systems, equipment, radar, crew training and communications available in these early battles:

Cruisers

The American Heavy Cruisers that fought in these battles were all of a similar tonnage — all built to the Washington Treaty limit of 10,000 tons. Their main armament of nine 8" guns 55 calibre was fairly standard worldwide. Although the weapons themselves were good, the mounts were slow in training and if the turret crews were not highly trained (which was often the case) their rate of fire was poor. The secondary armament of between four and eight 5" guns were of 25 calibre, their range was fairly short compared to later standards. The Heavy Cruisers had a fair turn of speed but their biggest disadvantage was that they were built as scouts for the battle fleet. As such, they mounted four scout observation aircraft and the very large hangers to house them were built amidships. In the battles that ensued, these aircraft were the first things to catch fire as the Americans had a habit at the time of leaving the aircraft fuelled at night on catapults, so with the first spark they caught fire. Of the five American Heavy Cruisers that were sunk by gun and torpedo during these battles their aircraft caught fire, and with four burning aircraft amidships the Cruisers stood out like beacons.

Alternatively, the 2 American Light Cruisers that were sunk in the later battles were Anti-aircraft Cruisers. These ships were brand new with a top speed of 40 knots. They were impressive and beautiful ships. Their main armament of sixteen 5" guns were fine for their intended role of Anti-aircraft Cruisers. But when pitted

against battleships and Heavy Cruisers in these night actions, these ships proved to be woefully inadequate being nothing more than very large Destroyers. Although equipped with the latest radar, these Cruisers were very badly used in these battles.

By way of contrast, the Japanese Cruisers in these battles were of a similar tonnage to their American counterparts although in battle they tended to be rather heavy. The Japanese armament of between six and ten 8" guns was similar although the use of twin turrets made their training faster. Most of the ships carried two to three scout aircraft. The major difference to the Americans was the Japanese practice of either launching their aircraft off at night or draining their tanks before battle. Also unlike the Americans, the Japanese Heavy Cruisers were armed with eight (8) torpedo tubes which, in short range night battles, was a tremendous added bonus to the Japanese side.

Destroyers

The American Destroyers that were used to screen their Cruisers in these battles were basically 1,500 ton ships of the Craven and McCall class. My father served on one of the Craven class, USS *Helm*. These were fine looking ships with four 5" guns 38 calibre and a very heavy torpedo armament of sixteen 21" torpedos. Towards the end of 1942, the Americans introduced the Fletcher Class Destroyers into this campaign. These ships mounted five 5" guns in single mounts and ten 21" torpedo tubes. These were arguably the best destroyers in the Second World War. Most of the American ships were fitted out with the very early form of SC Surface Search radar. Some of the American Cruisers carried the very large SK air search radar from their main mast while the Destroyers carried the very short range SC Surface Search radar. The SC Surface Search radar had a theoretical range of between 5 and 7 miles. In these early battles they proved to be inadequate.

By way of contrast, the Japanese Destroyers of this period were handsome, heavily armed ships. Their standard armament of six 5" dual purpose guns in fully enclosed mounts made them rather formidable. They also carried between six and nine 24" torpedo tubes. They were the only Destroyers in the world that carried a full reload capability for their torpedos.

Torpedoes

The American 21" torpedo had a dismal record during this period whether launched by surface ship, submarine or from the air, they more than often failed to explode or ran erratically. It was eventually discovered that the warheads that were fitted with a proximity igniter frequently failed to explode and even the weapons that were seen to make a direct hit failed to explode correctly.

My father always claimed one of the reasons for the erratic running and poor performance of the American torpedos was the habit that some crews had of draining the alcohol out of some torpedos to mix with their orange juice. To this day, illegal alcohol on US ships is called "Torpedo Juice".

Ironically, perhaps the only US ship-launched torpedo to explode correctly was fired by USS *Bagly*, accidentally hitting HMAS *Canberra*.

The consequence of American torpedo malfunctioning was eventual redesign of the warheads.

By way of contrast, the Japanese 24" (Long Lance) torpedo may be said to be the most outstanding weapon the Japanese had. This mammoth torpedo with its 500 kilogram warhead was propelled by liquid oxygen driving it at a top speed of 49 knots. It also had a range of up to 40,000 yards at 39 knots. Its oxygen propulsion system left very little wake.

Radar

The crews only had a rudimentary understanding and training in the use of radar. As an example, the radar aboard USS *Helm* had only been installed shortly before the invasion of Guadalcanal.

The same is true for the Australian ships in these battles. Radar had only been installed a matter of weeks before Savo Island. This was of the British type 271 Surface Warning set.

The Japanese radar relied on the "Mark 1 eyeball".

Crew training

Crew training on board the allied ships was varied. In my father's case, he had been on board the one ship, USS *Helm*, since 1937. As a matter of fact he served on board that ship for 8 years and it was the only ship he served on in his naval service. His unit, (Destroyer Squadron 4) had been together since the formation of the Squadron in 1940, were at Pearl Harbour together and served together right up to the Solomon Campaign. Often in battle conditions the other ship crews could be thrown together, broken up, and mixed into other ships as replacement crews or for further training.

The majority of the personnel on board the Cruisers were newly enlisted and only had a rudimentary training basically straight out of boot-camp. As a matter of fact, the entire convoy sailing to the Solomons stopped in the middle of the Pacific to take on freshly-arrived officers, "90 Day Wonders" straight out of the Officer Training classes.

The Australian ships were in a similar situation with experienced personnel being sent to newly commis-

sioned ships. Most of the ships had conducted very little surface firing training in the 6 months leading up to the Solomon Campaign and some of the ships had no night firing training for well over a year prior to the Solomon Campaign.

By way of contrast, although the Japanese lacked radar, they spent a large amount of time in night training and firing in all conditions. Although the Japanese night glasses were no better than the American types, they made much better use of them. They were more than well-equipped with night glasses and their training in the use of night glasses was intensive. The Japanese crews had been together for a long time and their ships were well versed in each others capabilities. The Japanese were also very battle experienced, having been at war with China since the mid 30s. The Japanese thought nothing of training in the worst conditions and thought the loss of men and equipment a small price to pay to reach their high standards. The proof of this was at the battle of Savo: the Japanese sighted the Americans at 11,000 yards on a dark stormy night and eventually sailed through their lines undetected.

Communication

Most of the American ships were equipped with TBS (Talk Between Ships). This was short ranged tactical radio broadcasting on the VHF band. Its main drawback was that it was in constant use with both trivial and emergency messages being broadcast at the same time. Therefore emergency messages were often ignored or were unheard.

By way of contrast, the Japanese, like the Australian Navy, relied on the traditional signal lamps for short range night communications.

Although the battle of Savo Island is the best known battle of the Solomon Islands, especially to Australians, it is one of only five major battles that were fought there. The other four: Cape Esperance, the two night battles of Guadalcanal, and the battle of Tassafaronga, were equally as savage.

So now let's analyse these battles.

Cape Esperance

After the disasters off Savo Island the Americans quickly sailed their partially unloaded transports back to safer waters. Even without the losses at Savo, this was inevitable as Admiral Fletcher had withdrawn his air support from his carriers leaving the marines to their own devices. Without air support the transports were extremely vulnerable. Within a few days of landing, the marines accomplished one of their main tasks on Guadalcanal which was the building of an airstrip. With the finishing of the strip, the Americans controlled the seas around Guadalcanal by day but at night the Japanese ruled.

Every night the Japanese would bring their transports and destroyers down "The Slot", offload their ships and leave by daylight. During the day the Americans would race in their transports and unload. Also of a night the Japanese would then bombard the Henderson Field as the strip on Guadalcanal became known, with everything from Destroyers to Battleships firing on the beleaguered marines and what became known as the "Cactus Airforce" who occupied the island. It was in support of these reinforcements that the next major battle took place. This was the battle of Cape Esperance fought on the night of 11 October 1942.

An American taskforce under Rear Admiral Norman Scott with 2 Heavy Cruisers and 2 Light Cruisers and 5 Destroyers sailed into Ironbottom Sound with the express purpose of derailing the "Tokyo Express" as the Japanese reinforcement convoys became known. That night two groups of Japanese ships were approaching Guadalcanal — the first group to land artillery and troops; the second group, comprising the 6th Cruiser Squadron — the victors at Savo Island under the command of Admiral Goto, were to bombard Henderson Field.

Admiral Scott found himself in the classic position of crossing Goto's "T". Two of his (Admiral Scott's) ships picked up the Japanese force at a distance of 16 miles on their radar. Unfortunately the word was not passed correctly to Admiral Scott who unfortunately had not placed himself on his best radar equipped ship. Scott had no great faith in radar. He for one was not convinced of its reliability or accuracy. Because of a communication breakdown on Scott's flagship the USS *San Francisco*, the three van Destroyers became separated from the rest of the American line during a turn. When the Japanese were discovered by the flagship, Scott was concerned that the three American Destroyers were being confused for the enemy. If it hadn't been for the Captain of the Light Cruiser, USS *Helena*, taking the situation into his own hands and opening fire, the situation could have been disastrous for the Americans.

On the Japanese side, Goto believed that the ships he was seeing in front of him were his own transports and Destroyers and he turned broadside to the American taskforce and even flashed his recognition lights. In answer, his ship came under extremely heavy fire and Goto was mortally wounded. In the ensuing melee with ranges down to less than one mile, the Japanese lost one Heavy Cruiser and one Destroyer with two of their Heavy Cruisers badly damaged.

The Americans lost one Destroyer and one of their Cruisers badly damaged.

It was the first victory the Americans had over the Japanese in night battle. The victory celebrations were short lived as the Japanese still managed to unload all their heavy artillery unopposed and the next night the Japa-

nese Battleships, *Kongo* and *Haruna*, bombarded Henderson Field with over 1000 14" shells, leaving the airfield a total mess although the next day the Americans were still able to launch a few aircraft.

For the next month both sides strove to reinforce the island: the Japanese were preparing an 11-ship convoy when word arrived that the Americans got in first with seven ships anchored off Lunga Point. The Japanese set off immediately with an interception force comprising two battleships, one light Cruiser and 11 destroyers under the command of Admiral Abe.

The American transports took just over one day to unload and on the evening of the 12th November 1942 set sail back to Espiritu Santo. The American covering group of five cruisers and eight destroyers sailed into Savo Sound to intercept the Japanese. They were led by Admiral Daniel Callaghan who, like Admiral Crutchley before him, was bedevilled by the fact that few of his ships had operated together. He steamed in one column: four Destroyers in the van, followed by the five Cruisers and four Destroyers bringing up the rear.

Naval Battle of Guadalcanal: First Phase

On Friday, 13 November 1942, Callaghan's Cruiser/Destroyer force blundered across the path of the Japanese battleships. The choice of Callaghan to lead this force was a curious one: he spent most of his career as a staff officer — he had only gained his first sea command as an admiral two weeks previously. Callaghan hoisted his flag in the heavy cruiser, USS *San Francisco*. Admiral Scott, who was much more experienced, although junior to Callaghan by a few days, moved his flag to the USS *Atlanta*. This was a curious decision by both admirals as neither of these ships was equipped with the latest SG radar which had served the Americans so well on board USS *Helena* in the battle of Cape Esperance a month previously. Once again, it was the USS *Helena*, which picked out the Japanese ships on her radar at a range of just over 18 miles. Callaghan soon turned his column to starboard to cross the Japanese "T". At this time, the turn also unmasked the radar of USS *Helena* and USS *Juneau*. As the ships turned to starboard the Americans discovered to their horror they were actually amongst the Japanese leading destroyers who had not sighted the American column as yet. With destroyers to both port and starboard, instead of crossing the "T" they were actually inside the Japanese formation and like the days of sail, the battle that ensued became a one-on-one affair. With ranges down to less than several hundred meters some of the American ships were even using their machine guns to fire on their opponents. As the van American destroyers turned to port to unmask their torpedo tubes, the line quickly bunched and Admiral Callaghan lost all control of his column. USS *Atlanta* was the first to open fire giving the Japanese destroyer, *Akatsuki* a full broadside of fourteen 5" guns. For the next hour, the battle raged in a very small

area with ranges between 200 yards and 5 miles. Torpedoes were fired by both sides although, once again, it was only the Japanese who scored hits, hitting three of the American cruisers and two of their destroyers. USS *Atlanta* had her engine rooms destroyed, USS *Juneau* had her keel broken, USS *Portland* her starboard props and rudder blown away. A lot of the American fire was concentrated on the Japanese Battleship *Hiei* which sustained much damage to her superstructure. Her Captain, Captain Suzuki was killed by shortrange anti-aircraft fire from the American destroyer USS *Laffey*. USS *Atlanta* was not only hit by the Japanese, she also suffered the indignity of receiving two full nine-gun salvos from USS *San Francisco* which smashed her upper decks and killed Admiral Scott. Shortly afterwards, USS *San Francisco* came under fire from the Japanese battleships and Admiral Callaghan and most of the bridge staff were also killed. The fighting continued until 0230 hours when Captain Gilbert (the highest-ranking surviving Captain) on USS *Helena* ordered a general withdrawal. By dawn the next morning, USS *Atlanta* had sunk, USS *Juneau* was sinking, and three destroyers were resting at the bottom of the Sound.

On the Japanese side, the Battleship *Hiei* was burning furiously north of Savo, and two destroyers had sunk. Later on that day, USS *Juneau* was torpedoed by a Japanese submarine as she limped out of the Sound and sank with a very heavy loss of life. The *Hiei* was set upon by aircraft from Guadalcanal and from the USS *Enterprise* (which was operating to the south) and sank the next evening.

For the Japanese troops still on Guadalcanal, the situation was desperate. And so on 12 November 1942 a much needed relief convoy set sail. This force of 11 transports and 11 destroyers was under the command of Admiral Tenaka. His ships were crammed with over 10,000 troops, much needed heavy equipment, food and medical supplies. At the same time a Japanese bombardment force, under Vice Admiral Kondo, sailed towards Guadalcanal. This force of a Battleship, two heavy cruisers, two light cruisers and nine destroyers were also to act as a wide escort to the troop transports.

Naval Battle of Guadalcanal - Second Phase

On the morning of 14 November 1942, Tenaka's reinforcement group was discovered by aircraft from Henderson Field and all through the day was attacked not only by Henderson's aircraft but also aircraft from the USS *Enterprise*. Six of Tenaka's transports was sunk and a seventh had to retire badly damaged. Tenaka, nevertheless, kept heading towards Guadalcanal with his four remaining transports and his 11 Destroyers four of which were crammed with Japanese soldiers from the sunken ships.

On the American side, the situation was desperate:

Admiral Halsey, since the start of the Solomons campaign, had lost two aircraft carriers sunk; 11 cruisers either sunk or severely damaged; and 17 destroyers sunk or damaged. He now faced a difficult decision. With so few escorts he could either protect his remaining Carrier, USS *Enterprise*, or strike at the Japanese force sailing down "the slot". He played his last trump card: he still had his two modern Battleships, USS *Washington* and USS *South Dakota*, although desperately short of cruisers, he sent them off towards "the slot" escorted by only four destroyers which was all he could scrape together. This force was very ill-matched. The destroyers had never worked together, two of them didn't even have gunnery radar. Although the battleships had the latest SG radar, the radar had been badly sited midway up the mast and could only search ahead. In charge of the American force was Admiral Wallace A. Lee, a big gun-man to the core who, unlike his predecessors, Scott and Callaghan, had a great respect and understanding of radar. At 2100 hours on 14 November 1942, Admiral Lee led his force into Ironbottom Sound. They patrolled the area looking for the Japanese reinforcement group and the bombardment force. The lead elements of the bombardment force led by the Light Cruiser *Sendai* and three destroyers spotted Lee and trailed him for about half an hour until Lee made a turn which unmasked his radar. He spotted the Japanese force at a distance of about ten miles. His battleships then opened fire — the first time the American battleships had fired on enemy surface ships since the war with Spain in 1898. The small Japanese force turned, went to high speed and made smoke and escaped to the north.

Lee's force then rounded the south of Savo Island. As they did so the lead American destroyer picked Admiral Kimura's screening force comprising the Cruiser *Nagara* and four Destroyers coming in from the north and brought them under fire. The Japanese quickly fired back with their 5.5" guns and their "Long Lance" torpedoes. The American line suffered grievously. The lead ship USS *Preston* took the brunt of the Japanese fire and was quickly out of action. The Destroyer USS *Walke* had her bow blown off and sank shortly afterwards. The remaining two destroyers were very badly damaged and were forced to retire. One Japanese destroyer, *Ayanami* took the full broadside of USS *South Dakota*'s and USS *Washington*'s secondary armament and was quickly out of commission. Meanwhile, Kimura's force withdrew to the west. The American line was once again in disarray with burning ships in front of the speeding Battleships. USS *Washington* made an emergency turn to port but, at that moment, USS *South Dakota* had an electrical fault losing her radar and radio. For some inexplicable reason, instead of following Lee, he turned starboard placing himself between his burning Destroyers and the Japanese force coming down from the north. The turn to starboard also placed USS *South Dakota* in USS *Washington*'s radar blindspot and Lee lost sight of his consort. The Americans then came under fire from the dogged Admiral Hashimoto who returned with *Sendai*

and two destroyers and re-entered the battle, guns blazing and torpedoes firing. USS *South Dakota*'s radar suddenly came back to life and she started firing on Hashimoto's ships which were off her stern. Unfortunately with her first salvo, she set fire to her scout aircraft on the fantail. They blazed furiously adding to the chaos USS *South Dakota* had placed herself in. Unfortunately with her first salvo, she also blew out her radar once again and from then, until the end of the battle, she was blind — the Americans unable to fire correctly over optical sights relying so heavily as they did on their radar. At about this time, coming down from the north, was Admiral Kondo with his two heavy cruisers and the battleship. The American battleship was caught in the gaze of the Japanese searchlights and quickly came under heavy fire from a range of three miles. Admiral Kondo ordered every gun and torpedo to be fired. Fortunately for the Americans none of the Japanese torpedoes hit although the Japanese heavy guns took fearful toll of USS *South Dakota* killing many of the gunnery control personnel. While USS *South Dakota* was taking this fearful punishment, the USS *Washington*, a couple of miles ahead of USS *South Dakota*, was still undetected by the Japanese, finally came into the battle. She concentrated her main armament on the Japanese Battleship *Kiroshima* and her secondary armament on the two Japanese heavy cruisers. The Japanese battleship took fearful punishment taking at least nine 16" shells, knocking out two of her 14" turrets, jamming her rudder, and giving her a severe list to starboard. Shortly after midnight, the USS *South Dakota*'s Captain, Capt. Gatch, decided that his ship could take no more and elected to withdraw to the south. This left USS *Washington* alone. For the next twenty minutes she fired at whatever targets came her way dodging many Japanese torpedoes that were fired at her. Fearful that he was being led into a trap, Admiral Lee, also decided to withdraw. As Admiral Lee withdrew, the Japanese were once again in charge of the battlefield but time was running out for the Japanese. *Kiroshima* was sinking and Admiral Kondo knew that with the rising of the sun the American aircraft at Henderson Field would once again attack his force. He then ordered Admiral Tenaka to run his four remaining transports aground and get whatever troops he could ashore. With that he withdrew leaving the Japanese troops to their fate.

Of these six ships that Lee sailed into Ironbottom Sound, only one was battleworthy by morning. On the Japanese side, Kondo had lost a Battleship and a Destroyer. He still had two heavy cruisers, two light cruisers and eight destroyers at his disposal but with the loss of his 11 transports and 8,000 of the 10,000 troops on board, what on paper was a Japanese victory was, in reality, a smashing defeat. The supply situation for the Japanese on Guadalcanal was now desperate. The Japanese could no longer send merchant ships to supply the island. Submarines were used for a short time but they could not deliver the tonnage needed. In a desperate move, the Japanese decided to send destroyers down with 44

gallon drums filled with food and medical supplies. These drums would be dumped offshore and picked up by small boats.

Battle of Tassafaronga

On 30 November 1942, a Japanese force of eight Destroyers, once again under Admiral "Tenacious" Tenaka, arrived off Tassafaronga to make the first delivery of this form. The Americans had picked up word from the Australian Coast Watchers that the Japanese were sending a force and a cruiser force under Admiral Wright of four heavy cruisers, a Light Cruiser and six destroyers were sent into Ironbottom Sound to disrupt the Japanese.

They came across the Japanese as they were unloading — the Japanese force steaming at under 12 knots, were taken completely by surprise. The Americans launched their torpedoes but unfortunately opened fire with their main guns at the same time thereby not giving their torpedoes time to reach the Japanese. The torpedoes missed. The Japanese destroyers managed to swing their torpedo tubes out and fire at the American force even though their decks were covered in 44 gallon drums. They then made smoke, went to high speed, and, in a remarkable feat of seamanship, somehow reloaded their torpedos before attacking the Americans. The Americans suffered severely. The American Cruiser USS *Northampton* was sunk and other Cruisers, USS *Pensacola*, USS *New Orleans* and USS *Minneapolis* were severely damaged by torpedoes. Repairs to these ships took over a year to complete. The Japanese only lost one destroyer and that was to gunfire. Once again, the American torpedoes had failed.

To the Japanese High Command the battle at Tassafaronga was the last straw. Although a victory to their side, they still failed to achieve their objective of relieving the plight of their troops on the island. Tassafaronga was also the last defeat the Americans suffered in the Pacific in World War II. They learnt many lessons in the battles for the Solomon Islands both technical and operational. Radar, in particular was greatly improved especially with the introduction of the SG surface search radar. When properly mounted either on its own dedicated mast as in the capital ships or atop the main mast of smaller ships in a rotating position it proved its worth. The problems with the American torpedoes took a bit longer to resolve. By mid 1943, a new version was appearing on US warships and, although their targets were quickly disappearing, in the battle of Surigao Strait and in the Battle of Samar, the American destroyers proved devastating with their torpedo attacks against the Japanese battleships and cruisers. The problem with the TBS or "Talk Between Ships" proved to

be a different matter. This was not a technical problem, the system itself was fairly good with the range of between 5 and 7 miles. The system enabled ships to talk to each other. Unfortunately, in the heat of the battle and excitement, everybody had a tendency to talk at the one time and the last one to talk drowned out everybody else. This became a problem of training and training the Americans to talk at the right time became a difficult thing to do.

The Solomon Campaign that started out so disastrously for the Allies turned into the first major defeat for the Japanese. The Battle of Midway was a major defeat for the Japanese Navy, but Guadalcanal was the first defeat for both the Japanese Navy and the Army.

The Americans learned by their mistakes in these battles. With their great industrial base, they were able to improve their equipment, refine their technology and replace their ship losses. The American losses of their leadership through either death or reassignment were quickly replaced by new adventurous men like Admirals Halsey and Spruance.

With the ending of the Naval Campaign for Guadalcanal, both sides withdrew to lick their wounds. The Americans used their time well by improving their training and reforming their taskforces with newly arrived ships that stayed together as a group for the remainder of the War. Conversely, the Japanese never recovered from their losses in the Solomons. Especially severe were the losses to the Japanese transport fleet. The Japanese were not able to improve their equipment nor did they change their tactics. The radar they developed arrived too late to be of much value.

With the death of Admiral Yamamoto, and constantly forced to be on the back foot, the Japanese High Command was never gain able to regain the adventurous and aggressive spirit that served it so well in the opening nine months of the War.

As for the commanders in these battles, much has been written about them. There have been claims of incompetence, or even cowardice in some circles and some of just ignorance of the technology and systems that were available to them. But I for one am certainly not in a position to criticise these men. Perhaps we should just remember the words of S W Roskil when he wrote in his foreword to Richard Newcombe's book *Savo* when he said that "The historian is not a judge, still less is he a hanging judge."

Perhaps in 50 years time when historians are writing about some of us and our mistakes maybe the kindest thing they can say is, "There but for the Grace of God go I".



THE AUSTRALIAN NAVAL INSTITUTE INC

1996 Office Bearers

			Telephone	Fax
President	RADM C. Barrie	A-4-18	06 265 5158	
Snr V/Pres	CDRE P. McGuire	CP3-1-06	06 266 4102	
Jnr V/Pres	LEUT J. Sears	ADFA	06 268 6099	
Secretary	LEUT W. Bullen	D-3-12A	06 265 1157	06 265 1145
Treasurer	LEUT J. Brace	CP4-1-B6	06 266 4407	06 266 4818
Journal Editor	LCDR A. Hinge	ADSC	06 268 8454	06 268 8440
Councillors	CDRE W. Dovers			
	PCHA M. Davis			
	CMDR A. Du toit			
	CMDR T. Morgan			
	LCDR D. Devereaux			
	LCDR K. Wallis			
	LEUT R. Leahy			
	LEUT B. Spurgeon			
	LEUT A. Nelson			
	POWTR P. Andrews			
Public Officer	Mr A. Brecht	APW2-1-17	06 266 6297	

NEW ZEALAND CHAPTER

Convenor	CMDR B. Coffey	OTS HMNZS TAMAKI	64 9 445 5653	64 9 445 5677
Secretary	LCDR C. Olliver	20 Pukeora Av, Remuera, Auckland, NZ		
Treasurer	LCDR W. Stevens	C/- PO Box 817 Auckland, NZ		
Wellington Liaison Officer		CMDR R. McKillop	64 4 478 0725	

PAST PRESIDENTS

RADM C. Oxenbould AO (1995-95), RADM D. Chalmers AO (1992-93), CDRE I.A Callaway (1988-92), CDRE A.H.R. Brecht (1985-88), CDRE I.B James AM (1983-85), RADM R.C Swan AO CBE (1978-83), CDRE J.A Robertson (1977-78), CDRE V.A Parker (1975-77)

HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS

ADM Sir Victor Smith AC KBE CB DSC, VADM Sir David Stevenson AC KBE,
ADM Sir Anthony Synot KB OBE, CDRE J. A Robertson,
Rt Hon Sir Zelman Cowen AK GCMG GCVO QC, RADM R. Swan AO CBE,
CDRE I. James AM, CMDR G. Cutts, CDRE A. Brecht, CDRE I. Callaway.

FOUNDATION MEMBERS

Bennet. GA	Dickie. DD	Jervis. GE	Macleod. BD	Scott. BP	Williams. KA
Berlyn. NRB	Fisher. TR	Josslyn. IK	Nathey. RJ	Sharp. WR	York. D
Bonnet. VWL	Fox. LG	Kemp. WA	Nicholson. BM	Shearing. JA	
Brecht. AHR	George. J	Knox. IW	Nicholson. IH	Smyth. DHD	
Broben. IW	Gibbs. BG	Lee. NE	Orr. DJ	Snell. KE	
Calderwood. G	Goddard. FC	Loftus. WB	Parker. VA	Stephen. KC	
Cole. SEW	Grierson. K	Loosli. RG	Patterson. DR	Stevens. EV	
Cummins. AR	Hall. IW	Martin. DJ	Ralph. N	Stevens. JD	
Cutts. G	Herman. FJ	Martin. PCS	Read. BJ	Summers. AMF	
Dalrymple. HH	Histed. G	Mayson. JH	Reynolds. I	Swan. RC	
Davidson. J	James. IB	McDonald. NE	Robertson. JA	Swan. WN	

JOURNAL OF THE AUSTRALIAN NAVAL INSTITUTE Inc.

PO BOX 80, CAMPBELL, A.C.T. 2601

PRINT POST APPROVED

PRINT POST PUBLICATION No. PP 229 219 000 20

SURFACE
MAIL

POSTAGE
PAID
AUSTRALIA

MAY BE OPENED FOR POSTAL INSPECTION