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26 July 2014

AUSTRALIAN ARMY JOURNAL

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No. 224 January 1968



AUSTRALIAN ARMY JOURNAL

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The Australian Army Journal is printed and published for the Directorate of Military Training by Renown Press Pty. Ltd., and issued through Base Ordnance Depots on the scale of one per officer, officer of cadets, and cadet under officers.

Contributions which should be addressed to the Editor, Australian Army Journal, Directorate of Military Training, Army Headquarters, Canberra, are invited from all ranks of the Army, Cadet Corps and Reserve of Officers.

\$10 will be paid to the author of the best article published in each issue. In addition, annual prizes of \$60 and \$20 respectively will be awarded to the authors gaining first and second places in the year.

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AUSTRALIAN ARMY JOURNAL

A periodical review of military literature

No. 224, JANUARY 1968

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(Australian War Memorial)

Men of the 17th Australian Infantry Brigade flown in to defend Wau in late January 1943. Extremely bad weather had prevented the arrival of vitally important transport planes, with reinforcements, and the Japanese had advanced

The Study of Military History

*Colonel E. G. Keogh, M.B.E., E.D.,
Royal Australian Infantry (Ret.)*

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

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

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

Military history is the story of the profession of arms, of the influence that profession has had on the general course of events, of the contribution it has made to our national life. We need to

Colonel Keogh began his military career in 1916 as a driver in 1st Australian Wireless Squadron and served in the Mesopotamia Campaign in World War I. Commissioned in 24 Battalion CMF in 1924 he served with that unit until 1939 and then in various staff appointments in the Middle East and the South-West Pacific Area in World War II. Appointed the first editor of the Australian Army Journal in 1948 he published The Study of Military History in the journal in January 1965, on the eve of his retirement. It is being republished for the guidance and assistance of all officers undertaking this study in the course of promotion examinations.

Colonel Keogh has written several campaign studies which have been taken into use by the Australian Army as official text books on military history.

know something of the history of our army, of its exploits, for that history conditions our professional outlook. It explains why we find it best to do things in our own particular way, and it constitutes the basis of our form of discipline.



(Australian War Memorial)

The main street of Pozieres before the war.

Military Experience

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

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

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

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

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

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



(Australian War Memorial)

The main street of Pozieres, August 1916.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

What about the art of war, of strategy, of tactical insight, of leadership. It is in these fields, perhaps, that we can extract the most value from military history. It is in these fields that we really do need experience, and it is just these fields that first hand experience is so hard to get in peace. We can get this experience only by the study of military history.

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

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

How do we Study Military History ?

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

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

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

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

Another example of challenge, of the refusal to accept statements at their face value, is to be found in the Australian offensives on Bougainville and in the Aitape-Wewak area. The necessity of these

offensives was queried in Parliament, and one of the arguments put forward to justify them was:— "To commit any troops to a passive role of defence . . . is to destroy quickly their morale, create discontent, and decrease their resistance to sickness and disease." From this are we to assume that troops committed to an arduous offensive under severe climatic conditions are bound to have a higher morale and to be healthier than troops engaged in defence? It is true, as a generalization, that the offensive generates higher morale than the defensive. But is it true in particular cases? And do you have to mount a full-scale offensive to maintain morale, or would a modified form of the offensive be sufficient? The formation on New Britain did not undertake a big offensive; it seems to have successfully maintained morale and the offensive spirit by aggressive patrolling.

Morale is an attitude of mind. In defence the correct attitude can be fostered by means short of full-scale attack. Take 9 Australian Division for example. Besieged in Tobruk, the division maintained morale and the offensive spirit by "giving away" the deep and commodious Italian dugout in favour of fighting trenches, by deep patrolling, and by establishing their dominance over no-man's-land — "Our front line is the enemy's wire, no-man's-land belongs to us."

After being shut up in the fortress for months on inadequate rations, the troops might have been a bit on the lean side, but they were still full of fight. And their health was surprisingly good — until, on relief, they got in amongst the fleshpots of Egypt.

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

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

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

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

What does this statement suggest?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

One of the clearest patterns that emerges from military history is the one which demonstrates the evils of failure to concentrate upon the attainment of the aim. Time after time, war after war, large forces are sent on missions which cannot possibly further the attainment of the aim. At the worst they jeopardize, or even prevent, the attainment of the aim because they weaken the main effort. At the best they are a wanton waste of human life. This pattern seems to apply at all levels of activity. In the field of strategy there is the example of the Mesopotamian Campaign in World War I. Closer to home we have our own Solomons and Aitape-

Wewak campaigns in the later stages of World War II. The real war against Japan had moved 1,000 miles to the north. The Japanese forces left behind in these areas were isolated and helpless. They could do absolutely nothing. Why on earth did we engage in costly offensive operations to clean them up when they could have been safely left to wither on the vine? We could have collected the lot with scarcely a battle casualty when the main Allied forces brought about the collapse of the Japanese main forces.

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

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

Methods of Study

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

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

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

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

These four points constitute a firm base for our study of the campaign.

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

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

The basic material which the soldier uses in his profession is human nature — men and women. He must know how people react to the stresses of war, and how they react to danger and adversity, to triumph and disaster.

Where do we Find the Material?

Where do we find the material for the study of the human factor in war, of the actions, emotions and thoughts of ordinary men and women and of the art of leadership? Fortunately this part of our study need not be hard work. It can indeed be a recreation. Nearly everyone reads for recreation. Why not systematise this recreation and turn it to good account by reading for pleasure books with a direct or indirect bearing on the subject?

What sort of books should we read to give us an insight into the human factor? Well, we can read the heavy tomes with the psychological slant but we can hardly call them recreational. I think we will get on far better, we will acquire a deeper and more lasting knowledge of human beings at war if, with our minds always alert to pick out the lessons, we read:

- (a) Biographies.
- (b) Appropriate novels.

It is unnecessary to labour the value of biographies, but it is desirable to add a word of caution. The author is sometimes apt to be carried away by his admiration of the person he is writing about, to make out he was always right, to make him into too much of a paragon of all the virtues. And the autobiographies, the books written by the actors themselves, very often suffer from the same defect. They seldom admit they were wrong and, writing from hindsight, they are usually able to prove that they were right. So read these books with a critical eye. Don't let yourself be carried away by the author's plausibility or eloquence. With this proviso these books are a very valuable source of information, and are generally quite easy to read.

Historical and War Novels

Now the novels. Don't despise the novelist, but make a distinction between the author who writes merely to spin a good yarn and the author, the serious novelist, who writes because he has something to say, some important comments to make. It is probably true to say that the novelist and the dramatist have done more to directly influence the development of thought and ideas than all the philosophers. While it is true that the philosophers and the thinkers produce the basic idea, it is the novelist and the dramatist who "put it across" by translating it into terms which ordinary

folk can understand and appreciate, into terms of universally experienced human emotions — love and hate, courage and cowardice, hope and despair. Consider, for instance, the tremendous influence of the novel "Uncle Tom's Cabin". Up to the time of its publication there was a chance that the issues which divided the Northern and Southern States of America could have been settled by wise statesmanship and public forbearance. Its publication made the civil war virtually inevitable. It focussed all the issues upon a single point — slavery. It enraged the South and it inflamed the North. In far away Europe, particularly in England and France, it created a public opinion which compelled the Governments to drastically modify their policies of active sympathy towards the Southern cause.

World War I produced a crop of novels which profoundly influenced the course of events over the two following decades. With few exceptions all these books expressed the violent revulsion of the common man against the stupidity and futility of the dreadful blood-baths to which they had been subjected on the Western Front. You can learn all about the strategy and the tactics of the Western Front in half a dozen printed pages, for there was precious little of either to write about. But if you really want to understand, if you want to find out what the war was like from the point of view of the fighting man, read novels like "All Quiet on the Western Front", "Not So Quiet", "Her Privates We", "War by ex-Private X", "Covenant With Death", etc. Read the poetry of Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen, and plays like "Journey's End". Above all, read C. E. Montague's "Disenchantment". Every officer ought to have this little volume of beautifully-written essays. He ought to keep it by his bedside and read a few pages every night. That will keep his feet on the ground and his head out of the clouds.

From these books you will learn more about the real nature of World War I than from all the learned volumes of strategy and tactics put together. You will learn about the incredible imbecility of the worst vintage generals in all history, of the shocking staff work, of the sheer ineptitude of military leadership all the way down the chain of command. You will understand why the people who make and unmake governments in democratic countries cried out in revulsion "To hell with brass hats and red tabs, to hell with generals, we shall have no more of that nonsense". And when you have understood that you will understand the motive force behind the policies of disarmament and appeasement which led step by step to World War II.

In Service circles it is fashionable to blame the politicians for this disastrous disarmament policy. Anyone who has given thoughtful attention to the literature of World War I would know that this view fails to trace the chain of cause and effect back to its origin.

The politicians were simply reflecting public opinion. That public opinion had been created by the war itself. It had been expressed, focussed and consolidated by the literature of the war. Some of the writers, C. E. Montague for instance, went right to the heart of the matter — the downright ineptitude of the military leadership and the reasons for it — others saw only the result. If the soldiers had conducted their business more efficiently, as they did in World War II, the literature would have had quite a different tone. In the ultimate analysis of cause and effect the soldiers were responsible for the wave of pacifism which swept the democratic world after the war, not the writers or the politicians. They only expressed the public opinion which the soldier had created.

The novels of World War II reflect a totally different feeling because the field leadership at any rate was infinitely better. The value of these books lies in the presentation of the cold facts in a way which enables us to grasp the "feel" of the thing in a very vivid manner. For example, we may read that the Allies sent to Russia by the Arctic route so many tanks, aeroplanes, trucks, so many millions of tons of shell, that so many ships were sunk, so many lives lost. All good stuff for a planner to know, but it leaves you stone cold, it raises no feeling at all. But if you read "HMS Ulysses" you will have a very good idea of what the cold statistics meant to the Allies in terms of human values — in terms of human courage, resolution and suffering. And if you read David Forrest's "The Last Blue Sea" you will learn more about the impact of the jungle on young troops than all the text books can give you. If in the pursuit of your profession in peace or war you forget those human values, all the rest of your knowledge will go for naught. Those values are your indispensable tools of trade.

The Documentary

There is another, though rarer, type of book which presents both the technical and the human aspects of war in an easily digested form. I don't know the literary term for this kind of work. It resembles a documentary film which presents the dry facts of some particular aspects of life, or some particular persons or events, by clothing them with human values, reactions and emotions without passing into the realm of true fiction. The characters, instead of being creatures of the writer's imagination, are real people, people who have actually lived and whose actions have influenced the course of history. Instead of simply giving us the bare, and often unimpressive facts, the writer brings them back to life, recreates the scenes and the scenes and the actions he wants to present to us. Treated in this way by a skilful writer, the facts we are seeking become more vividly impressive, more easily remembered and more easily read.

This form of literary expression has been brought to near perfection by a school of American writers. In the sphere of military history perhaps the leading exponent is Bruce Catton, whose magnificent works on the American Civil War vividly depict its strategy and tactics, the personalities, and the varying degrees of abilities of its leaders, the reactions of the troops to the ebb and flow of victory and defeat. All the great lessons are there, timeless as time itself — the results of half measures, of indecisiveness, of bad staff work, the influence of selfishness and personal ambition, the little things that go wrong and cause great disasters, the over-riding importance of the human factor with all its strength and frailty. These things always have been and probably always will be, the factors which determine the issue of victory or defeat.

In his book "A Stillness at Appomattox", Catton gives us an almost exact representation of one of the major problems of the atomic battlefield — the exploitation of the hole punched in the enemy's defences by a nuclear explosion. The Union army faced the Confederates in strongly fortified lines at Petersburg. When several assaults had failed a Union engineer suggested driving a tunnel under a vital point in the confederate works and blowing it up. That part of the programme was an immense success — what was probably the biggest explosion in any war up to that time blew a huge gap in the Confederate line. The rest was a pitiable fiasco. Through the neglect of elementary principles, through the failure to do simple things which could reasonably be expected of a junior subaltern, experienced generals failed completely to exploit the opportunity. It is remarkable how monotonously disasters occur through the failure to do simple, elementary things. History may not repeat itself, but, by Heavens, the mistakes of history do. Are some of us going to make the same mistakes on an atomic battlefield?

Recently an Australian author, Raymond Paull, made a very creditable attempt to give us in this documentary form the story of the early stages of the war on our own northern approaches. His "Retreat From Kokoda" is, I think, the first military classic this country has produced. Despite certain attempts to discredit this book, it is chock full of lessons which are of the utmost importance to the Australian Army. More recently an Englishman has given us the story of the destruction of the Normandie Dock at St. Nazaire in "The Greatest Raid of All". While this book lacks something of the power and sweep of the other works referred to, it could almost be regarded as a text book on the organization and conduct of an amphibious raid.

Some years ago, during a wet spell on a holiday, I picked up a book with the unpromising title "Prepare Them for Caesar". Up till

then Julius Caesar had been for me a shadowy, academic figure. In the book he came alive, a very human figure. Reading it I found what Wavell tells us to seek. I began to understand why men followed Caesar, why his soldiers stuck to him when his cause seemed hopelessly lost.



(Australian War Memorial)

THE KOKODA TRAIL

'About midday, and through the night, pour water over the forest, so that the steps become broken, and a continual yellow stream flows downwards, and the few level areas become pools and puddles of putrid black mud. In the high ridges... drip this water day and night over the track through a foetid forest grotesque with moss and glowing phosphorescent fungi.'

(Major-General Frank Kingsley Norris DGMS, AMF, 1948-55)

The great merit of these books — the novels and the documentaries — lies in the fact that they do not require hard study, they are truly recreational. Nevertheless every one you read adds a little more to your knowledge of war. Subconsciously your trained mind will be at work criticising, evaluating, picking out the lessons great and small, lessons which are more likely to stick because they are expressed by living, human characters instead of cold, inanimate print in a text book. Subconsciously the climate of war, the vision of men and women in action from the cabinet room to the forward area, seeps into your

soul and becomes a part of your being. A sympathetic understanding of human nature will be created in your mind, an appreciation of its grandeur and its frailty, its varying motives, its hopes and ambitions and fears, its cruelty and its compassion. It is not sufficient for the soldier to be aware academically of the various facets of human nature. He must have a far deeper awareness than that. The best way to acquire that essential awareness is to read the works of good writers whose talent enables them to present human beings in a way which touches our hearts as well as our minds.

Conclusion

The officer who studies military history along the lines of recreational reading and analytical research will benefit in three ways:

Firstly, he will develop a mind rich in the experience of war in all its aspects. The climate of war will become an integral part of his subconscious being. Without consciously thinking about it he will have a cultivated awareness of the pitfalls which strew the path of the commander and the staff officer, and he will be able to see the possibilities and the dangers of any situation or any course of action.

Secondly, he will develop the power of analysis — the power of breaking up the problem into its component parts, balancing one against the other, and arriving at a sound solution.

Thirdly, it will fill his mind with knowledge of human beings in combat, and that is essential knowledge for the soldier.

I have recommended two types of literature. Each type complements the other. The official histories give you the bare facts, the skeleton. The biographies, novels and the documentaries clothe the bare bones with the flesh of human beings in action.

Finally, remember that unless your critical analysis of fact is not tempered with sympathy and compassion you will never learn anything about humanity. □

AAJ MONTHLY AWARDS

The Board of Review has awarded the \$10 prize for the best article published in the June 1967 issue of the journal to Lieutenant-Colonel R. M. C. Cubis MVO, for his contribution 'With the Royal Australian Regiment of Artillery in Vietnam'.

Simplifying Logistic Support in The Australian Army

*Lieutenant-Colonel R. Vardanega,
Royal Australian Army Service Corps*

PART ONE — GENERAL SURVEY

Introduction

THE Australian Army has so far maintained a 'wait-and-see' policy in the organization of its supporting administrative services. The British Army has gone most of the way in seeking to clearly functionalize its administrative services and the Canadian Army is planning to go all the way with an integrated Defence structure involving the Navy, Army and Air Force. The New Zealanders seem to be maintaining the *status quo*.

This article is not designed to examine either the British or the Canadian decisions or to make any critical comments on either; it seeks only to make proposals relating to the Australian Army.

Aim

To examine in outline the structure of certain administrative services and logistic functions in the Australian Army and to recommend changes designed to simplify and rationalize the existing structure.

The Mood for Change and the Search for Logic

Because of changes made in other Commonwealth nations, there seems to be an understandable mood for change in the Australian Army. It is interesting that the desire for change appears to resolve itself into two camps, i.e., for the British way or for no change at all. It is surprising that there is no apparent trend towards either a US Army or revised 'Australian' way.

What is right in the United Kingdom or Canada is not necessarily correct for Australia. The circumstances, the geography and the military requirements are different enough to indicate that the AMF approach should be original. The basic divisional organization to be supported and traditional procedures are similar in the United King-

Lieutenant-Colonel Vardanega began his army service with the 51st Infantry Battalion (CMF) in 1938. This was followed by service with the 6th Division AIF in the Middle East, Ceylon and New Guinea and with the 5th Division in New Guinea and New Britain.

After the war he commanded a CMF unit in the armoured brigade for a time and was then appointed to the Regular Army. His experience since 1945 covered command and training appointments until December 1955 when he graduated from Staff College. Since then his service has included General Staff, Logistic Staff and Service appointments at Command HQ and Army Headquarters, Canberra. It is of interest that Colonel Vardanega, who has appeared before in AAJ, was Chief Instructor AHQ Logistics Course in 1964.

dom and Australia. This should not, however, be accepted as sufficient reason to follow what has been done in the UK.

It *must* be a bad assumption that the AMF is wrong if it is not like the British Army just as it must be a bad assumption that the US Army is wrong because it too is different.

The questions to be answered in isolation are:

- Does the current AMF administrative organization need to be changed in order to achieve economies, to increase the level of efficiency and to improve effectiveness in operation?
- If changes are needed how should they be made so as to cause the minimum disruption, and in order to avoid excessive costs and confusion?

Apparent weaknesses

The principal weaknesses in the Australian Army's administrative (logistic) systems and organizations could be summarized as:

- The facilities for movement are operated by two separate corps and, as a consequence, there are duplications of effort and the related systems are confusing.
- Too many separate elements are involved in the procurement and distribution of materiel with the result that there is an unhealthy diversification of interests and special skills are not fully exploited.
- Administrative plans are prepared by a Directorate in the General Staff branch. Therefore this planning tends to be divorced from the directorates and services which have to implement the plans.
- The duplication of effort and some clash of interests at the higher planning levels, must operate against the needs for efficiency. Examples are: DAP in GS Branch and D Maint in QMG Branch; both QMG and MGO concerned with procurement of materiel; GS Branch, QMG Branch and MGO Branch are all involved in logistic planning.

Examples

The Royal Australian Army Services Corps (ST Service) operates the cargo-carrying road transport and certain amphibians for the Army. It also procures and distributes food and petroleum. The same corps performs the air transport loading/unloading and air despatch functions for the army, with the limitation that the Royal Australian Engineers (Transportation) are allocated air transport loading and unloading duties at certain airfields outside the combat zone. The RAASC also 'sponsors' the Australian Army Catering Corps (AACC).

The Royal Australian Engineers (Transportation) operates rail and sea terminals and some air terminals. It also performs railway operating functions and operates army watercraft.

Over and above these two corps, the Directorate of Movements functions are performed by a Staff organization.

The Directorate of Administrative Planning (DAP) at Army Headquarters is in the General Staff (GS) Branch and does not have a day-to-day association with administration (or logistics) and has no direct control over any of the services which are concerned with logistics. It might therefore be described as having all the fun but none of the responsibility. It should be part of a branch with a primary function in logistics.

The logical deductions are:

- It would promote simplicity, greater efficiency and economy if only one corps manned and operated rail, road, water and air transport. Similarly only one corps should operate all terminals.
- This corps would be especially qualified to exercise executive control over all movement agencies. It would be illogical if this were not the case.
- Food and petroleum have very little in common with trucks, trains, ships and aircraft, and are equally incompatible with movement control.
- Administration is not a direct function of the General Staff.

The Royal Australian Engineers, Royal Australian Army Service Corps, and Royal Australian Army Ordnance Corps between them procure and distribute the great majority of materiel included in the AMF's inventory. All three corps are also deeply involved in aspects relating to research and development. They also man the holding and distributing units involved.

The interests of the RAE extend to combat engineer operations, construction operations, technical advice, stores procurement and distribution and the operation of the transportation service (ships, rail and some air loading and terminal operations). The corps is also the major contributor in personnel to movement control agencies. It procures materiel which is 'sponsored' by corps other than RAE. In the discharge of these dissimilar roles the RAE are responsible to two separate members of the Military Board, i.e., the Chief of the General Staff and the Quartermaster-General.

The RAASC is involved in general road and amphibian transport, performs air loading/unloading and dispatching, procures and distributes foodstuffs and POL, mans the army postal service and provides all clerks for non-corps units. It also sponsors the Catering Corps. It is responsible to only one member of the Military Board — the QMG. This corps does not procure any materiel which is 'sponsored' by another corps. Thus it is largely self-contained in the exercise of technical skills.

The RAAOC procures virtually all materiel required by the army except engineer stores, petroleum, foodstuffs and medical stores. The corps does not 'sponsor' all the materiel it procures. In fact it relies heavily for specialized procurement advice on a number of 'major user' corps or 'equipment sponsors'. It is not therefore technically self-contained at the initial procurement level, because it procures much materiel which it does not use in the field.

The Royal Australian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (RAEME) play an important part in the initial procurement stage of certain materiel, especially in the advisory role in support of RAAOC. This corps is technically self-contained.

The RAAOC and RAEME are responsible to only one member of the Military Board at Army Headquarters, i.e., the Master-General of the Ordnance (MGO). In spite of this, however, the MGO does not have direct staff officer representation at higher headquarters in field formations; at these levels QMG Branch staff officers are responsible for MGO Branch staff functions. This latter fact is important in any consideration of possible changes and the practice probably stems from the time when the MGO functions were included in QMG Branch. It might be claimed therefore that with these two corps the position is confusing in field operations, where there should be no room for doubt.

Important Points

- Two members of the Military Board are responsible for procurement of most of the AMF's materiel requirements and also for logistics relating to materiel and movements.
- The RAE is both a combat corps and a supporting logistic service.
- In outline, a corps (major user) with the necessary technical skills 'sponsors' the equipment it needs and informs the procurement corps accordingly.
- Procurement corps are involved from the factory to the user field unit, i.e., they buy materiel, store it and distribute it to users.
- If one corps procures materiel which it does not actually use in the field there is probably some consequential technical weakness at the procurement level, and an excessive need for the passage of technical advice. This is probably the case now in MGO Branch and in the Directorate of Engineer Stores (DES).

Deductions

- The procurement agencies should be staffed by personnel with appropriate skills drawn from major user corps. This should improve the technical efficiency.

- Procurement of materiel for the whole army depends largely on sound advice from 'sponsors', and therefore is not necessarily the exclusive province of only one corps. In fact, it might best be done by a non-corps organization, with the proviso that holding units (depots) should be manned by the distributing corps.
- The agency involved in procurement of materiel need not necessarily be concerned with the distribution and/or use of that materiel.
- The diversity of interests in the RAE, RAASC and RAAOC appear to be excessive. To change these, however, would involve fairly extensive, costly and time consuming alterations. Some preliminary disentangling is indicated.

Higher Direction and Planning

For the successful operation of any large organization it is obviously desirable for activities of lower echelons to be appropriately coordinated at the higher levels where policies originate. In the Army the Military Board is charged with responsibility for the control and administration of all matters relating to the military forces, in accordance with the policy directed by the Minister for the Army.

It might be expected therefore that the separate responsibilities of the members of the Military Board would be consistent in the staff branches which each member controls, in a vertical sense, down to the levels in the Army at which the Board members are represented. It will be seen later, however, that this is not entirely the case and where the inconsistencies occur there are fairly apparent weaknesses.

The Military Board

In outline the present responsibilities of members of the Military Board are illustrated below:¹

- *Chief of the General Staff (CGS)*. Military policy relating to security of the Commonwealth, military operations, organization, training, intelligence and related matters. He is also Head of the General Staff (GS) Branch.
- *Adjutant-General (AG)*. Personnel and matters related to personnel. Note: The AG aspects are not directly related to this paper. He is also head of the Adjutant General's Branch.
- *Quartermaster-General (QMG)*. Movement and maintenance of the troops. Is head of the Quartermaster-General's (QMG) Branch. Note: Not responsible for those aspects of maintenance for which the MGO is responsible.
- *Master-General of the Ordnance (MGO)*. Provision, inspection and maintenance of war materiel and ordnance stores; research, design, experiment, etc. Note: Not responsible for aspects in above for which the QMG is responsible.

¹ The Minister is not included because of his overriding position.

- *Deputy Chief of the General Staff (DCGS)*. General staff matters not involving important questions of military policy or principle for which the CGS is responsible; plus certain other GS matters specifically.
- *Citizen Military Forces Member (CMFM)*. Matters affecting the Citizen Military Forces.
- *Secretary to the Department of the Army*. Permanent Head of the Department of the Army, responsible for financial administration and control of expenditure, civil personnel, departmental aspects and the general functioning of the Department.

It will be seen that the only reservations concerning responsibilities are those applicable to the QMG and the MGO. This has its implications at lower levels in the Army as well as at the top in some respects. Note that there is no mention of administrative responsibility under GS Branch, yet it is there that administrative planning is currently done.

At Army Headquarters (AHQ) the QMG and the MGO each have their own staff branches to implement their policies and directions. At lower headquarters, however, the QMG's branch staff officers are also responsible for MGO Branch matters.

The most tempting deduction to make at this stage is to assume that all existing weaknesses would be removed if the QMG Branch and MGO Branch responsibilities were adjusted so as to avoid any duplication or overlapping. Surprisingly enough this simple deduction probably runs very close to the truth.

Coordination at the Top

The Military Board structure appears to be as functional and appropriate today as it has ever been. There is probably a clear case for the following broad divisions of policy:

- Operational and organizational aspects.
- Maintenance and movements.
- Personnel matters.
- Materiel procurement and design.
- *Departmental functions and general business.*

Coordination in the top policy-making echelons is clearly achieved at Military Board level (AHQ). At Command HQ the staff arrangements provide for coordination and this extends down to field headquarters.

Sponsorship and Procurement

Every item of materiel procured for the Army has a 'sponsor'. There are many sponsors and three principal procurement agencies. Outside the Army the Department of Supply is the procurement

'agent' (in Australia) for almost all army materiel. The three principal army procurement agencies control units in the field and 'look over their shoulders' to procure materiel — this is a significant weakness in the system.

A sponsor is normally a Head of Corps which has special knowledge of its equipments; for example, the Director of Infantry (D-Inf) is the sponsor for machine-guns and rifles, yet all corps use these weapons. The infantry, however, have special knowledge in this field. MGO Branch procures the weapons. This is one example which is sufficient to illustrate that sponsorship and procurement are divided and it is not often that the 'twain do meet'.

Procurement of materiel for the army is an enormous task, little understood by those who are not directly involved. It has become so complex that it should be a function in itself. It represents so much in money, effort and related skills that it should be the exclusive province of one organization, headed by a single member of the Military Board. This function is expanding at a fast rate.

It is considered that the procurement organization should function only as an agency for the army as a whole. It should not be concerned with the operation of depots, control of stocks or distribution in the field.

Specialized advice to the procurement organization can be provided by sponsors, and its staff should be selected from those corps in the army with the necessary background of skills.

Research and Development

Research and development are obviously related to procurement and they do in fact frequently dictate the selection of materiel for procurement. They are inseparable in many respects.

For the reasons stated Research and Development organizations should be under a common control with procurement. This obviously applies to trials of materiel.

PART TWO — PROPOSED CHANGES IN OUTLINE

As mentioned earlier and for the following reasons there is a need for some preliminary disentangling:

- Any changes made should be designed to cause the minimum disruption and avoid excessive costs and confusion.
- Alterations must be capable of being implemented in self-contained phases; i.e., at the end of Phase One it should be practicable to function for a 'settling down' period or to call a halt entirely. Any subsequent phase should not be obligatory because of something done in Phase One. Thus the changes could be spread over a number of years if desired.

If a complete solution is required a reorganization could be implemented along the following general lines:

Phase One. The separation of procurement from materiel logistics.

Phase Two. Rationalization of the various Service functions.

Outline of Phase One Changes

There would be no change in the Military Board structure because it obviously is well suited to future needs and is also appropriate to vertical separation of functions.

Procurement and research and development would become the sole responsibilities of the MGO Branch. These matters must clearly be directly represented at Military Board level as they represent a very significant proportion of annual military expenditure. The MGO would cease to be concerned with the control of any functional corps in the field.

Materiel maintenance, quartering and movement of the army would pass entirely to the QMG Branch as would the control of any corps currently controlled by the MGO. All logistic planning would also be concentrated under the QMG.

Outline of Phase Two Changes

The phase two changes would be confined to those corps placed under the QMG in phase one. They would thus be implemented under the direct control of only one member of the Military Board and be the direct concern of QMG Branch only. The advantages of this will be obvious.

In this phase the QMG could proceed to produce a separation of the following functions:

- Transportation (one corps).
- Supply (one corps).
- Repair (one corps).
- Engineer stores (RAE).

Note: The Engineer Stores Service would remain unaltered except that the Directorate of Engineer Stores would function as part of MGO Branch and pass from the direct control of the QMG.

PART THREE — PHASE ONE REORGANIZATION

By reverting to the current responsibilities of the Military Board it follows logically that the MGO should control exclusively all procurement and research and development, yet not be involved in stores holding, stock control and/or distribution.

'Movement and maintenance' surely includes all stores holding, stock control, distribution, supply forward of procurement and repair functions. Therefore the QMG should, logically, be responsible for all

materiel once it has been procured and for the preparation of administrative plans.

A suggested new grouping and composition is shown below:

MGO

- Procurement, initial inspection and replacement of all army materiel.
- Research, design, development, experiment and trials of all army materiel.
- Scales, entitlements and catalogues, as advised by the QMG.
- Staff Directorates to comprise:
 - Directorate of Research and Development. (A new directorate, which should also incorporate the present functions of the Scientific Adviser's Office.)
 - Directorate of Equipment.
 - Directorate of Procurement and Distribution.
- Functional Directorates:
 - Directorate of Ordnance Procurement.
 - Directorate of Engineer Procurement.
 - Central Provisioning Office (Supplies and POL).
 - Directorate of Medical and Dental Procurement.
 - Directorate of Inspection.
 - Scales and Documentation Centre.
- Control of the following organizations:
 - Army Design Establishment.
 - Army Food Science Establishment.
 - Army Operational Research Group.
 - Trials Units.

QMG

- Maintenance, quartering and movement of the army.
- Staff Directorates to comprise:
 - Maintenance.
 - Quartering.
 - Movements.
 - Logistic Planning.
- Control of the following Corps:
 - RAE (Tn, Stores, Construction).
 - RAASC (and the AACC).
 - RAAOC.
 - RAEME.
 - ASCO.

Implications of the Proposed Changes

MGO Branch would have sole responsibility for procurement, research and development, and trials. It would be a non-corps organization staffed by members from those corps in the army with appropriate technical skills. It would not control any particular corps in the

army and would not be directly involved in field operations. It would exist only at AHQ level.

QMG Branch would have no procurement functions and would have control of all corps responsible for the materiel maintenance and movement of the army. It would also become the one branch responsible for materiel, movements and logistic planning.

As is now the case, the General Staff would prescribe materiel policies, and sponsors of materiel would pass advice concerning specifications and quantities to the procurement branch. Responsibilities of the procurement branch (MGO) would include arrangements for delivery of materiel to stock holding depots at which point the items would pass to control of the QMG.

Advantages of the System

The most obvious advantages of the changes in Phase One are that all those corps concerned with materiel and movement in the field would have a single control from top to bottom and that procurement functions would also cease to be divided.

Other advantages are:

- A higher degree of expertise in procurement.
- Elimination of duplication in materiel and movements logistic planning.
- Equipment sponsors would all work to one procurement branch, with probable improvements in procedural matters.
- *It would simplify any possible later rationalization between RAE, RAASC; RAAOC in the transport/transportation and supply fields because the corps concerned would then be under the control of a single member of the Military Board.*
- A *minimum* of cost and disruption would be involved in achieving changes of significant importance in streamlining administration.
- Costing and financial programming should be simpler because of the further centralization of expenditure relating to materiel.
- No important changes in staff or service procedures are involved. In fact, although the implications are significant the processes of implementation are relatively simple.

Disadvantages

It might be claimed, as a major disadvantage, that the QMG would be responsible for inventory control and distribution of materiel with no control over its procurement and that this could lead to an undesirable separation between procurement and distribution. This is not a valid objection because if so it should follow that procurement and distribution should all be in the hands of one agency whether for single items or for all materiel.

The procurement agency with no formal field commitments could lose touch with forward area problems and develop a 'rear areas' outlook. This need not be because MGO Branch would necessarily retain responsibility for field trials and investigations. The officers of the branch would also come from all corps with a requirement for materiel and thus would ensure a strong practical background for the procurement branch.

Conclusion — Phase One

These suggested changes in the structure of the Australian Army should bring an important measure of increased efficiency and lead to the elimination of much overlapping in responsibilities. They should also create a sound posture for any further rationalization of service functions, with a minimum of disruption. The changes could be either a long term adjustment, or the first phase of a two-phase reorganization.

PART FOUR — PHASE TWO REORGANIZATION

Proposed Changes

In this phase it is proposed that the conflicting (and overlapping) interests of RAE (Transportation) and RAASC should be resolved and that supply functions should cease to be a concern of both the RAASC and RAAOC. No changes to Engineer Stores or RAEME are suggested.

Transportation Functions

One corps should be allotted the following roles for the army:

- Operation of all terminals for the loading and unloading of military personnel and materiel.
- Operation of all land, sea and air general transport facilities for the Army.
- Air maintenance.
- Movement control.
- Movements planning.
- Provision of staff clerks. (Just as appropriate with transportation as with any other corps, and merely a matter of convenience.)

A corps to perform the above roles would obviously draw its initial needs in skilled manpower from the RAE (Tr) and RAASC. There should be no room left for doubt of the fact that this corps would also provide the movements staffs at all formation headquarters in the army; it would thus perform both the staff and unit functions relating to movements and transportation, on behalf of the QMG. To do less would be to invite more confusion when the aim is to simplify.

In the creation of such a corps it is almost certain that deep emotional issues relating to traditions and history will arise. Those

concerned in the change-over must understand that traditions should never be allowed to impede progress.

The RAE of course would not stand to lose its separate identity as a corps and its great traditions could be preserved in the very substantial corps that would remain. It would, however, lose some of its existing functions and many of its highly skilled personnel and these losses could not be lightly regarded.

The RAASC would suffer the most serious losses if a new corps were formed because the transport and air maintenance functions of the RAASC would account for a very significant element of its personnel and of its history. The RAASC has been involved in general transport operations over many years of peace and throughout several wars. It also pioneered air maintenance during the operations in New Guinea in 1942-45. If supplies and POL also went to RAAOC there would be no corps left to preserve the RAASC traditions.

The first step towards one corps for all transportation functions should be the creation of a single transportation directorate at AHQ. This directorate should implement the changes from above, proceeding along lines prescribed by the QMG, rather than to attempt concurrent changes at every level. The Director of Transportation would, for a prescribed period, have all RAASC and RAE (Tn) personnel and units under his control and be head of corps for both. At a convenient point in time he would hand over his supplies and POL functions, personnel and units to the Director of Ordnance Services (DOS) and the AACC would commence to function as a separate corps.

The name of the Corps to perform all transportation and movement functions is a matter which need not necessarily be covered in this paper. It could continue as the RAASC or be created as a new Transportation Corps.

Supply Aspects

As stated earlier, food and petroleum have very little in common with trucks, trains, ships and aircraft. They are items of supply and the RAAOC has a primary function as a supply corps. It seems logical therefore that RAAOC should also be responsible for the supply of rations and POL. The catering corps would need to be correctly placed.

It is considered that there are three possible courses of action in respect of rations and POL:

- Leave or place supplies and POL with the corps concerned with transportation.
- Pass these responsibilities to RAAOC.
- Create a new corps to perform the supplies (rations), POL and catering functions for the Army. A Quartermaster Corps is suggested.

The only advantages that would go with leaving supplies and POL with transportation are:

- (a) There would be no real change from the present RAASC functions, and therefore no need for the development of new doctrine.
- (b) The RAASC officers and other ranks with combined ST training could continue to follow their existing career pattern.

The most obvious disadvantage lies in the fact that a large and new transportation corps (function — not name) would be hampered in its development by tasks that had no bearing on its primary role. However, it would be no more unworkable than the ST Service (RAASC) is at the present time.

There are no important reasons why the supplies and POL functions should not pass to the RAAOC. In this case the AACC could become an independent corps or be sponsored by the Ordnance Service as it is now sponsored by the ST Service.

The grouping of rations, catering and POL in one small corps (perhaps, with the addition of staff clerks) is an attractive possibility. Such an arrangement would readily fit in with any long term aim of one corps providing these services for all three branches of the armed forces.

The transfer of responsibilities should begin at AHQ Directorate level, followed by action at Command HQ level. The transfer of units and unit personnel could follow by stages.

Conclusions — Phase Two

The proposed second phase changes should produce an order of rationalization which would shape the army to meet likely developments in the next decade, at least. The increasing use of aircraft in the army and the development of other improvements in transport will call for a high degree of specialization in transportation fields. It is important therefore that the army should quickly produce an organization suited to put transport improvements to the best possible use. There is also the need to adopt postures which will allow for maximum benefits to be gained from electronic data processing and this calls for a reduction in the number of agencies through which similar data must be processed.

By narrowing the fields to be covered by officers and other ranks the proposed changes will also reduce the problems associated with training, as well as concentrating skills into more restricted areas. It is becoming increasingly difficult, time consuming and costly, to produce 'Jacks of all Trades'. Now is the time to eliminate the need for them and to offer opportunities for better specialization. □

Tradition and Reality

Lieutenant-Colonel R. T. Jones,
Royal Australian Army Education Corps

"The introduction of selective National Services does not in any way detract from the importance of volunteers for the Regular Army, the Emergency Reserve or the Citizen Military Forces. On the contrary, both the Government and the Nation would urge that as high a percentage as possible of those in our armed Services should be those who of their own choice, and in the spirit of a great national tradition, have joined one or other of these services."

Introduction

ON 28 October 1916 the people of Australia went to the polls. The referendum question to which they were required to answer simply 'Yes' or 'No' was whether they favoured the Government having the same powers to conscript for overseas service, in time of war, as the Government already had to conscript for service within the Commonwealth. The answer was 'No'.

Less than fifty years later, on 10 November 1964, the Prime Minister announced in the House of Representatives the introduction of selective compulsory National Service, with an obligation to serve overseas if required. A month later the people again went to the polls, this time to vote in a Senate election in which the new National Service scheme had been a major issue. The Government won.

There are a number of remarkable features in this apparent change of national heart. The conscription referendum was held during a war in which many Australian troops were on active service in overseas theatres; the 1964 decision was taken in a period of ostensible peace, when only a small number of Australian troops were serving overseas as part of a Commonwealth strategic reserve. Anti-conscription, anti-war sentiments have traditionally been strong in Australia; a second conscription attempt, held at a referendum in December 1917, was also defeated, while as late as 1942 Mr. John Curtin, then Prime Minister, had had considerable difficulty in persuading his own party to agree to the extension of the area of CMF employment to all the South-West Pacific south of the Equator.

Lieutenant-Colonel Jones was appointed lieutenant in the WA University Regiment in 1951, transferring to the RAAEC (ARA) in 1958 after appointments as LO HQ 13 Bde and Instructor at the Apprentices School. Then followed posts as Education Officer with HQ Western Command (1958-60) and with the Directorate of Army Education AHQ (1960-61). At the end of 1962, having qualified at the 1961 course at Staff College, he was appointed DAAG Directorate of Personnel Administration AHQ, moving thence to the Directorate of Staff Duties as a GSO 2 in December 1964. In March 1967 he was appointed ADAE HQ PNG Command.

As winner of the AMF Gold Medal and ASCO Prize Essay competition in 1965 with Tradition and Reality he repeated an achievement of the previous year.

Lastly, the scheme introduced in 1964 was a major departure from earlier compulsory training schemes: the 1911-1929 compulsory training provisions under Part XII of the old *Defence Act* were purely part-time for home defence, while the 1950-1957 scheme, apart from a brief period of full-time training, was based on service in the CMF. Understandably, Millar gives credit to the 1964 decision as 'a radical and courageous measure.'¹

The subject of this essay — and the extract from the Prime Minister's speech before the House on 10 November 1964, which forms the quotation on which the subject is based — cannot be treated in isolation from an examination of the community influences which affect the Services' manpower. National defence is, after all, a national concern; manpower for the Services is drawn from the national community, no matter by what method. To see the reasons for the Australian people's choices in 1916 and 1964 purely in terms of the events of those times is to ignore the apparent contradictions, and to admit that without foreknowledge of the events of the future no long-term manpower planning is possible.

This study sets out to prove that such long-term planning is indeed possible, and offers a basis for that planning. Its basic assumptions may be stated as follows: that general manpower policies are related to the nature of the state, that a study of the Australian setting will indicate the possible limits within which particular manpower policies may be applied, that Australian military requirements will further limit the choice of policies available, and that the final choice will in turn be dictated by the likely future development of the nation. The examination of each of these assumptions and the conclusions to which they lead establish the framework of the study; within this, the particular question of volunteer versus conscript recruitment will be examined. The study is therefore divided into four parts.

PART I — MEN IN UNIFORM: THEORY AND PRACTICE

The chief foundations of all states, whether new, old or mixed are good laws and good arms.

—Machiavelli, *The Prince*.

Nations and Armies

Today, the term 'Machiavellian' is associated with the cunning and the contrived; in reality, the author of two of the classics of statesmanship and power — *The Prince* and *Discourses on Livy* — shows considerable vision and an enviable

1. T. B. Millar, *Australia's Defence* (1965), p.125.

ability to get to the heart of a problem. These he demonstrates vividly in his condemnation of the widespread use of auxiliary and mercenary troops and his advocacy of strong, national armies.²

These armies have grown hugely since Machiavelli's Florence hired 10,000 French mercenaries to attack Pisa. Napoleon's *Grande Armee* in Russia in 1812 totalled some 600,000; in 1960 the French were maintaining this number in Algeria alone. Also in 1960, the Russians had 3,623,000 under arms, while by 1963 the United States Treaty Powers and the Communist bloc were, between them, maintaining active forces of almost fifteen-and-a-half million.³

Yet while the sheer size of 20th century military institutions would probably stagger Machiavelli, he would undoubtedly be struck by the considerable diversity in the methods by which such forces are raised and maintained. In the last 500 years, the 'nation-state' itself has undergone change, and individual nations have tended to find their solutions to the complex problems created by large standing armies in the light of their differing political developments and historical experiences. For military and political institutions are inseparable.

Three simple examples will suffice. Many Latin American and South-East Asian countries maintain armies which are politically strong, but militarily weak; these armies are typical of the societies which foster them, with small, very wealthy ruling classes and large, often poverty-stricken masses. The officer corps is seen by many as a path to political power or as an opportunity for social upward mobility; the rank and file, often drawn from the politically-neutral peasantry, are used for internal police duties rather than for external adventures. The gulf between officer and politician is narrow, while that between officer and men is too wide by Western standards.

By contrast, the Western nations themselves have set up reasonably well-defined barriers against the intrusion of the army into politics. This has arisen from relative political stability and from the historical development of the democratic state; the intervention of the military in civil affairs would itself lead to political instability, while increasingly the citizen of the democratic state has only been called upon to bear arms in national 'wars against aggression'. Small, politically non-partisan, peace-time standing armies (often only of the size required to meet colonial responsibilities), supplemented or in

2. N. Machiavelli, *The Prince* (in the OUP World's Classics series).

3. Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 1963-64* (London, Nov 1963), p.33.

effect supplanted in war by large, national conscript armies, are typical of the Western democracies in the first half of the 20th century.

The third example is historically the oldest — Aristotle draws it to our attention in his *Politics*.⁴ This is the state in which every citizen is required to bear arms, both as a universal-preparedness for war and in order to extend other training to the citizen. This is typical of the state which is constantly under threat of war, or which seeks, for political or even religious reasons, a tight, national cohesion, high morale and good discipline. Sparta, Athens and Ottoman Turkey in the past, Switzerland, and Israel today, are examples of such states.

Even such a superficial examination reveals the extent to which military institutions are dependent on and at one with political institutions, and the degree to which the military institutions derive from the historical and social background of the state. The three examples given, of course, are essentially pure systems; they are described in more detail in a number of references.⁵ Nevertheless, the three systems — the 'praetorian' armies of Latin America and South-East Asia, the 'cadre conscript' forces of the Western democracies and the 'nation in arms' principle adopted by such states as Switzerland and Israel — tend to be poles around which most other systems cluster. It is apparent, for instance, that while Australia has traditionally had a system broadly corresponding to the Western 'cadre-conscript' peace-war example quoted, it has also evidenced a trend towards the 'nation in arms'. The 'nation in arms' concept, with its compulsory service provisions, was in fact written into the old *Defence Act* but largely as a result of World War II experience was removed in 1950; in effect, the 1964 decision swings back towards that concept. France, on the other hand, shows traces of all three polar types in her military institutions.

The nature of military institutions is demonstrably linked with the historical, political and social background of the state. In like fashion, policies for the provision of manpower for the Services are related to the type of military institution which must be manned.

Manning the Services

In practice, day-to-day problems tend to obscure the theoretical relation between manpower policies and the nature of the

4. Aristotle, *Politics*, 1265a. Quoted by Rapoport in Huntington *et al*, *Changing Patterns of Military Politics* (1962), p.99.
5. See particularly Huntington *et al* *ibid*, Ch III, and S. Andrzejewski, *Military Organization and Society* (1954).

institutions they serve. Modern industrial nations face two major problems in manning their services — manpower of the high technical, physical and mental standard required by the armed Services is also at a premium in the society at large, and the skills and techniques required in the Services are rendered obsolescent no less rapidly than in other employment areas.

The Services can no longer make do with Wellington's 'scum of the earth', and there is now no basis for the old belief that bad times make for large armies. Modern armed Services need large numbers of men whose skills are either directly transferable from civil life or closely related to civil skills. Janowitz has estimated⁶ that while during the American civil war some 93 per cent of enlisted men were employed in purely 'military-type' occupations, by 1954 this proportion had dropped to below 30 per cent. At least in part as a result of this tendency, the generally small true unemployment pools in highly-developed societies are of little use in providing manpower for the Services; the Grigg Committee in the United Kingdom, after exhaustive analysis of recruiting rates and their relation to levels of employment, found that 'no correlation between unemployment and recruiting can be established from the figures'⁷.

These factors place the Services in direct competition with other employers of labour, and this competition is keenest for those whose qualifications are critical to both an expanding technology and its armed Services — the professionals and the technologists. The modern nation which requires to maintain significant regular forces is faced with two broad alternatives: it must seek these key personnel as volunteers, by entering into active competition in such areas as pay and conditions of service with other users, or it must provide these personnel to the Services through some form of conscription, thus directly denying their use to other users. Neither of these courses is desirable in itself, as neither contributes to the requirement to 'close the gap' between supply and demand. In consequence, the Services in modern nations attempt in part to meet their own needs, by conducting extensive in-Service training courses both for servicemen and for enlisted civilians (both those voluntarily enlisted and those conscripted).

But the rate at which modern military skills and techniques are rendered obsolescent presents a consequential problem. Again, the Services must attempt to meet the problem through their own training institutions and, in fact, modern armed

6. M. Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait* (1960), p.65.

7. *Report of the Advisory Committee on Recruiting* (HMSO, London, 1958; Cmd 545). The quotation is from Annex B, p.59.

Services are often complimented upon the extent and complexity of their training and re-training programmes. The implications, however, are themselves extensive; a nation which wishes to maintain a large, effective, permanent army must accept a heavy cost in in-Service training (with perhaps, a hidden bonus in the value of Service-learned-skills-to-the-community, as in France and Germany), while a nation which assesses that it cannot afford a large army on a permanent basis and attempts to rely on reserves or large-scale mobilization in time of need has a lower cost to meet in peace but must accept a heavier burden on mobilization (perhaps at a time when it can least afford it).

Inevitably, each nation makes its own choice among the types of alternatives offered above, and takes into consideration other factors such as the immediacy of military threats and the internal political and economic climate. The result is considerable diversity, but it is hardly accidental that, in spite of this diversity, it is still possible to classify armed forces, by the way in which they are manned, into four broad categories — voluntary, conscript, citizen-army and mixed systems.

British Commonwealth countries have in general based their Services upon a voluntary system. This avoids the administrative and financial problems (and the potential political odium) of some form of compulsory service, but it carries the penalties of having to compete directly, in terms of pay and conditions of service, with other community employers (including the government itself), and presents huge problems on mobilization. The conscript system, as it exists in such countries as France, Denmark and Russia, requires every able-bodied male to serve one long period of permanent military service, followed by a period on the reserve or on a number of reserves. It produces a large standing army (if it is too large, the intake may be reduced by ballot) and an even larger reserve, but it effectively 'sterilizes' a number of key men by putting them compulsorily in uniform (to the possible detriment of the economy) and raises the question of whether large reserve forces are either effective or economical.

Undoubtedly, the most 'democratic' system is the citizen-army concept employed in such countries as Israel and Switzerland, with its automatic obligation for all citizens to serve in the armed forces in time of need. Although it can be surprisingly economical (Switzerland, for example, runs her model system on approximately 4 per cent of her annual national income), such a system has only a very small 'force-in-being', is administratively cumbersome and needs time to develop to full

effectiveness. Its effectiveness was amply demonstrated in the Sinai campaign of 1956.

The mixed system, of which the United States and the Federal German Republic provide examples, does not rely on one type of recruit to the exclusion of others. Both countries, for example, rely on a combination of volunteers and conscripts; both use the conscript provision, either directly or indirectly, to aid volunteer recruitment. In essence, such a system tries to gain the advantages while minimizing (or ignoring) the disadvantages of the other systems; if carefully designed, this system would appear to have the best potential.

The point has been made that this tendency for manning systems to group themselves into four categories is hardly accidental, and it is obvious that these categories bear a close relation to the types of national army described in the last section. The Swiss and Israeli citizen-army systems are the logical outcome of the 'nation-in-arms' military type represented by those countries; the derivation of the typical British Commonwealth and Russian systems is equally clear. Where there is divergence from a military type, it can be traced, as in the case of the United States (to which a 'cadre-conscript' — volunteer system would appear appropriate), to the development of needs which have made adherence to the type no longer relevant (this, however, does not invalidate the generalization). It will be seen later that this has also happened in Australia.

The first assumption can now be taken to have been demonstrated: there is a direct relationship between the nature of the state, the nature of its military institutions, and the policies it adopts in manning these institutions. It is a relationship which may be affected by differing responses to day-to-day problems, but it is also apparent that even these differing responses will owe their origin to differences in national background and characteristics — the basic relationship is not altered. It is to this relationship in the Australian setting that we must now turn, to determine their consequences on manpower policy for the Australian Services.

PART II — THE AUSTRALIAN SETTING: TRADITION AND REALITY

On the face of it Australia has had gambler's luck.

—Horne, *The Lucky Country*.

Tradition or Myth?

It is hardly surprising that when Australia commemorates her war traditions, she does so on anniversaries associated with

a war now fifty years in the past. The real meaning of Anzac and Armistice Days will be argued far into the future; both of them, however, were new experiences to a new nation. They were like nothing that had gone before, and nothing that followed could be quite the same.

— Yet it would be quite wrong to build the war traditions of a nation — particularly those of a young nation in an old war — into a national military tradition. For there is a real distinction between war traditions and military traditions: the one is the substance of war museums and unit reunions, the other is an active element in the making of national policies. It is possible to blur the line between the two; a national military tradition will call on the useful aspects of the traditions of war for its popular expression, while organizations with a vested interest in the maintenance of the traditions of war will often create pressure for the formation of particular national policies. The distinction, however, remains.

It is a distinction often overlooked in Australia. The traditions of war — particularly the traditions of World War I — have been mistaken for an Australian national military tradition. It is time to set the record right; Australia has, in her short history as a nation, amassed remarkable and honourable traditions of war, but her supposed national military tradition is a myth.

The Real Tradition

Australia today is a modern, highly-industrialized, liberal democracy. Her history, since Federation, has been one of reasonably rapid and stable development towards this state of nationhood, and it has been a progress little impeded by the forces which in the same period have created new nations and destroyed old ones. Particularly in this sense, she has been a lucky country.

The popular tradition is that of the 'frontier' — of a pioneering, individualistic, hard-working, hard-playing people, with a rightful contempt for the iniquities of authority, governments and foreigners but with a strong sense of mateship and a belief in the rights of the individual. The real tradition is perhaps less flattering; it is built up of elements which reflect the direction Australia has taken since Federation and the kind of path she has been able to travel.

There is the element of being modern, of being 'with it' — how much of this is an imported, second-hand modernity, cast off by some other nation in the process of going ever further? There is the element of industrialization, with its base of natural

wealth and its creed of progress — how often does this wait on overseas foresight, initiative and capital? There is the element of liberal democracy — when will its fruits be extended to Aborigines, pensioners and other minority groups? Above all, there is the element of luck, with its consequent belief that what has happened for so long is likely to continue. It is this last element which so greatly influences the answers to the questions that have gone before, in that luck has been largely responsible for us not having had to find real answers in the past. Indeed, it has been luck which has allowed us to hold to the popular tradition for so long when it must be obvious that it is no longer tenable.⁸

The real tradition is of a nation, Western in outlook and origin, seeking to develop the characteristics of a modern Western nation but lacking the external stimulus and thus the internal drive to force the pace. It is not hard to explain or to find excuses; the pressures for more positive development have either been lacking or been enervated by distance, security and isolation. However, the needed stimulus, and with it the drive to more positive progress, may now be with us — one of Donald Horne's less arguable observations is that which notes Australia's sudden discovery of and growing preoccupation (almost obsession) with Asia and its peoples. In consequence, the future may look quite different; this does not alter the past.

It is in the events of the past, and in the traditions which have been built up around it, that we must look for evidence of a national military tradition. For a guide as to the basic nature of Australia's military institutions, we must also look to the underlying nature of the state.

It has already been noted that Australia's military institutions have broadly corresponded to the 'cadre-conscript' model described earlier, one that is generally typical of Western democracies at least up to the middle of this century. In this, she has chosen the only one of the three general models which would satisfy the requirements of her type of social and political system — the 'praetorian' model would be unacceptable due to the nature of the Australian social base and the requirement to differentiate between civil and military functions, and the 'nation-in-arms' model is inappropriate to her historical origins and her military needs. Yet in one critical area she has diverged from the general 'cadre-conscript' model.

At least until 1942, Australia conscripted only for home defence, and relied wholly upon volunteers for her expeditionary

8. The generalizations in this paragraph owe much to Donald Horne's, *The Lucky Country* (1964).

forces. This system she found satisfactory to her military needs, compatible with her relative security and isolation from aggression, and thoroughly in tune with her traditions — up to the point where these could no longer be met by this system without a considerable degree of real danger. In this sense, the breakthrough came in 1942; in the presence of a tangible threat, with her military needs making impossible demands on volunteer manpower, with her security threatened, the militia had to take an active part in the defence of the mainland beyond its shores. It proved itself, magnificently — and in so doing destroyed an embryo national military tradition.

Up to a point, then, the traditional Australian military pattern is clear. In peace, the small, professional, politically non-partisan, regular cadre was all that was required; in war — 'too important to be left to the generals' — that cadre was submerged into a large national army, composed of volunteers for overseas service and conscripts for home defence. This pattern — this military tradition, if you like — disintegrated in the face of a situation in which overseas service was no longer an adventure in support of high national ideals but an immediate requirement for the security of the mainland.

It may be, as Donald Horne suggests, that as a nation we are masters of expediency and improvisation. It is more likely that we have been able to draw upon our real national traditions in time of need — our modern, industrialized, democratic base, however imperfect, and our luck. Let us continue to celebrate our honourable traditions of war, but let us recognize that we owe them not to any inbuilt national military tradition but to the real efforts of a nation responding, according to its traditions and capabilities, to urgent national need. This recognition is vital in our approach to the realities of the present.

Present Realities

The realities of Australian social and economic development are plain to see — a generally prosperous, socially-mobile society with a fast-growing, full-employment economy. In this, Australia is typical of other, similar, Western democracies, and given a favourable international situation there is every reason to expect these trends to continue. The political and military realities are also plain, but the future is less sure; this also she shares with other Western democracies.

It is no longer practical or even possible to speak of clear states of peace and war. Traditionally, democracies have treated these states as clearly identifiable and requiring specific and sharply-differentiated responses. This, indeed, is the origin of

the typical 'cadre-conscript' military system found in Western democracies up to the middle of this century; in peace, the military served few functions other than as a colonial police force and as a framework on which a national army could be formed in time of war, while in war itself the nation as a whole assumed the military burden. This differentiation also satisfied the requirements for effective civilian control of the military and for isolation of the military from politics. As this differentiation has become blurred, along with the blurring of the line between peace and war, complex political and military problems have arisen.

The United States experience during and after World War II is significant⁹. As it became increasingly apparent that the purely military victory in 1945 had not met the requirement for post-war peace, a crisis developed in civil-military relations. In somewhat cynical terms it could be claimed, with some reason, that if war was too important to be left wholly to generals, then peace was too fragile to be left entirely to politicians. It was becoming evident that in war it was not enough to win — it was necessary to win in such a way that peace would be assured; it was equally evident that in peace it was just as necessary to be prepared for wars-short-of-wars — ranging in scope from realistic, backed-up threats to large-scale containment actions. The clear differentiation between peace and war had gone, and with it went the isolation of the military from politics and even, to some degree, objective civilian control. It was possible for Professor Lasswell to postulate the development of a 'garrison-state', a democracy in which the military becomes ascendant as a result of prolonged international tension.¹⁰

The resultant crisis in U.S. civil-military relations has even now not been entirely resolved. It is significant, however, that America has broken with her traditional 'cadre-conscript' system as effectively as she has abandoned her isolationist policy — neither is relevant to the realities of the present. America now conscripts, in a period of ostensible peace, for active service overseas.

A direct comparison between the United States and Australia is hardly valid — we have only a fraction of America's international responsibilities, for example — but some lessons are there to be learned. Our own international commitments are

9. The content of this section is derived principally from S. P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State* (1957) and A. A. Ekirch, *The Civilian and the Military* (1956).

10. The most recent elaboration of the 'garrison state' hypothesis is found in Huntington *et al*, Ch II — 'The Garrison State Hypothesis Today', by Lasswell himself.

growing, and with our treaty obligations and the general strategic situation in South-East Asia, the simple peace-war dichotomy is no longer a practical belief. Traditional methods of maintaining a peacetime army — the cadre of the 'cadre-conscript' system — are only as valid as the concept of the cadre itself, and it is becoming evident that the cadre is no longer sufficient. Even the traditional methods of ensuring objective civilian control of the military, relatively simple under pre-World War II conditions, may need examination and revision; as we have adopted the traditional British approach to civil-military relations, it is unlikely that we will face the same type of crisis which confronted the United States, but it is significant that even the British had their 1914 'Ulster Rebellion'.

The most pressing reality of the present, however, is the demand that the new situation imposes upon the nation as a whole. Against a background which has no clear military tradition, in an economy which is straining to meet the greatly increased social and industrial demands of modernization, in a society in which instant readiness for war in time of peace is a new concept, above all in a nation which by its luck and its traditions has been lulled into an acceptance of the idea that what has happened for so long is likely to continue, there is now an urgent military requirement to produce a greater effort. Manpower policies suited to this new requirement must be related to these political, social and economic factors; these factors will impose limitations upon the degree to which the new needs can be met. The success which has come from national efforts in the past is obviously no guarantee of success under new conditions and in new situations in the future. The second assumption basic to this study — that the nature of the Australian setting will indicate the possible limits within which particular manpower policies may be applied — has been established; the real limits will come from an assessment of the Australian military requirement.

PART III — THE MILITARY REQUIREMENT AND THE NATIONAL INTEREST

The strategic position in which Australia finds itself is unusually complex... There is a range of military situations in which Australia must be prepared to contribute forces and sustain them over a period... The initial contributions can only come from highly trained regular forces and provision must exist to increase these by appropriate reserves and citizen forces as the situation might require.

—Defence Report (1965).

The Size and Shape of the Armed Forces

Estimates of the approximate size of regular forces needed by Australia to meet likely immediate requirements are remarkably

similar, whether made by military or non-military experts — the Army is seen as requiring a regular field force of divisional strength, while both the Navy and the Air Force, although requiring smaller numbers, need proportionately similar increases in present strengths. Behind these first-line forces stand the citizen and reserve forces; while the need for these is accepted, the size of the requirement for citizen and reserve forces is much more open to debate than is the case with regular forces.

The size of armed forces is of course dictated primarily by estimates of the strategic situation and the resulting assessment of operational requirements. The emphasis which has been placed upon the expansion of regular forces in Australia in recent years is directly attributable to the results of periodic re-evaluations of the strategic situation; it is also evident, however, that there has been a simultaneous development in professional military thinking. Discussion of the need for a 'graduated response' capability, heard frequently in military circles and implicit in the Department of Defence statement quoted at the head of this Part, owes much to the general dialogue on deterrence theory which has attracted much attention in recent years.

Yet there are significant practical limits to the size of such forces, and to their 'shape' — their distribution between immediately-available and follow-up forces, and between operational forces and their support. It would be folly, for example, to ignore equipment considerations in determining the possible size and shape of armed forces — it would be unlikely to cost less than \$300,000,000 to equip a modern division, and the very nature and quantity of this equipment would impose a heavy training, maintenance and accounting burden on any military system, while the need for skilled manpower to maintain, repair and replace this equipment is likely to continue to grow at a faster rate than the need for men with purely military skills (a trend already noted above, in the study by Janowitz¹¹). The availability of manpower is itself a most obvious limitation; even under a conscription system, the state may be forced to compromise between defence and general economic needs in determining the size of the call up.

It is these practical limits, as much as the developing strategic situation and the re-direction of defence policy, which have forced a re-assessment both of our regular manpower policies and of our planned employment of citizen and reserve forces.

11. M. Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait*.

Regular manpower, particularly that for an Army with a field force of divisional strength and with adequate administrative, training and logistic support, is simply not available in Australia in either the quantity or the quality required under a volunteer system. In a 1960 study of 31 representative countries, Australia ranked highest in basic pay-rates paid to private soldiers (followed by Sweden, Canada and the United States)¹²; even given an economic climate at that time which might have been thought favourable to regular recruiting, regulars could not be 'bought' in sufficient numbers. In the quality of manpower available, it was obvious that the Services could not compete with other employers on a purely volunteer basis; the recent officer-retention policy, criticized extensively both inside and outside the Services, was in part a reflection of this inability to compete.

Citizen and reserve forces in Australia are subject to the same limitations already noted in respect of other countries — the limitations of real availability, training, and equipment. It is of interest to note that the R.A.N. and R.A.A.F., whose regular forces together approximately equal the size of the regular army, maintain citizen and reserve forces which total less than one-sixth of the citizen and reserve forces maintained by the A.M.F.¹³. Undoubtedly, this reflects the problems faced by largely technical and professional forces, such as the R.A.N. and R.A.A.F., in economically employing such forces; it may also be indicative of the much stronger citizen force tradition in the A.M.F. The army in particular faces a considerable problem in making its citizen and reserve forces truly effective, and while the new legislative provision justifies the retention of such forces (in view of the realistic potential for 'graduated response' now given them, particularly in the 'defence emergency short of mobilization' context) it is as well to remember that this in itself does not increase their effectiveness as military forces.

In a nutshell, the Services require significant numbers of highly trained (and thus highly trainable!) regulars, with maximum operational availability and adequate support, backed up by valid and effective citizen and reserve forces. If the numbers cannot be found by volunteer recruitment, what factors should govern compulsory manpower provisions?

12. M. R. D. Foot, *Men in Uniform* (1961), Appendix II, p.162.

13. See *Defence Report*, 1965 (presented to Parliament on behalf of the Minister for Defence, Senator the Hon. Shane Paltridge), Table I.

Volunteer or Conscript?

At the outset, two statements must be made about volunteers: it has already been shown that it is impractical, in Australia at present, to plan on the availability of sufficient volunteers, and 'the thesis that one volunteer is worth ten conscripts is not necessarily sound'.¹⁴ Enough has been said to justify and explain the first statement, but the second requires elaboration.

It may be true, as Millar suggests, that a good volunteer is worth ten inefficient, unwilling conscripts. It is just as likely, however, that an efficient, willing conscript will be worth quite a number of volunteers; both have basically the same minimum standards of entry, but the average conscript (given an arbitrary ballot) is likely to be of better quality than the average volunteer (given the strong competition for above-average manpower between the Services and the community at large). In any case, the efficiency and the willingness of the conscript are at least in part the responsibility of the Services.

However, a conscription system brings with it certain inherent problems, particularly those which arise out of the relatively short period of obligatory regular service typical of such schemes. Unless he transfers to the regular forces, the average conscript will have little or no chance of reaching senior non-commissioned rank, particularly in those appointments requiring a high degree of either military or civil-military skill (and thus a long period of in-Service training). This will be particularly so in a conscription system which is 'non-selective' in the sense that conscripts are not selected against known Service deficiencies in specific areas and cannot always be utilized in their civil skills. The basis of conscription is therefore of considerable importance, and when taken in conjunction with prevailing in-Service conditions will largely dictate the size and shape of the armed Service for which conscription is introduced.

There are two ways in which a conscription system can be made selective, both resulting from a need for manpower which falls short of the drastic 'universal' provision. One is the West German type, in which all male citizens are liable but only those required to meet the needs of the Services are taken; this is based on the specific needs of the Services in certain areas and results in only a proportion of nineteen-year-olds being called up. The other is the type introduced in Australia in 1964, and in fact extensively used in Western Europe at times, in which a number of the eligible group are balloted arbitrarily in accord-

14. Millar, *Australia's Defence*, p.127.

ance with the total numbers required by the Service. The difference is in the basis of selection: in the first case, what the man is determines whether he is selected; in the second, what he is does not influence the initial process of selection at all. The type of system used in West Germany is obviously 'designed to suit the needs of the forces, rather than to respect the rights of the citizens'¹⁵.

There can be little doubt that in 'respecting the rights of the citizen' the Australian system presents the Services with considerable problems, the most obvious among which is the necessity to absorb, four times a year, an intake of conscripts whose range of civil occupations bears no direct relationship to the needs of the Service at the time. Given also the existing system by which trades are classified (and thus Service tradesmen paid) on the basis of direct comparison with the civil trade structure (which is still largely based on a 4-to-5 year apprenticeship system), it will be apparent, that while certain conscripted tradesmen will be absorbed readily into the Service trade and technical NCO structure the majority of conscripts will be unable to be absorbed into these areas because of their relatively short period of service.

Conscription, Australian style, will produce significant numbers of 'good conscripts'; the problems of absorbing them satisfactorily, economically and efficiently are considerable, however, and there is an obvious requirement for numbers of high-quality volunteers to fill appointments into which conscripts cannot be absorbed. These problems exist equally if conscription is applied to building up the citizen forces. This adds considerable point to the Prime Minister's statement that 'the introduction of National Service does not in any way detract from the importance of volunteers'¹⁶. Two facts are incontrovertible, however: volunteers, especially those suitable to move into rank and trade appointments which cannot be filled by conscripts, are not readily available, and on this basis there is a finite limit to the expansion of the regular army purely by the use of National Servicemen called up under 1964 Act.

It is as yet too early to predict what degree of transfer from National Servicemen to the ranks of the regular volunteers will be attained, or what in fact are the finite limits to which the regular army can be expanded under the present scheme. These are critical factors and require close study. And, as in any study

15. Foot, *Men in Uniform*, p.113.

16. Extract from the Prime Minister's speech on the Defence Review, made to the House of Representatives on 10 Nov 1964 (p.4) and quoted in the subject set for this essay.

of Services' manpower, some assumptions as to the true nature of the national interest in manning the Services must be made.

The National Interest

The primary national interest, as vested in the Services, is that of the maintenance of national security, not, it is important to note, the militaristic interest of the fighting of wars. The failure of the 'cadre-conscript' system in the mid-20th century has been in its inability to cope with anything between small colonial actions and global wars. Australia's armed Services exist to maintain her security in the face of real and potential threats which cover a wide range of power and which require a wide and flexible spectrum of response.

Against this must be set the requirement for orderly political, social and economic development as a nation, and the desire to act out an international role largely by diplomacy alone. In the past, Australia has been able to put defence at a low priority in peace, well below the requirements and desires stated above; this has itself contributed to national development. With the general blurring of the line between peace and war, with the strategic situation to which Australia has found herself a largely unwilling party, and with the vastly more complex requirements of military security, this priority has had to change.

The question is what else must change with it? Some fundamental changes have already occurred: the community has accepted a corporate responsibility for maintaining adequate defence forces in time of peace, the government has altered the whole basis of the provision of manpower for defence, and the Services have begun to adapt to this new situation. Other changes, however, may be necessary. The community may have to accept a re-definition of its 'rights' as protected by the ballot-box, which while it ensures equality of opportunity neither shares the obligation nor provides the manpower a modern Service needs, and the Services may well have to re-assess their training and employment procedures which, while suited to a small force of long-term volunteers, may no longer be adequate to the needs of a larger force on a new basis and with a sizeable element of short-term conscripts. The Services may also have to re-assess the validity of their present forces (regular, citizen and reserve) in the variety of cases from the deployment of small forces to national mobilization which are presented by the graduated responses required in the future.

The society is changing, and with it must change the institutions which comprise it; to stand still, as the Irishman said, is to go backwards. The supposition that the society may be becoming more worldly and materialistic — though objective proof of this would be most difficult — would in theory have little import for a manpower system for which a positive need for some form of conscription has been proved to and accepted by the community. In practice, in the Australian case, this question would be likely to have some significance as the continuing need for a considerable number of volunteers has also been proved; this is nullified, however, by our experience that whatever pay and conditions of service have been offered (catering, that is, to the supposition that the society is becoming more worldly and materialistic!) it is still not possible to attract sufficient volunteers. Whatever validity this supposition may have, it is apparent that as a factor in volunteer recruitment it is not as significant as other community social and economic factors considered earlier.

The Australian military requirement and its relation to the national interest have established the third assumption necessary to this study — that these do, in fact, dictate the real limits of our Service manpower policies. They establish that we require a defence force in peace larger than that which can be provided from within the present Australian community by volunteer recruitment; they demonstrate that whatever system is created requires selectivity and flexibility if it is to be capable of responding to the requirements of the Services and the war requirements of the nation, and they suggest that the present system may not fully meet these requirements. Lastly, they suggest that further change, on the part of both the community and the Services, may be necessary to meet our real defence needs.

PART IV — MANPOWER AND THE FUTURE

The nature of each nation's security problem must determine its call-up system; and each security problem depends in turn on the intertwining of geography, economics, demography, strategy, politics and history.

—Foot, *Men in Uniform*.

Any examination of Australia's possible future defence needs must acknowledge that some things are likely to change but that others may remain the same. Threats to the national security are likely to change in scope and direction, but as far as one can see into the future there will always be a threat. Warfare itself will change, possibly radically, in response to political and technological change, but essentially it will always require trained

manpower. It is almost impossible to conceive of the changes likely on the Australian scene in the future, but insofar as it affects her defence needs we must assume that she will still remain modern, Western, highly-industrialized and democratic (to assume otherwise is to have to conjure up an entirely new defence and manpower concept, anyway).

Yet on the basis of the three assumptions chosen to underlie this study, and demonstrated earlier, it is possible to project our 1965 defence system into the future without having to accept radical change. The new directions established in 1964 seem broadly related to our likely future needs; the old, inadequate 'cadre-conscript' system has followed most of its other national models into the discard and there is in its place the basis of a more valid graduated response policy, while it would appear that national priorities have been reshuffled to give defence, for the first time, a priority more suited to the unstable realities of our strategic situation. It is important to remember, however, that these are in fact new directions, that on these new paths we must constantly check to see that we will arrive at our new destination. Already, it is possible to erect a few warning signs.

Our new defence destination is clear — to have armed forces which are capable of responding to any foreseeable strategic requirement, compatible with the ability of the community to provide them. The problem, however, is not merely one of size; the shape of these forces, and their effectiveness, is also important.

There is evidence that the selective National Service scheme introduced in 1964 will create additional problems of size and shape. The basis of selection is such that there would appear to be a finite limit to the expansion of the regular army by this means alone, while an intake unrelated to the specific (as distinct from the total) manpower needs of the Service will result in absorption problems and a likely increased demand for volunteers — the latter generally unavailable except by a programme aimed at encouraging National Servicemen to join the regular army. While the actual size of these problems cannot be resolved at this point, there is an urgent need to avoid any action — such as an arbitrary further increase to the National Service intake — which might aggravate them. They should, of course, be under examination as a matter of priority.

The question of the real availability and effectiveness of citizen and reserve forces is also unresolved, and it will need a careful examination of the part to be played by regular, citizen and reserve forces in each of the possible areas of graduated

response before we can be sure that our citizen and reserve force policies, in particular, are valid. It is obvious that our possible range of responses would be critically (and possibly fatally) reduced if our citizen and reserve force policies are not soundly based.

Ultimately, our needs may take us further in the direction of the manpower policies of the United States or of West Germany, in our search for a system which is more selective and flexible than our present system would appear to be. Our problems, though, will remain unique to Australia, an 'intertwining' of those factors mentioned by Foot and discussed in these pages. We must seek our own solutions, but in the knowledge that the new base we build on, the result of the 'radical and courageous measures' of 1964, is sound. □

PORT MORESBY, 1942

A happy inspiration stimulated the construction of section posts along the perimeter. Accompanying his detailed instructions for the new defence plan, Porter [Commander, 30th Infantry Brigade] announced a competition awarding a fortnight's home leave to the section which constructed the best post — a prize calculated to excite any soldier's enthusiasm and ingenuity. Not only were these posts the best Porter had ever seen, their concealment and camouflage defied detection, and several eminent visitors did not at first recognize positions on which they actually stood.

The end result of the competition was not so encouraging. The home leave prize was awarded to a section of the 39th Battalion's E Company. The happy recipients departed — but never returned. Eventually, when they did not report again for duty, they were posted Absent Without Leave, to be apprehended and punished.

— Raymond Paull, *Retreat from Kokoda*. (1958)

Letters to the Editor

Fluid Warfare in the Nuclear Age

Sir, — Colonel Garland argues with force and clarity his case that the air mobile division is the proper solution to the problems of guerilla and post-nuclear warfare (AAJ June 1967), but he, like all others who espouse this thesis, appears to assume that in any such war in which we may be engaged we will enjoy total, permanent and unchallenged supremacy in the air. To base a tactical concept on such an assumption is rash; to base a country's military organization upon it is foolhardy.

It is important to recognize that much less than air parity may threaten (and very gravely threaten) air lines of communication. We already know that at much less than parity on the ground a guerilla enemy can threaten ground L of C; as long ago as Elizabeth I we knew that at much less than parity on the sea an enemy's sea lanes could be laid waste. As a Claymore to a CL, as the Golden Hind to a Spanish galleon, so, I would think, just a few MIGs to a swarm of choppers or a flight of ponderous MRTs.

This is not to argue that the tactical concept of the air mobile division is invalid. I am sure it is valid — but until the problems of such a division operating in the face of enemy air superiority have been considered the concept remains unvalidated.

It may be argued that we have no need to consider the problems posed by enemy air supremacy since the United States would always ensure that no enemy that we might conceivably fight ever achieved such supremacy. If this is the solution that is offered it is an appalling one. With forethought and intent we make the operational capability of our Army wholly dependent upon the efforts of our ally. To do this is to abandon national sovereignty — which, one had always thought, it was the purpose of one's armed forces to establish and maintain.

The present divisional organization generously protects us from tanks but leaves us remarkably exposed to aircraft. Tanks, with their lumbering logistics, might force our air mobile infantry to move but would need a lot of luck to pin us down and destroy us. Enemy aircraft would need to establish only a few days local supremacy to deny us both movement and supply, leaving us patent to destruction.

It is remarkable that ten years ago in TEWTs the enemy always enjoyed supremacy in the air — lest the problem be too simple for the students. To-day we always enjoy this supremacy — lest, perhaps, the problem prove far too difficult for the Directing Staff?

I have no doubt that, both tactically and nationally, the concept of the air mobile division is valid. It is important, however, that its professional protagonists should complete the task of validating it.

5 Field Ambulance CMF

S. F. McCullagh, Major RAAMC

Medium of Exchange for Military Thought

Sir,—We are inclosing a copy of the October issue of the Military Review in which we have published a digest of the article titled 'The Validity of the Domino Theory' by Wing Commander K. Tongue which appeared in the April 1967 issue of the Australian Army Journal.

One of the major purposes of the Military Review is to provide a medium of exchange for military thought between nations of the Free World. The privilege of using material from journals such as yours is a major contribution to this effort.

Would you please forward the inclosed copy of our magazine to Commander Tongue and express our congratulations for a worthy contribution?

Thank you for the courtesy of allowing us to reprint this article.

Military Review,
U.S. Army Command and
General Staff College,
Fort Leavenworth,
Kansas.

Donald J. Delaney
Colonel, Artillery
Editor in Chief



THE ARMED FORCES OF CANADA 1867-1967,

edited by Lieutenant-Colonel D. J. Goodspeed
(Directorate of History, Canadian Forces Headquarters, Ottawa 1967)

THERE is a correlation between the defence forces of the Dominions of Canada and Australia despite the difference in geography and mixture of race. Both countries were settled by men and women of independent thought, courage and the will to create something better than that which they left. While many of Australia's first settlers did not come to this country of their own choice they were of hardy stock and soon made the adjustment required to begin a completely new life.

Recognition of the need for internal defence created 'homespun' militia units in both countries in the nineteenth century. These purely volunteer units of colonial militia sponsored the creation of a national army. While Australia found no need to call on its units Canadian militia fought against the Fenians (an Irish-American Brotherhood intent on liberating Canada from British domination), and the Metis (recalcitrant settlers in the Northwest Territories) and their Indian supporters.

A similar pattern of the development and service of both countries' armed forces continued. Each made a sizeable contribution to the Boer War. About 60,000 Canadians and the same number of Australians lost their lives in the First World War, although Australia only committed two thirds of the size of the Canadian force. Roughly the same number of Canadians and Australians (1,000,000) went into uniform in the Second World War but the casualties sustained by the Canadians were higher — over 17,000 in the Royal Canadian Air Force gave their lives.

In the wars and commitments to help keep the world's peace since 1945, aside from Korea, Canadian servicemen have performed the role of 'watch-dogs' in many trouble spots. In fact, Canada has taken part in more United Nations operations than any other nation and is the only country to have participated in every one of the world organization's peace forces.

Today the Canadian armed forces have entered a new phase with 'integration' of their services; the planning for which commenced

at the end of the Second World War. In 1946 one Minister of National Defence controlled the Navy, Army and the Air Force.

In a report published in 1963 the Royal Commission on Government Organization noted an increase in the size of the 'administrative tail' common to all military forces and, 'among the operational elements... a rapid increase in the technical content of the work, a large element being common to all services'. There was 'a growing range of activities of common concern to the Services, for which the traditional basis of organization is unsuited. It is increasingly recognized that to maintain three separate organizations for such functions is uneconomic.' Consequently, in 1964, there was a complete reorganization of the forces 'command structure' on a unified basis.

In tracing the history of the armed forces of Canada since its establishment as a dominion the Department of National Defence has done a fine job of presentation in this centennial volume. A chapter is devoted to the fighting heritage of the country from the time, in 1609, when Samuel de Champlain killed two Iroquois braves with one shot from his harquebus (this is a very early example of practical integration) until 1 July 1867 when Canada, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick came together to found a new nation in North America.

Containing 250 photographs and illustrations there are some fine reproductions of war art and the whole is a pleasing and inspiring portrayal of a young country playing a full part in the defence of its own ideals and at the same time displaying a proper regard for those of less fortunate countries. Has not Australia a heritage to also warrant portrayal of these worthwhile qualities? The year 1970 is the centenary of our own 'Volunteer' forces—C.F.C. □

CORRECTION

In the article 'Aspects of the Military Geography of South-East Asia' (AAJ No. 223, December 1967) in the tenth line from the bottom of p.8 appears the statement that 'over 4 per cent of the area'. This should read 'over 40 per cent of the area'.