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ARMY JOURNAL

A periodical review of military literature

No. 305, October 1974

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(Army Public Relations)

A P-4000... (The 161st... Saved... from Helwan... flying along the Crockerback Range in



INTERVENTION FOR IMPERIAL INTEGRITY

AN ANALYSIS OF THE CAUSES OF THE ANGLO-BOER WAR OF 1899-1902

From a British cartoon of July, 1899, John Bull invites the Boer leader, Paul Kruger, to choose negotiations or war. Feeling he had little alternative, Kruger chose war and all that it entailed.

*Major J. V. Johnson
Royal Australian Army Ordnance Corps*

INTRODUCTION

OCTOBER 10th, 1974, is the seventy-fifth anniversary of the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902, more commonly known as the Boer War. This article traces the development of the situation which led to British and Imperial troops being committed to a war which many held to be essential to maintain the integrity of the British Empire, and which many others considered essential to preserve the rights of British subjects living and working in the two Afrikaner republics, Transvaal and the Orange Free State.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SOUTH AFRICA TO THE EMPIRE

With the development and expansion of British interests in India, Australasia, and China, a growing interest was shown in the Dutch

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colony of the Cape of Good Hope. As early as July 1797, Earl Macartney communicated to Henry Dundas that, if possible, the Cape should be annexed to secure the 'master link of connection between the Western and Eastern world'.¹

The Napoleonic Wars provided the opportunity for this to eventuate, and in the Convention between Great Britain and the United Netherlands of 13 August 1814 (in which most Dutch Colonies were returned to Britain), His Britannic Majesty engaged 'to restore to the Prince Sovereign of the United Netherlands . . . the colonies . . . which were possessed by Holland . . . with the exception of the Cape of Good Hope'.²

The strategic value of the Cape to Britain as the half-way house to India was thus displayed. Britain then proceeded to consolidate her hold on the Cape and its immediate hinterland. Many of the Dutch inhabitants preferred to migrate into the northern wildernesses to continue their near nomadic, subsistence pastoralism. This northward migration, or Great Trek (1830) has been described by a prominent Afrikans historian as a clear attempt by Britain to 'exclude other whites from South Africa' and the 'initial cause of South African disunity'.³

In 1843 Britain further strengthened her position by annexing the infant republic of Natal, thus gaining control of the east coast. This action showed Britain's intention to maintain her dominance of coastal areas and her aim of prohibiting the existence of 'maritime republics'.⁴

From this time onward the problem was basically one of either holding the Cape and its immediate environs only — and the Cape was undeniably the 'linchpin of the British Empire'⁵ — or of establishing a defence in depth to exclude possible future interference by going well inland to safeguard British interests. As time went on, Gladstone appeared to favour the former view — a strongly fortified Cape peninsula⁶ and this view is supported by Professor Marais; but the majority of opinion favoured control of a wide hinterland, not only to give added

¹ Robinson, R., Gallagher, J., and Denny, A. *Africa and the Victorians*, p. 15.

² Eybers, G. W. *Select Constitutional Documents Illustrating South African History*, p. 19.

³ Marais, J. S. *The Fall of Kruger's Republic*, p. 326.

⁴ de Kiewiet, C. W. *The Imperial Factor in South Africa*.

⁵ Marais, op. cit., p. 325.

⁶ Wilson, M. and Thompson, L. *Oxford History of South Africa*, vol. 2, p. 290.

depth but also to protect the native peoples from oppression by Boer settlers.

An example of this policy is to be seen in the agreement between Sir H. G. Smith and Chief Moshesh of 27 January 1848, which was aimed at achieving 'peace, harmony and tranquility . . . maintaining the hereditary rights of the Chiefs and . . . effectually confining the Boers'.⁷ In the Orange River Proclamation of 3rd February these aims were effected by placing the 'Chiefs of the territories . . . under the Sovereignty of Her Majesty as the paramount and exclusive authority'.⁸

Britain thus clearly indicated her intention to be the paramount power in South Africa.

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, with the development of several new imperial powers and Britain's power resting increasingly on her possession of India and her preponderance in the East, the Cape became increasingly vital to British security and it became more obvious that any withdrawal would be 'suicide' and would lead to the reduction of Britain to the status of a 'minor power'.⁹

The strategic importance of the Cape is clearly revealed in the minutes of the All Party Commission on Colonial Defence (1879-81) which stated 'the security of the route [to India] by the Suez Canal might, under certain contingencies, become very precarious . . . so great as practically to preclude its use; in which case the long sea route [via the Cape of Good Hope] would be the only one available'.¹⁰

By 1881, the Royal Commission on Colonial Defence in its findings (3 September 1881, CO 812/38, 411) stated that 'The Cape Route [is] . . . essential to the retention by Great Britain of her possessions in India, Mauritius, Ceylon, Singapore, China and even Australasia . . . [and therefore] must be retained at all hazards, irrespective of costs'.¹¹

To achieve this retention, Britain had to maintain her paramountcy over South Africa, thus ensuring the retention of the Cape, which had become the most important coaling station in the Empire. This paramountcy depended on her (a) excluding other European powers from Southern Africa — achieved by a combination of diplomacy and the

⁷ Eybers, *op. cit.*, p. 269.

⁸ Eybers, *op. cit.*, p. 271.

• Crankshaw, E. *The Forsaken Idea — A Study of Viscount Milner*, p. 49.

¹⁰ Robinson, Gallagher and Denny, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

¹¹ Robinson, Gallagher and Denny, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

Royal Navy; and (b) guiding the development of the loose settlements of South Africa towards a loyal Imperial Federation.

All attempts at Imperial Federation were doomed to failure — the Orange River Sovereignty was dissolved at the Bloemfontein Convention of 23 February 1854, and the Annexation of the Transvaal (q.v.) led to the London Convention of 1884.

These failures led to a new condition for the preservation of paramountcy — the need to contain potentially hostile inland republics. Failure to succeed in this regard could only lead to the use of force, as withdrawal from the Cape was inconceivable.

EARLY ENCOUNTERS WITH REPUBLICS

The Annexation of the Transvaal

At the Sand River Convention (16 January 1852) the British government gave to 'the emigrant farmers beyond the Vaal River the right to manage their own affairs and to govern themselves according to their own laws without any interference on the part of the British Government'.¹²

By a resolution of the *Volkraad* these emigrant farmers adopted a title for their state, and called it 'The South African Republic',¹³ such title to take effect from 19 September 1853. However, by a subsequent decree of 21st November, the title was revised to 'The South African Republic to the North of the Vaal River'.¹⁴

This republic remained rural in nature and depended on the Cape for its access to the world. However, as time progressed it grew, began to regularize its borders and slowly acquired a national identity. Two somewhat menacing probabilities began to form. The first was that the republic talked of establishing a railway through disputed territory to the east coast at Delagoa Bay. When the French President (Marshal Macmahon) granted, at arbitration, the Delagoa Bay area to Portugal, and when the republic's President, Thomas Burgers, tried to raise a loan for a railway into the now Portuguese territory, the British became alarmed. The second possibility was that the Transvaal, if equipped with its own 'independent' access to the sea, might slowly drift out of the sphere of Britain's commercial domination, and, worse still, block the

¹² Eybers, op. cit., p. 358.

¹³ Eybers, op. cit., p. 360.

¹⁴ *ibid.*, p. 361.

routes from the Cape to the north and thus be in a position to dominate all Africa from the Lakes south.

Britain, sensing that her paramountcy was being threatened, sought for a cause which would permit annexation. She did not have to look far. The Transvaal was close to bankruptcy and 'all confidence in its stability once felt by surrounding and distant European communities has been withdrawn'.¹⁵ The Transvaal had 'forfeited the respect of the overwhelming native populations'¹⁶ by permitting unchecked savagery in the repression of native uprisings by irregular forces. President Burgers was also making overtures to Germany and other foreign powers and the possibility — although remote — that Germany might step in and dominate the Transvaal posed a very real threat to British paramountcy.

When Theophilus Shepstone, KCMG, H.M. Special Commissioner for certain purposes in South Africa, duly arrived in Pretoria in January 1877 with his 'invading force' of 25 mounted policemen, he was soon satisfied that 'a large proportion'¹⁷ of the population desired British annexation, and despite protestations from President Burgers and one Stephanus Johannes Paulus Kruger, and without seeking a referendum on the matter, on April 12th he annexed the Transvaal by proclamation.

This annexation was neither approved, condemned nor disputed by the *Volksraad* and left the way open for agitation by Afrikaner Nationalists who were only too eager to accept British help in the time of need, but to bite the hand as soon as it contents had been swallowed.



S. J. P. Kruger

¹⁵ Shepstone, T. *Proclamation of Annexation of the South African Republic to the British Empire*, (12 April 1877) in Eybers, op. cit., p. 450.

¹⁶ *ibid.*, p. 451.

¹⁷ *Cambridge History of the British Empire*, vol. 8, p. 466.

Kruger and Joubert publicly stated that the annexation was 'unjust and its governance unprosperous'.¹⁸ The discontent they raised in the extreme nationalist sector of the population led to a new, vociferous and popular patriotic movement arising, which championed the conservative, narrow and introspective Boer way of life. Kruger became, in effect, the champion of self sufficiency in a backward near-subsistence economy against the rising tide of modern industry and commerce with its implications of regional interdependence.

On the other hand, Lord Carnarvon, speaking in the House of Lords nearly two years later, stated that 'there was no alternative except that of annexation . . . there was not an angry word spoken, [when Shepstone crossed the frontier], not a shot fired, not a drop of blood shed . . . a protest by the President . . . was but a formal protest'.¹⁹ He continued to justify the annexation in terms of benevolence towards the native tribes, responsible government and the security of the Cape as of 'paramount value'²⁰ to Britain.

Professor de Kiewiet states that the annexation was clearly desired by both racial groups (British and Dutch)²¹ and it cannot fairly be described as a conspiracy by British capitalists against the rights and independence of the Boers. The annexation was, however, undeniably one of an independent and foreign state despite all the arguments in its favour, and as such it led to a growing resentment towards British Colonial policy in France, Germany and the Netherlands.

The British administrators on the spot — such men as Wolseley, Lanyon and Kimberley — underestimated the tide of Boer nationalism, and the emergence of the Transvaal triumvirate of Kruger, Pretorius and Joubert on 13 December 1880, took them by complete surprise.

The disasters of Bronkhorstspuit and Majuba Hill gave the Boers the initiative — although also an exaggerated opinion of their military capabilities — and set the way for a Royal Commission at which a marked misgiving was shown towards the British by the Boers.

The resultant Pretoria Convention (3 August 1881), returned the Transvaal to republican status, but the word 'republic' was not mentioned. Rather, the 'Transvaal State' was granted (in the preamble to

¹⁸ de Kiewiet, C. W. *A History of South Africa, Social and Economic*, p. 107.

¹⁹ Hansard, 3rd Series, vol. 244, pp. 1655-7.

²⁰ Hansard, 3rd Series, vol. 244, p. 1658.

²¹ de Kiewiet, *op. cit.*, *Imperial Factor*, p. 105.

the Convention) 'complete self government, subject to the suzerainty of Her Majesty.'²² The term 'suzerainty' reappeared only in Article XVIII which dealt with the powers of the British Resident in the handling of native affairs.

In a proclamation accompanying the convention, the triumvirate declared that 'for all inhabitants, be they Burghers or not, all the ordinary rights of property, trade and traffic are the same. We solemnly repeat: our motto is Unity and Reconciliation, our Freedom is Order and Law'.²³

The Convention did not appear to diminish in any way the nationalist and expansionist ambitions of the Boers and its territorial limits did not deter Boer trekkers from going further into the interior.

In 1883 the *Volksraad* resolved to send a deputation to England to replace the Pretoria Convention with one 'more in harmony with the wishes of the people'.²⁴ The new Convention, known as the London Convention (27 February 1884), contained no mention of the 'hateful suzerainty'²⁵ and gave the 'South African Republic' full independence but, in Article 4 stated that 'The South African Republic will conclude no treaty or engagement with any State or Nation other than the Orange Free State, nor with any native tribe to the eastward or westward of the Republic until the same has been approved by Her Majesty the Queen'.²⁶

Britain thought that she had stabilised the situation. The Transvaal was still an economic dependency of Britain, Foreign Powers were excluded by Article 4 as was territorial expansion into non-British areas. Kruger, however, saw the convention purely as an example of 'British spinelessness'²⁷ and the new Republic was thus born in an atmosphere of recrimination.

THE GOLDEN TRANSFORMATION

The *status quo* of the London Convention was soon to be shattered. Gold discoveries in the Transvaal in the mid-1880s triggered off a mass migration into the area. The Republic was swiftly raised from a state of chronic penury to real wealth almost overnight. From a backward, almost stagnant agricultural economy, gold produced a modern,

²² Eybers, op. cit., p. 455.

²³ Eybers, op. cit., p. 464.

²⁴ Kruger, S. J. P. *Memoirs*, p. 196.

²⁵ *ibid.*, p. 199.

²⁶ Eybers, op. cit., p. 471.

²⁷ de Kiewiet, op. cit., *History of S.A.*, p. 108.

populous state. Financial backing was now available to the Transvaal Government and Kruger's dreams of an Afrikaner Empire suddenly had concrete backing. The Transvaal moved rapidly from under the total dominance of the Cape Colony to a position of equality and even near superiority.

This tremendous wealth brought some drawbacks with it. The immigrant population brought with it urban, individualistic and materialist views which were in conflict with the rural socially integrated and calvinistic outlook of the Boers. Their isolation and conservatism were directly threatened.

The immediate danger of this new situation to the British Empire was that the emergence of a powerful, rich and possibly well armed Transvaal might well upset the balance of power in South Africa. The Transvaal made no secret of its dislike and suspicion of the British and the possibility of the Cape being wrested from the Empire by force could not be ignored.



Cecil Rhodes

To the British, the 'Carnarvon' vision of a self-governing and white controlled federation of all South African States under the British Crown seemed to be the ideal solution — a federation whose trade and foreign relations would be dominated by Britain, and in which Britain might regulate the handling of native affairs. This idea was, broadly speaking, acceptable to both Liberals and Conservatives, and appealed particularly to Cecil Rhodes, Prime Minister of the Cape Colony, and also to the most prominent Afrikaner Cape parliamentarian of the time, Jan Hofmeyr.

However, just as Rhodes and London embraced such an idea, Kruger and Pretoria sensed and rejected it.

Kruger, who was described by a member of Shepstone's mission to the Transvaal as 'an elderly man, decidedly ugly, with a countenance

denoting extreme obstinancy and also great cruelty²⁸ was by now firmly established as the champion of the Trek movement and an implacable enemy of the British. He also had visions of Empire, but his territorial expansion was blocked by the British — geographically by denying access to the sea, and by Article IV of the London Convention — diplomatically as well. Even free commercial expansion of the Transvaal was blocked to a great extent by the Republic's dependence on Cape owned railways to move her goods to the outside world.

To overcome these disabilities, Kruger made overtures towards Britain's diplomatic rivals in Europe, particularly Germany, where he gained sympathy from the Kaiser. He revived Burger's Delagoa Bay Railway scheme which posed a real threat to the commercial interests of both the Cape Colony and the Orange Free State.

The rapid influx of miners from overseas — mainly from Britain — presented Kruger with a major problem. If he admitted these 'uitlanders' to the franchise on equal terms with his 'burghers' it would certainly mean the end of his way of life, probably displace him from power and possibly even mean the end of the Republic. He despised the urban, modern uitlanders and openly compared them with 'the baboon in my yard'²⁹ and referred to them as 'thieves and murderers'.²⁹ Worse, he decided to forget the declarations of equality of 1877 and decided to deny them the franchise and achieved this by reviving his franchise laws, and in Law No. 4 of 1890 based eligibility on both naturalisation and fourteen years residence in the Republic.

Whilst such a severe franchise restriction was allied to contemporary Dutch and Belgian practice it was in direct contrast not only with British ideals but also with current practice within South Africa. At all times there had been freedom of movement and of land purchase between the territories, and in fact, two Republican presidents had been British subjects. Burger's family had lived in Scotland, and Brand, President of the Orange Free State, was a Knight and a member of the Cape Bar. No discrimination existed in the Cape against Dutch settlers.

As the uitlanders rapidly outnumbered the burghers and had no apparent hope of legal or constitutional modification of their plight it is hardly surprising that some discontent arose.

²⁸ de Kiewiet, *op. cit.*, *Imperial Factor*, p. 120.

²⁹ Lockhart, J. G. and Woodhouse, C. M. *Rhodes*, p. 290.

³⁰ *ibid.*, p. 291.

Kruger's limitations on the uitlanders effectively checked any possibility of the British dream of voluntary federation being a reality and also, of course, led to agitation for reform which was never fully pro-British in nature — as many miners were quite prepared to accept a more liberal form of republicanism. He was, therefore, to a certain extent preparing the stage for a future conflict.

Against Kruger in Africa stood Cecil Rhodes, the philanthropist-politician of the Cape Colony. Kruger observed, 'This young man I like not; he goes too fast for me . . . I cannot understand how he manages it, but he never sleeps and he will not smoke'.³¹

Rhodes regarded South Africa as a future federation under the British Flag, presumably with himself as Premier. He included in his achievements the chairmanship of de Beers (the largest Rand mining corporation) and the Prime Ministership of the Cape Colony — by virtue of the support of the Cape Dutch Afrikaner Bond, led by Jan Hofmeyr. A declared Imperialist, as managing director of the British South Africa Company, he extended British domination to Matabeleland and Mashonaland and was therefore a 'natural' selectee as champion of the uitlanders' cause.

The franchise laws were not the only form of discrimination practised against the uitlanders. Mining activity on the Rand was divided into two types — the 'outcrop' mines whose activities were conducted at a shallow depth; and the more capital-intensive 'deep-level' mines which were much more expensive to develop in terms of capital and labour. The outcrop mines' main requirement was cyanide, which was not taxed on entry to the Republic. On the other hand, the deep-level mines required dynamite to blast away the hard, intrusive rock encountered at greater depths, required motive power to operate their lifts and other equipment, thus requiring coal, and their labour demands exceeded the available European resources, thus requiring native labour.

Dynamite costs ranged from 12% to 20% of the total working costs of a deep-level mine, and two-fifths of the cost of landing explosives at the Rand was a result of taxation imposed by the *Volksraad*. No tax was placed on cyanide and a proposal to this end was turned down by the *Volksraad* in 1894.³²

³¹ Lockhart & Woodhouse, *op. cit.*, p. 287.

³² Blainey, G. 'Lost Causes of the Jameson Raid'. *Economic History Review* XVIII, No. 2, (Aug. 1965), p. 357.

Wages accounted for up to 69% of the total operating costs of 'deep levels'. The *Volksraad* and the Chamber of Mines both made no attempt to regulate native contracts and permitted the sale of alcohol to the natives, which led to great inefficiency and loss of work. Pass laws to regulate native labour were not enacted until after the Jameson raid in 1895.

Coal for mine power plants was also taxed and as the deep-level mines allocated about 10% of their operating costs to coal, which was subject to high freight rates on the Government-approved Netherlands South Africa Railway Company, they were again subject to discrimination.

Import taxes on mining equipment for deep-level operations were five times higher than those levied on equipment for the chemical-mill processes used by the mainly Afrikaner 'outcroppers'.

It is hardly surprising, therefore, that dissatisfaction should be felt in regard to the government by the mainly British deep-level miners who saw Kruger as the main block to their progress. A decline in deep-level mine share values in late 1895 lent to their desire to reduce taxation a new and more urgent impetus.

Rhodes, who held extensive deep-level interests, was sympathetic to their grievances and was soon to prove that he would risk his political power to pressure his economic power. Kruger's *Volksraad* had turned down the Cape's proposals to build a railway through the Transvaal to the north — suggested by Hofmeyr but obviously backed by Rhodes. Already the Netherlands South Africa Railway was asserting a domination over the Cape and Natal lines by means of tariffs. This tariff block was Rhodes' excuse to apply for the 'Bechuanaland strip' as a new route for his railway to his northern territories.

The wealth of the Transvaal continued to grow, and after 1887 the Rand dominated the Cape in economic terms, and, as its wealth grew, so also did its power to resist overtures of imperial federation. No longer was the South African Republic the poor dependant of the British colonies and, despite frantic efforts by Rhodes, the Delagoa Bay Railway was moving towards the sea. When it was opened the line soon increased the independence of the Transvaal — although barely seven years later it was to serve as Kruger's escape route to Holland.

As his economic position consolidated, Kruger became more arrogant in his dealings with the uitlanders. His administration, totally

unprepared for and incapable of meeting the complex problems of a modern state, was inept and inefficient at its best, thoroughly corrupt at its worst and frequently based on nepotism. The high import duties it imposed made the cost of living high for the uitlanders, who were not capable of subsisting on farm produce as were the rural-dwelling Boers; and Kruger refused to assist them with the establishment of English language schools despite the fact that over half the juvenile population spoke English at home. As the Cape government permitted and often assisted Dutch language education the position did seem to be unfair. As a result, agitation for internal reform gained momentum.

The reform movement was more anti-Kruger than pro-British and contained Germans, Americans, Afrikaners and Irish republicans as well as British subjects, and the movement tended to prefer a liberalised republic to the British Crown. The movement, which was led by the Transvaal National Union (founded in 1892), gained the support and approval of Rhodes who considered that a liberalised republic was more likely to enter a customs union with the Cape than Kruger ever would be. The reform movement was not even particularly concerned with the franchise issue, in fact Lionel Phillips, a leading mining figure and a signatory to the Jameson invitation (q.v.), even declared that the people did not care 'a fig for the franchise'³³ but were more concerned to be permitted to carry out their lawful pursuits without what they considered to be undue government interference.

Kruger, whose sense of smell was as sound as a springbok's, soon got wind of these rumblings for reform. He retaliated by placing arms orders in Germany and commenced to build a series of forts to dominate Johannesburg. His relations with Germany were further displayed at a *Kaiser-Kommer* or convivial gathering to celebrate the Kaiser's birthday on 27 January 1895. At this gathering he openly stated 'I know I may count on the Germans in future and I hope Transvaalers will do their best to foster the friendship that exists between them... [and] I feel certain that when the time comes for the Republic to wear larger clothes, you will have done much to bring it about'.³⁴ This open courtship with Germany and the obvious arms purchases led the reformers to consider violence for the first time. It also showed plainly how unlikely a peaceful solution to the South African system would be.

³³ Lockhart and Woodhouse, op. cit., p. 289.

³⁴ Lockhart and Woodhouse, op. cit., p. 295.

Coincidentally with this, a new Colonial Secretary was appointed in London, Joseph Chamberlain. Chamberlain was a fervent Imperialist and immediately perceived the threat posed to British global security by an ascendant Transvaal with German backing. This threat was accentuated by Britain's isolation — at its worst at this point in time. He saw an urgent need to preserve Britain as the paramount power and revealed his intentions very clearly when he successfully confronted Kruger over the closing of the 'drifts' on 3 November 1895. The contest between Chamberlain and Kruger has been aptly described as 'the opposition of two totally incompatible ideas, brought into precipitate conflict by the rapid development of the gold mining industry of the Witwatersrand'.³⁵

Chamberlain was well aware of the existence of a reform movement in Johannesburg and sympathised with its aims. He insisted that the reformed state should be a British Colony and not a republic, however liberal or sympathetic.³⁶

He saw only two paths open — to support (at a respectable distance) the plot to supplant the Kruger Regime with one more sympathetic to and co-operative with Britain or the Cape; or some form of direct Imperial intervention which would be diplomatically unacceptable in the absence of a very real *casus belli*.

He was aware of Rhodes' complicity in the reform movements plottings, realised that an uprising was possible and planned to send the High Commissioner, Sir Hercules Robinson, to Pretoria after the movement started the uprising, to act as a mediator.

When Chamberlain took office from his Liberal predecessor, Rhodes already had negotiations well under way for permission to use a strip of Bechuanaland, parallel to the Transvaal border, along which to build his railway to Salisbury.

THE 'TRAGIC BLUNDER'

Chamberlain must have become aware of the strategic importance of the Bechuanaland strip at quite an early stage of his negotiations with Rhodes. He could not have escaped the implications of the reform movement in Johannesburg and Rhodes' desire to have access to the border and control of a disciplined and armed body close to it.³⁷ Admit-

³⁵ Fraser, P. *Joseph Chamberlain*, p. 169.

³⁶ Wilson and Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 316.

³⁷ Wilson and Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 311.

tedly, there were obvious advantages — the railway to the north could be built without transgressing the territory of the Transvaal, having the police on the Transvaal border would reduce the need for military reinforcements in the event of the 'drifts' issue becoming a war, and the Imperial Government would be left free and untarnished to mediate in the event of a dispute between the Republic and the Chartered Company.³⁸

Such an action also would involve a military force, outside the direct control of the Imperial Government, in a strategic position where its uses could be misconstrued; left, in fact, in the hands of Rhodes — whose complicity with the reformers was well known — to use as he saw fit.³⁹

Chamberlain's subsequent decision to transfer both the strip and the police to Rhodes can well be called a 'blunder',⁴⁰ or even possibly a 'pre-meditated plan to deprive the Boers of their Independence'.⁴¹

Meanwhile, probably unknown to Chamberlain, Rhodes had instructed Dr L. S. Jameson, the Chartered Company's Administrator of the northern territories, to concentrate the mounted police and, on a signal from Cape Town, to go to the assistance of the rebels in Johannesburg. It is highly unlikely that Chamberlain actually knew of Jameson's role in the plans for the rising, but it is widely held that his knowledge did include 'more than he was prepared to admit'.⁴² He certainly 'actively abetted . . . the Rhodes Plot'⁴³ as he saw in it an obvious solution to the South African problem.⁴⁴ He expected a rising and probably welcomed the prospect of it but had no direct responsibility to it.

However, just as events in Johannesburg seemed to be moving to rebellion, on 17 December 1895, the United States sent a near ultimatum to Britain about her border disputes between Venezuela and British Guiana. Cleveland was using the Monroe Doctrine (and also possibly in light of his forthcoming election) to twist the lion's tail. Although the entire situation was to resolve itself amicably at the Treaty of

³⁸ Butler, J. *The Liberal Party and the Jameson Raid*, p. 56.

³⁹ Marais, op. cit., p. 94.

⁴⁰ Pakenham, E. *Jameson's Raid*, p. 331.

⁴¹ van der Poel, J. *The Jameson Raid*, p. 29.

⁴² Butler, op. cit., p. 270.

⁴³ Drus, E. 'Question of Imperial Complicity'. *English Historical Review* LXVIII (1953), p. 583.

⁴⁴ van der Poel, op. cit., p. 29.

Washington (2 February 1897) its immediate effects on South Africa were most disturbing.

It exposed the utter and total nakedness of British isolation to the rest of the world, caused the Kaiser considerable 'exhilaration',⁴⁵ and, worse still, gave Kruger great confidence. Kruger, of course, realised what was going on in Johannesburg and was merely awaiting the time to act. The uitlanders were weakened by the possibilities of British reactions and the many Americans on the Rand became divided in their loyalty. Disputes broke out about the use of the Union Jack (after the rising had got under way). The rebels were losing confidence and cohesion. Despite this, on 20th December, a letter was despatched by them to Jameson which said, inter alia, 'not satisfied with making the uitlander population pay virtually the whole revenue of the country, while denying them representation, the policy of the government has been to steadily encroach upon the liberty of the subject... every public act betrays the most positive hostility to everything English... the internal policy of the government is such as to have roused into antagonism to it not only, practically, the whole body of uitlanders, but a large number of the Boers... public feeling is in a condition of smouldering discontent... all the petitions of the people have been refused with a greater or less degree of contempt... the government has called into existence all the elements necessary for armed conflict... the one desire of the people here is for fair play, maintenance of their independence and the preservation of public liberties... in the event of armed conflict thousands of unarmed men, women and children of our race will be at the mercy of well armed Boers, while property of enormous value will be in the greatest peril... we feel constrained to call upon you to come to our aid should disturbance arise here'.⁴⁶

The signatories were C. Leonard, F. Rhodes, (brother of C. J.), Lionel Phillips, J. Hammond and G. Farrar. The letter was written in a way that could not but appeal to Jameson and probably encouraged his later actions considerably.

However, the uprising was losing momentum, and on 27th December, Sir Hercules Robinson cabled the situation to Chamberlain, who in turn instructed Rhodes to stop. Rhodes in turn sent a string of telegrams to Jameson to stop, but as Jameson's men had cut the Cape

⁴⁵ Kruger, R. *Goodbye, Dolly Gray: the Story of the Boer War*, p. 38.

⁴⁶ *Report of the Select Committee of the Cape of Good Hope House of Assembly on the Jameson Raid, 1897 Cd. 8380, vol. LXII, pp. 191-2.*

Town wires by mistake the message failed to reach him and Jameson set off on his own initiative with the inevitable result of surrender and ignominy.

The Kaiser then joined in with his famous telegram of 3 January 1896 to Kruger, in which he congratulated the President on his success against 'armed hordes' and his 're-establishing peace and maintaining the independence of your country against attacks from without'.⁴⁷ This telegram, described by William's foreign secretary, Baron von Marschall to the *Times* correspondent, Sir Valentine Chirol, as *eine Staats Aktion* (government act) was actually a softening of the original version which von Marschall described as 'needlessly provocative'.⁴⁸

The telegram served a dual purpose. Whilst it gave Kruger confidence it gave rise to such indignation in England that public sentiment swung towards Rhodes and Jameson. Rhodes escaped any actual punishment and Jameson, convicted under the Aliens Enlistment Act in Britain was sentenced to only two years' imprisonment and, within 5 years was back in the Cape as a Member of Parliament, within 9 years of the Raid was the Prime Minister, and died, a Baronet, in 1917.

Regardless of the British Government's swift denunciation of the Raid, the damage was done, and it was vast in extent.

Kruger was vindicated as leader of the Boers, and had gained an immense propaganda advantage. He had been re-elected in 1893 by only 7,854 votes to 7,009, but in 1898 he was to be re-elected by 12,858 votes to about 6,000.⁴⁹ The Boers, who before the raid had been fairly evenly divided between Krugerism and progress were now united by fear, suspicion and resentment.⁵⁰

The new, pro-Kruger president of the Orange Free State, Marthinus Steyn, shared these views and, on 17 March 1897, he signed a treaty of offensive and defensive alliance with the Transvaal.

This alienation of Afrikaners was not restricted to the Republics: in the Cape, where Rhodes' political career had ended abruptly, the Afrikaner Bond swung towards Kruger and the basis of Anglo-Dutch alliance in that province lay in ruins, as did any chance of Britain obtaining federation by common interest.

⁴⁷ Ensor, R. K. C. *England 1870-1914*, p. 232.

⁴⁸ Letter by Sir V. Chirol, *Times*, (Oct. 14, 1922), p. 11.

⁴⁹ Ensor, *op. cit.*, p. 237.

⁵⁰ de Kiewiet, *op. cit.*, *History of South Africa*, p. 136.



M. T. Steyn

Kruger's dream of Boer hegemony of South Africa was much nearer to realisation than before, and all Britain could hope for was to attempt to contain the distrustful republic by diplomacy.

Even this was fraught with difficulties. Kruger retaliated against the uitlanders in 1896 by his Aliens Expulsion Law (No. 5, 1896) in which any foreigner who 'by reason of his actions is a danger to public peace and order . . . may be expelled . . . [or] may be transferred from place to place'.⁵¹ Further legislation of a discriminatory nature was to follow.

Press regulations restricted freedom of expression, and when the Chief Justice J. G. Koetze began to question the validity of some decrees of the *Volksraad* in relation to the *Grondwet* (Constitution), Kruger passed a decree (Law 1, 1897) which denied the Judiciary the right to 'refuse any law or resolution of the Volksraad on the ground that . . . it is in conflict with the Grondwet . . . it is not competent for the Judicial Power . . . to arrogate to itself the so-called right of testing'.⁵² When Koetze refused to accept this view, Kruger simply dismissed him.

Throughout 1896, Kruger continued to arm. War materials imported through Delagoa Bay in 1897 were valued at £256,291 compared with £61,903 in 1895.⁵³ Fortifications around Johannesburg accounted for another £1½ million and German artillery officers were engaged to instruct the gunners.⁵⁴ In August 1897, the Prime Minister of Natal asked Kruger why he was engaging in such a great armament programme, and received the reply '[for] Kaffirs, Kaffirs and such-like objects'.⁵⁵

⁵¹ Eybers, *op. cit.*, p. 506.

⁵² *ibid.*, p. 512.

⁵³ Ensor, *op. cit.*, p. 248.

⁵⁴ *ibid.*, p. 248.

⁵⁵ Headlam, C. *The Milner Papers I*, p. 58.

THE RULER FROM OUT OF EGYPT

In 1897 another important character arrived on the scene. Sir Hercules Robinson, now Lord Rosmead, had been recalled, and his successor was a convinced imperialist, Sir Alfred Milner, a German born barrister and liberal journalist, who combined a rather German temperament with a brilliant English academic background, which in the words of Sir R. K. C. Ensor made 'a first class administrator, but [not] . . . a diplomatist'.⁵⁶

Milner approached his duties in a restrained and logical manner. He travelled throughout the colonies, learned Dutch and closely observed the developments in the Transvaal.

He swiftly recognized the role of the Republic as the prime mover in Afrikaner nationalism and considered that its further growth would only further weaken Britain's claims to paramountcy. He appreciated the propaganda value of the restrictions Kruger was placing on the uitlanders, and concluded that only a wholesale granting of franchise to them in the immediate future would guarantee British interests, as he considered that a slow movement in this direction might only further encourage 'Afrikanerizing'.⁵⁷

By 1897, the Rand Capitalists had assumed the leadership of the uitlander cause and Milner slowly became their champion, filling the space once occupied by Rhodes. Uitlander grievances were real and no similar state of oppression existed against Boers in either the Cape or Natal. The uitlanders now outnumbered the Boers and paid five-sixths of all taxation — much of which was being spent on arms to enforce their permanent subjection. It is hardly surprising that Milner, who openly declared 'I am a British Race Patriot'⁵⁸ was so sympathetic to their cause.

The re-election of Kruger and his dismissal of Chief Justice Koetze in February 1898 led to a change in Milner's approach. By now, the 'Boer sheep and the British goats were being swept into different Kraals'.⁵⁹ Milner was thoroughly alarmed at Kruger's ascendancy and armaments, and believed that time was no longer on Britain's side and in March he wrote to Chamberlain, stating that he saw 'no way out of

⁵⁶ Ensor, *op. cit.*, p. 245.

⁵⁷ Marais, *op. cit.*, p. 329.

⁵⁸ Hancock, W. D. *Smuts* vol. 1 — *The Sanguine Years*, p. 74.

⁵⁹ *ibid.*, p. 73.

the political troubles of South Africa except reform in the Transvaal or war... Kruger has returned to power, more autocratic and reactionary than ever... I should be inclined to work up to a crisis'.⁶⁰

This view, though it may appear extreme, was that of the man on the spot, and Milner was, unquestionably, a skilled observer and a competent judge of facts. He recognized the increasingly nationalist current in the republics and the increasing centralizing of power on Kruger, whose strong anti-British sentiments were undeniable. To Milner, the possibility of an attack on the Cape was not out of the question, nor was its possible success.

Chamberlain, however, still cautious of his narrow escapes following the Jameson Raid, applied the brakes, stating that nothing short of a serious and flagrant breach of the Pretoria convention would be an acceptable *casus belli*.

Undeterred, Milner began to take affairs into his own hands. His first public contribution was in a public speech at Graaf Reinet on the 1st of March, 1898. This speech, undoubtedly intended as warning to Kruger can also be seen as a plea for moderation. In his speech he called upon the Transvaal to 'gradually assimilate its institutions... the temper and spirit of its administration to those of the free communities of South Africa such as this Colony [the Cape] or the Orange Free State. That is the direction in which a peaceful way out of these inveterate troubles is to be found'.⁶¹

Unfortunately, the speech came too late. It achieved limited support in the Cape Dutch sector but fell on deaf ears in the Transvaal, where it only provoked Kruger and gave a premature sense of encouragement to the uitlanders. The essential question for the British was now becoming one of whether or not Imperial policy could permit the Transvaal to continue speaking without reprimand, and acting in a high handed and bellicose manner without restraint in matters that affected all South Africa 'vitality and closely'.⁶²

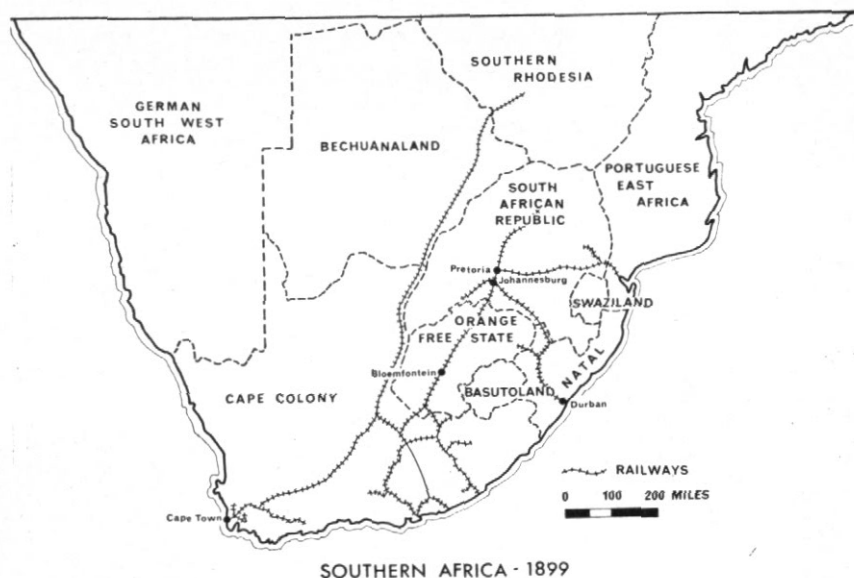
The situation was further complicated by the narrow victory of the now pro-Boer Bond under W. P. Schreiner in the Cape.

In November 1898 issues suddenly came to a head when a British subject, Thomas Edgar, was shot by a Transvaal police constable (with

⁶⁰ *ibid.*, p. 78.

⁶¹ Crankshaw, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

⁶² de Kiewiet, *op. cit.*, *History of South Africa*, p. 139.



the unlikely name of Jones). As this incident acted as a catalyst for later events it is worthy of some detail.

Edgar was alleged to have been involved in an assault on a fellow uitlander in a Johannesburg street, outside his home in Florries Building. Bystanders called the police and Jones arrived to find the victim of the assault lying unconscious on the roadway. Jones, believing the victim to be dead, was informed of Edgar's whereabouts and called upon him to come out. Without waiting for a reply, he [Jones] drew his pistol and commenced to break in the door. As the door opened, Edgar appeared inside with his wife, and before he could be identified or even offer any resistance he was shot dead by Jones. Committed for trial for 'culpable homicide', Jones was released on £200 bail and was subsequently tried before a Boer judge (who had survived Kruger's dismissals) and an all-Boer jury. He was acquitted, and the trial judge observed that 'he hoped the police, under difficult circumstances, would always know when to do their duty'.⁶³ Local British subjects held these remarks to be a commendation of Jones' act and tempers flared on both sides. The uitlanders decided to send a petition to the Queen (against the advice of the British diplomatic staff) in which they spoke against their lack

⁶³ *Papers relating to the Complaints of British Subjects in the South African Republic.* Cd. 9345-1899, pp. 146-7.

of representation (para. 2) the immigration and press laws (para. 9), the control of the judiciary by the *Volksraad* (para. 15), the fortifications of Johannesburg (para. 16), the police and jury system (paras. 17-19) and the Public Meetings Act (para. 31).

The petition concluded by requesting 'Your Majesty's protection to Your Majesty's subjects resident in this state . . . take measures which will secure the speedy reform of abuses and to obtain substantial guarantees from the Government of this State for a recognition of their [British subjects] rights'.⁶⁴

The petition had 21,684 signatures⁶⁵ and, as most of these were from the working class, showed that anti-Boer sentiment was no longer confined to Rand Capitalists. The petition caused tremendous embarrassment. To refuse to accept it would be seen as further evidence of Imperial weakness and would have had severe morale effects throughout the dominions: To accept it would mean a direct challenge to Kruger on the franchise laws which he considered essential to his independence.⁶⁶ This might have led to war.

Cabinet delayed making any decision and again Milner stepped in. In a series of despatches he took up the uitlander cause. 'The political turmoil in the Transvaal Republic will never end' he wrote, 'until the permanent Uitlander population is admitted to a share of the government . . . [which] would no doubt give stability to the republic . . . it would at the same time remove most of our causes of difference with it, and modify and in the long run entirely remove that intense suspicion and bitter hostility to Great Britain which at present dominates its internal and external policy'.⁶⁷ His aim appears to have been to secure an end to the political turmoil in the Transvaal by a reformed and stable republic — which would have been pro-British and thus no longer a menace, as its approach would have been a moderate, less nationalistic one. It appears, however, that he realised that the Kruger regime would never accept such a situation — which would to them be a total capitulation — because he concluded that 'the case for intervention is overwhelming'. He then succinctly drew the Imperial Factor into the debate. He wrote 'The spectacle of thousands of British subjects kept permanently in the position of helots, constantly chafing under undoubted

⁶⁴ *ibid.*, pp. 185-9.

⁶⁵ Ensor, *op. cit.*, p. 247.

⁶⁶ Kruger, R., *op. cit.*, p. 49.

⁶⁷ Crankshaw, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

grievances and calling vainly to Her Majesty's government for redress, does steadily undermine the influence and reputation of Great Britain and the respect for the British Government within the Queen's Dominions.⁶⁸

On 9 May 1899, Cabinet accepted the petition, thus starting along the road to war. Many people hold that Milner provoked the situation, particularly after he abruptly terminated the Bloemfontein conference between Kruger and himself. Kruger, however, must bear much of the blame. Since 1895 he had been arming for a conflict, and was inflexible at the conference, just as was Milner. Even Afrikaner sympathizers regarded Kruger as being responsible for the War. J. X. Merriman, the Cape Treasurer in Hofmeyr's government wrote to President Steyn just after the Bloemfontein Conference in which he described Kruger as 'more dogged and bigoted than ever . . . surrounded by a crew of self seekers and others who prevent him from seeing straight . . . one cannot conceal the fact that the greatest danger to the future lies in the attitude of President Kruger and his vain hope of building up a State on a foundation of a narrow minded minority, and his obstinate rejection . . . to establish a true republic on a broad, liberal basis . . . such a state of affairs cannot last . . . it will well if the fall does not sweep away the freedom of all of us'.⁶⁹

This and other attempts at moderation did bring about some suggested franchise reforms, proposed on 13th August by J. S. Smuts, Kruger's State Attorney. However, Smuts had already (May) observed that Kruger regarded war as 'inevitable or likely to become so'⁷⁰ — and this was before the Bloemfontein Conference.



General J. C. Smuts

⁶⁸ Ensor, *op. cit.*, p. 247, N. 1.

⁶⁹ Crankshaw, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

⁷⁰ Hancock, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

Attitudes, however, were hardening. Kruger added unacceptable provisions to the Smuts proposals, and on the 26th of August, Chamberlain told an audience in Birmingham that 'the sands are running out ... [Kruger is] dribbling out reforms like water from a squeezed sponge'.⁷¹

On September 8th he rejected the Smuts proposals and Smuts informed his government that 'the Enemy [not "the British"] is quite determined that this country will either be conquered or reduced by diplomatic means virtually to the position of a British Colony'.⁷²

Chamberlain was quite right when he said that the sands were running out. The Boers needed to declare war when the grass on the veldt began to grow (October) in order to maintain the horses of their largely mounted army. On 27th September the Free State publicly allied itself with the Transvaal, thus giving the Boers a two to one initial military advantage, and on October 10th the sands ran out, and on the morning of the twelfth 'the plain was alive with horsemen, guns and cattle, all going forward to the frontier'.⁷³

The war was, therefore, an inevitable one. Kruger wanted Africa for the Afrikaners, Britain could not, at her time of greatest isolation, permit any weakness on her line of communication.

Kruger would not back down, Britain could not. The immovable wall was hit by the unstoppable projectile — when diplomacy failed, war followed. As Kruger would not accept moderation he was forced to accept defeat. ✂

⁷¹ *ibid.*, p. 103.

⁷² *ibid.*, p. 104.

⁷³ Reitz, *D. Commando*, p. 28.

A 20th Century Military Force

Richard F. Rosser

HOW can we keep American military capabilities in line with American foreign policy objectives? Can we create a volunteer military force which has (1) the required numbers and quality of people; and (2) adequate budgetary support from the government? There are four basic policies which might address these goals, but only one, I believe, will lead us to a modern military force for the twentieth century.

The first policy which a government can institute to keep the balance between objectives and declining military capabilities is simply to *redefine and narrow its defence and foreign policy goals*. Britain and Canada have done just this in the last decade. We have taken a major if rather vague step in the same direction with the Nixon Doctrine. Yet the United States faces a problem in going further. We cannot give up our inherited position as the leader of the Western coalition, and as a superpower. Even if we wanted to, we could not withdraw from a world which is increasingly interdependent politically, culturally and economically. Such a policy, therefore, is not realistic.

A second policy alternative is to *increase the size and capabilities of the American armed forces* in the face of a newly perceived threat to national security. In a democratic and advanced society with a free press, such a threat must have some basis in fact. A potential enemy must have done something, or have threatened to do something, which appears to have increased the uncertainty about the survival of the nation. A conservative political party in power, of course, would probably react more strongly to such a threat. And many in the military, by training and instinct, would take the most pessimistic view of the potential enemy's intentions as well as capabilities. (We are instructed in our military schools to assume the worst possible case). Yet this second policy alternative remains essentially a reactive move. Therefore, it is not a viable and positive method of keeping objectives and capabilities in balance. We cannot rely on the Russians or the Chinese, for example, to constantly and blatantly threaten our national existence.

A third policy alternative is more within the power of the military to effect. Specifically, the military can attempt to *maintain its opera-*

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tional effectiveness by isolating itself from society in order to guard the purity of its traditions, and to develop a sense of uniqueness and elitism.

Isolation is an attractive defence mechanism for any organization under attack by other organizations or by society. 'Close Ranks' is a natural cry. And if the military became sufficiently small in numbers and sufficiently out of sight on isolated bases, much of the previous hostility to the military and fear of militarism might disappear. Yet this would not be certain. Fear is often based on the unknown. The public might view a relatively small but isolated military, which still would have nuclear weapons and a monopoly of force, as an alien band of mercenaries. (Notice the current reaction of some respected analysts to proposals for an all-volunteer force.) Attempts to maintain uniqueness through isolation, therefore, might very well increase public fear of the military. Such attitudes probably would result in even further reductions in appropriations for the armed forces.

Certain men, of course, always would volunteer for some military functions because of their uniqueness. Indeed, the Marines continue to stress this point in their recruiting. Other men and probably some women¹ would join the military to escape from a society with those values they disagree. The latter motivation for enlistment incidentally would increase further the gap between society and the military, and could give the armed forces the reputation of being a haven for society's failures, outcasts, and misfits.

The central question, however, is whether enough people with the necessary intelligence and skill would join a military organization which emphasizes isolation and separateness in an advanced Western nation. Ambitious and self-respecting young men probably would be turned off by the 'alien' culture of the military, and reluctant to become part of an organization which was neither respected nor valued by society.

If the potential threats to national security in the coming decades permitted leisurely mobilization based on a small corps of highly trained professionals, we still might be able to accept a 'purified' force of fewer men, and less money for equipment. But such is not the case. Deterrence, based on both nuclear and conventional forces, depends on forces

¹ Rather than repeat men and women in relation to the military in the rest of this essay, all references to 'men' should be taken to apply equally to women. In my opinion, women should be considered an equally valuable resource for the armed forces.

in being — not on the potential levels fielded by a revived manpower draft. We should not rely on the possibility of repeating the 1940s in the nuclear era.

The fourth method of keeping military capabilities in harmony with foreign policy objectives is also largely within the power of the military to effect. My main effort in the remainder of the essay will be to analyze this fourth policy alternative in detail. I refer to the policy of *making the military more — and not less — like twentieth century American society.*

The central fact about the American armed forces today is that they are not of the twentieth century. Aspects of their structure and life style date from the second century B.C., from the seventeenth, nineteenth and other centuries. The armed forces are increasingly out of tune with the world in which we live. Society has changed radically; they have not. Indeed, we see signs everywhere within the American military of attempts to pursue the third alternative noted above — isolation from society to avoid change. Many members of the military fail to recognize that the *status quo* in American society is change. By standing still, the military will become further alienated from the changing society of which it is a part.

Here I should state my assumptions for advocating this fourth method:

1. It is essential in a democratic society for the military — if it is to be an effective force — to be supported by that society.
2. A democratic society supports its military only if the society values, trusts, and respects that military.
3. Value, trust, and respect are best achieved — perhaps only achieved — if the military does not appear to be an essentially alien organization within the society. Some degree of alienation, of course, will always occur. The military has the special role of defending the society from external enemies and monopolizes major weapon systems which makes it unlike any other organization. The danger comes from unnecessarily *increasing* the degree of alienation of the military from society.
4. Society — not the military — judges whether the degree of alienation of the military from society is excessive. The military can complain about society being decadent, permissive, and immoral — in essence can argue that society has diverged

from previous norms of conduct. But society judges whether its military deserves its trust. The judgement is evident in the military budget, and in whether or not sufficient, qualified young men join and remain in the armed forces.

Guidelines for Change

In discussing the changes needed to make the American military more like twentieth century American society — in effect, an organization less alien and therefore more effective as an armed force, I would like to provide the following guidelines and caveats:

1. My suggestions should be considered favourably unless they would clearly harm operational effectiveness.
2. Some of the assumptions about the necessary nature of a military organization may still be true, even though based on traditions which are thousands of years old. (I am not against tradition just because it is tradition — I am only against tradition when it does not enhance operational effectiveness.)
3. The problem of judging operational effectiveness is difficult because judging effectiveness is inevitably partly subjective and thus subject to differing evaluations. Admiral Zumwalt has said, '... I have yet to be shown how neatly trimmed beards and sideburns or neatly shaped Afro haircuts contribute to military delinquency, or detract from a ship's ability to carry out its combat function'.² Congressman F. Edward Hebert, chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, suggests on the other hand that the relaxation of restrictions in the military about haircuts is tending to turn the armed forces into a permissive and democratic country club.³
4. A final caution! No set of changes the military might make, regardless of how extensive, would necessarily solve the problem of money and recruitment. If the external threat to the nation is not obvious, appropriations still will be difficult to secure and young men still will question the purpose of a career in the armed forces.

The military perpetuates what is essentially a two-class system.⁴ How often have we heard the caution against fraternization between

² *Time*, December 21, 1970.

³ *Stars and Stripes*, January 12, 1971.

⁴ One colleague has commented that the military really has a 'caste' system.

officers and enlisted men: 'Familiarity breeds contempt?' The separation continues to be emphasized in a variety of informal arrangements which have developed in military society. I was struck by the answer given recently by an official Air Force spokesman to a request to place enlisted families in officer neighbourhoods in base housing. He admitted there was no law which says a base commander must reserve a certain section of housing exclusively for officers, but added that base housing officers must 'maintain the integrity of the neighbourhood. It just isn't recommended to put enlisted into officer housing areas'.⁵

Why does the military still have two classes? (Let's separate this question for a moment from the issue of rank itself.) There are four reasons generally given for maintaining the officer-enlisted system.

First, the separation has withstood the test of time, which in itself indicates the system is superior to alternate plans. Moreover, it must be a valid concept because it is universal. However, unexamined tradition, as I suggested earlier, is not an adequate justification for constructing an armed force for the twentieth century.

Second, the separation is necessary to maintain standards of authority and discipline, especially on the battlefield. This *may* have been true in the days of close-order drill with muskets. But today we have the curious fact that the majority of men in the Air Force getting shot at are officers, who are sent into battle by other officers. Even in the ground combat arms, *enlisted* 'non-commissioned officers' long have ordered and led men into battle. And they have not been dependent on a separate class standing for their authority. But even more significant, I suggest, is the fact that the majority of the men in all the armed forces long have been behind the lines, and effective leadership of these men has not depended on the maintenance of a separate and remote officer class.

Third, the separation represents 'functional differences' between officers and enlistees because of differences in class, education, skill, and experience. This assumption once was generally true, but about the only significant difference left today is the general requirement for officers to have a college education. This differentiation may become meaningless as increasing numbers of young people attend college. The services could attempt to maintain the educational gap by subtly dis-

⁵ *Air Force Times*, May 3, 1972.

couraging college-trained enlistees. On the other hand, the services cannot afford to draw 'enlisted' men only from the some 50 per cent who do *not* attend institutions of higher education. They need an increasing number of intelligent, well-educated specialists in the lower ranks. Indeed, a number of traditional 'enlisted' jobs — intelligence analysts, translators, personnel assignment managers — need college-trained persons more than some jobs held by officers.

The argument can be made that deserving enlisted men with college degrees — or with the ability to finish college — should be given commissions. But such programs, although well meaning, only serve to emphasize the two-class system. The implication is that college educated men should not want to remain in the 'lower' class. Yet many of these same men would prefer to if it were not for the social stigma attached to being 'enlisted' men.

Fourth, the separation is necessary because special rewards and privileges must be offered to get competent people to join the military — specifically, to get officers. Yes, there are some men in the military who like being officers — and never let their subordinates forget it. Men who must rely on a separate class status for authority, however, are poor leaders. And they are positively counter-productive in the attempt to keep well-educated, intelligent, and competent 'enlisted men' in the service.⁶

Now to return to the question of rank. The maintenance of hierarchy is still essential in military organizations — indeed, in any effective bureaucracy. I am not against rank, but against the artificial differentiation between 'enlisted' and 'officer' classes.

New Organization: A 'Meritocracy'

I propose an alternative scheme for organizing our hierarchy — a 'meritocracy'. I would like to see almost everyone begin at the lowest rank and progress upward according to his ability and ambition — a system used in most modern police and fire departments. Rank itself would depend on responsibility, skill, and function. The rate of promotion would be radically accelerated for promising individuals. I would permit lateral entry for those with age and experience.⁷ If we use the

⁶ *The Army Officers Guide* of 1894 states: 'Enlisted men are stupid but extremely cunning and sly and bear considerable watching'.

⁷ Lateral entry might not be permitted in all specialties. There would be little carry-over, for example, from most civilian jobs to combat units.

analogy of Federal civil service grades, the military would hire people not only at GS-7 (or 2nd lieutenant), but also at GS-3, -5, -9, -11, -15, etc. There would be no obvious break between two general categories of rank as now exists.

Society is increasingly complex. Therefore, people must increasingly specialize to serve society. The armed forces also have required increasing numbers of specialists. Indeed, there are almost no unskilled jobs left in the military.⁸

Yet in theory all officers still have 'officering' as their profession. They essentially are 'generalists', capable of becoming generals. Young men at the academies and in ROTC are told, for example, that they must be officers first — and only incidentally intelligence specialists, transportation experts, and so forth. For an analogy in society at large, we must turn back several centuries. Young sons of the landed gentry then were trained to be gentlemen — and only incidentally in how to make a living.

The basic difference between the skills young men have acquired and the duties we ask them to perform in the military leads to an unnecessary waste of manpower. A young man studies in college (and to a varying degree even at the military academies) to be a physicist, an economist, a psychologist, and so forth. At two-year community colleges, terminal education programs tend to be even more specialized. Why shouldn't they work in their particular fields in the military?

A young man no longer would have to make the often traumatic choice between becoming an 'officer' or remaining an 'electrical engineer' (and usually resigning from the service). He could be clearly designated, for example, an 'armed forces electrical engineer, junior grade'.

His intellectual links could be as strong or stronger with his civilian counterparts. Indeed, it might be more prestigious for him to be recognized first and foremost as an electrical engineer. There would be nothing wrong with this. The prestige accruing to the individual would indirectly enhance the prestige of the military, and the military in general would have stronger links with a broad range of civilian

⁸ See the study by Harold Wool, *The Military Specialist* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1968). By 1974, only 10 per cent of the enlisted men in the U.S. armed forces will be in ground combat jobs: significantly, 11 per cent will be in electronics; 17 per cent in other technical jobs; 18 per cent in administration; 24 per cent will be mechanics; 7 per cent will be craftsmen, etc. Data from the *Gates Commission Report*, p. 44, based in turn on Wool's study.

professional groups. The individual in turn would not feel as isolated from his civilian counterparts.

The Need for Diversification

Emphasis on specialization in both hiring and job assignment would be greatly enhanced by the development of separate, largely self-contained, and largely independent branches or corps.⁹

For several decades, we have pursued the chimera of 'unification' of the armed forces. This never could have been fully realized because an organization composed of all 'purple suiters' (the prevailing label for military men serving in joint agencies) inevitably would have been broken down into functional branches with the same degree of specialization as presently obtains, and a new kind of mission parochialism. My alternative would treat diversification — not unification — as a positive value to be pursued.

I suggest three main advantages for diversification through separate branches. First, a specialist would be hired by a particular branch, remain part of it, be promoted within it, and eventually have the opportunity to command it. In brief, the specialist would finally be permitted to practise his discipline or skill in a specific organization emphasizing that skill and be rewarded for it. (For my purposes, the infantry man is just as much a specialist — and the fighter pilot perhaps the ultimate practitioner of a narrowly defined skill). He would no longer leave the military out of frustration at the gradual loss of hard-won professional qualifications by assignment out of his specialty, or out of embitterment because service 'generalists' monopolized the high-ranking jobs in his career field.

Second, functional organizations would enhance morale by encouraging the full development of professionalism in smaller, more easily identifiable groups. A much stronger sense of belonging should result. One of the major stumbling blocks in recruiting intelligent and sensitive young men and women has been the cold, impersonal nature of our enormous military bureaucracies. And youth today are especially rebellious against large organizations. It is often forgotten that the student revolution started at Berkeley in 1964 against the impersonal educational system at that large university.

⁹ The U.S. Army has gone furthest in this direction, although the other services have medical corps, etc. The Army's new 'Officer Personnel Management System' indeed could be a major breakthrough, if it works out in practice.

The development of relatively small, special branches with personalized recruiting — really not so different from the operation of the British regimental system — should make military service much more attractive for American youth.¹⁰ The ability of the individual to participate in the running of the organization also would be much more tangible.

Third, separate branches would finally permit us to shed the 'combat standard' as the touchstone of military professionalism. The code of behaviour of the combat soldier — strict obedience, unquestioning loyalty to higher authority, saluting, parades, short haircuts, etc. — continues to be impressed upon what is now a highly complex organization using the most advanced technology known to man — and demanding the most highly trained specialists which society can provide. The necessity of at least superficial adherence to the combat standard undoubtedly drives many fine young men who are not in the combat arms branches out of the armed forces. And it must be emphasized here that the majority of men in a modern armed force are not in the combat arms branches.

The irony of the situation is that the non-combat officer or enlisted man, no matter how hard he attempts to emulate the combat standard, never quite makes the grade. To the combat air crew, he is the 'ground-pounder' or the 'non-rated' officer (i.e., not a pilot or navigator). The Army and Navy have analogous situations. Perhaps the ultimate irony is that the missile crews of our first-line deterrent forces — on land and at sea — are considered not quite 'warriors'. They do not engage in 'face to face' combat, but are part of a strategic and psychological contest.

I would argue that the 'combat ethic' is perfectly appropriate — indeed mandatory — for the combat specialist. For the non-combat specialist, it is inappropriate — indeed irrelevant and discouraging.

Continuing insistence on the 'combat ethic' of the combat specialist as the only real norm implicitly degrades the other military specialties. What the military finally must acknowledge is that there are many specialties or professions within the *general* profession of soldiering, and that *all* are of vital importance.

Naturally the combat arms branches are still the *raison d'être* of the armed forces. They should emphasize the combat ethic. But all

¹⁰ The U.S. Army is now studying the British regimental concept for its combat divisions. *Armed Forces Journal*, February 1972.

other branches should be permitted to develop distinctive uniforms, traditions, codes of conduct, and professional standards. The *standard* uniform for the intelligence branch, for example, might be a grey flannel (or double-knit) suit. (The Duke of Wellington once said that he didn't care what his men wore as long as he could tell them from the enemy). Some branches would want juniors to salute seniors, others would have a regulation against *any* saluting. The result, however, could be an increased sense of identity with the group and improved morale, leading to better recruitment and increasing retention.

But Who Leads?

The logical question is how does the military co-ordinate these branches? I propose the creation of a group of generalists — carefully chosen men and women drawn from all the forces, selected primarily at the lieutenant colonel level based on rigorous written and oral examinations, and on outstanding records in their specialty. An expanded National War College, assuming a rigorous curriculum, could be an excellent testing vehicle for generalist aspirants.

Some assignments for 'generalist' officers would be at headquarters staffs of the various branches. In this case, they would be working for generals who had chosen to stay in their particular specialty and compete for the top jobs in that branch — which would be reserved for them. The general officer positions, in the central co-ordinating agencies, however, normally would be held by members of the 'generalist' corps. Many members of the corps only would achieve the rank of colonel. But the recognition of the 'generalist' specialty as requiring unique talents might draw the kind of people who can cope with the extremely difficult political, strategic and managerial problems of the Department of Defense.

Informal systems, of course, now exist to select future generalists through early promotion procedures and special ad hoc assignment policies for 'fast-burners'. But the present systems are far from perfect. For example, an Air Force officer who does not become a pilot drastically reduces his chances of becoming a general officer — presently the ultimate aim of the service generalist. (Out of 425 generals in the Air Force, only some 30 are non-rated line officers). Second, existing special assignment policies are not really based on a systematic selection process,¹¹ and tend to favor young officers with 'good connections'.

¹¹ The Air Force 'Palace Vista' program is a welcome attempt to select outstanding young officers, but it too emphasizes the rated qualification for entry.

Finally, the selection systems are heavily dependent on the operation of the 'Peter Principle' — every employee tends to rise to his level of incompetence because promotion is largely based on how well the man does his given job — not on how well he will do a higher-level job.

An integral part of the proposal for a military organization composed of separate corps or branches is the clear recognition that the armed forces will have to pay more for some skills than others. But isn't it time the services accept reality? Every other organization in society must react to the economic law of supply and demand, if it is to recruit effectively. The Gates Commission demonstrated that the services have been able to avoid this only because of the draft.

The military continues to adhere to the theory that every captain's job is equally difficult, demands roughly equal skill, and therefore should involve equal pay. There have, of course, been continual *departures from this principle with combat pay, flying pay, etc.* However, these supplements often have not been enough, and the armed forces have sought other ways to recruit and hold particular skills. Thus doctors have been promoted at a rapid rate, simply to be able to pay them enough to stay in the service. The Department of Defense recently proposed an alternative for physicians: 'landmark bonuses' which would authorize \$17,000 a year for six years to those who would commit themselves beyond their obligated service. Some nuclear submarine officers already get unprecedented bonuses for staying on after their initial obligation.

If the services established separate branches and corps, separate salary scales should follow which could be adjusted according to supply and demand. Obviously, there would be considerable differences in pay, or other rewards. But I would argue that the present system is much more inequitable. Capable, hard-working people in genuinely responsible jobs now are expected to serve for the same wage paid to people of the same rank holding sinecures.

A Flexible Commitment

American society today is highly mobile. Professional men and skilled workers move easily and often from area to area, and from job to job.

The military is valiantly trying to stem this tide. Service leaders talk about 'Duty, Honor, Country' to our young men — and by 'duty'

is generally meant a lifetime of continuous, full-time service. There is nothing wrong with attempting to inculcate such a value. But the armed forces should not believe that they will be successful in keeping enough good men through this appeal. The most mature and sincere cadets at the Air Force Academy, for example, are hesitant about committing themselves even philosophically to the concept of a 30-year service career. It is their life, and they want the freedom at least to try other options.

Yet the military tends to oppose experimentation. It wants complete commitment — or nothing. And a man generally gets one chance to make this commitment. If he tries the military, resigns, and then attempts to return, he finds it very difficult to regain his commission or enlisted rank.

But what is intrinsically wrong with a man who decides to return to the military after a period in the civilian community? He usually is far more committed to the organization with his second tour. And would there be anything wrong with a man who entered the military three times, assuming there were a position open? This is 'lateral entry' — but with very significant differences. Persons in such cases already have been through the military socialization process: they have a military specialty; there is much more information about their capabilities. In most respects, they are similar to persons who have been temporarily assigned for several years out of their career field.

Lateral entry would go far to break down the isolation of the military from the civilian community. Innovative and ambitious people could move back and forth, benefiting both communities. Hopefully, the military would not consider them turncoats.

The military also frowns on 'part-time' soldiers. There is something not quite professional about the 'Guard' because its members have other jobs.

Yet, we have seen the fine record compiled in South-East Asia by the 'part-time' Air Guards units which have been functioning as integral units for decades.

The objection could be raised that these jobs would have been in effect 'civilianized'. But this objection would be based on a particular and rather subtle bias that has been developed in the American military, especially in the last several decades. The individual in the military who wants to remain in a particular job in a particular locale is said to be

'homesteading', implying a lack of ambition and of professionalism. Emphasis is placed on adaptability — which in turn requires successfully moving one's family dozens of times during a 30-year career. It would be difficult to overestimate the number of men who have resigned from the military because of the constant need to uproot their families in this manner. Yet these same men may have enjoyed their work. Couldn't the military begin to stabilize as many assignments as possible, and retain men in such jobs as long as they performed well? Certainly they could be required to move in case of an emergency. Indeed, all members of the military — 'full-time' and 'part-time' — could be subject to this requirement.

We then could erase the differentiation between 'regular' and 'reserve' forces except for those on truly 'inactive' reserve duty. The Commander in Chief would have far more flexibility in managing the total force than he does now. For example, the 'reserves', except for isolated units, were never called to active duty during the longest war in our history.

The Military as Minority

A pronounced characteristic of contemporary life is the increasing integration of society. Racial integration, of course, is one aspect of this trend, but it is not the one with which I am primarily concerned. I am referring to the development in the United States of a common culture. It needs to be emphasized that in many ways ethnic differences, religious differences, class differences, and urban and rural differences are lessening.

In a few decades, the military could be the only clearly distinct 'minority culture' in our society. This seems probable if we move to a volunteer force and at the same time continue present trends. The military's physical isolation, for example, is growing. The services are building more base housing, bigger and better post exchanges and commissaries, leading to self-contained military ghettos — albeit very nice ghettos — within American society. If further reductions in the size of the armed forces take place, most military families may be able to live on military reservations. The American military then would have duplicated within the United States what they have been accused of doing overseas since 1945 — separating themselves from the people (in this case American allies) they were supposed to defend, leading to misunderstanding, distrust, and even hatred.

And why the physical isolation? There are several reasons. Perhaps the main impetus historically has been to make life for the military more convenient — and indeed, possible. No well-tended suburbs surrounded isolated forts in the Indian territories. South Dakota in 1872 had few supermarkets; the commissary was a must. Even today, there is a shortage of adequate civilian housing around many Army posts and air bases in the southern and western United States.

However, what began as a necessity has become almost imperceptibly — and inadvertently — a way of life for all the military. Commissaries and exchanges exist in Washington, D.C.; surely no one would make a case that what they sell is not readily available in the civilian sector of our capital city. Many military posts and bases with well-developed housing areas are now adjacent to urban areas with thousands of homes.

Another reason for the continuing physical isolation of the military — even where it is not necessary — is the complicated system of privileges which has developed. Military families feel an indirect pressure to use base housing, the commissary, and the exchange because this is part of their 'pay' and is described as such. Such subsidized activities, on the other hand, lead to jealousy and charges of favoritism by the surrounding citizenry.

Compounding this whole problem is the continual shifting of individual military families from one station to another. It is much easier and quicker to seek the security of the post or base than to establish one's family in the civilian community only to be uprooted in a few years.

Physical isolation leads to cultural isolation. The military attend base churches, base movies, and base concerts, eat at their own clubs, and, in some cases, send their children to essentially military primary and secondary schools.

Physical and cultural isolation of the military foster a belief by local communities that the military really are a uniquely separate group within society — a group disinterested in the problems facing society at large.

I am fundamentally concerned, however, with the younger generation of officers and enlisted men, and whether they will want to become

a permanent part of what society may consider a suspect minority culture — the American military. Some may, but many won't. The heavy demands of peer group pressure are now more obvious than ever, for example, on military academy cadets. A wig store outside the gates of Annapolis is doing a land-office business. Upper-class Air Force Academy cadets wear civilian clothes at every opportunity. More fundamentally, many of the brightest, most imaginative members of the new generation now in the military are concerned with society's problems. If the military is to retain such people — and to recruit others of similar quality — it must permit these young people to be integrated with society.

The last difference between military life and the rest of American society is the former's paternalism.

In society at large, our youth, rightly or wrongly, have more freedom earlier. They can vote at 18, go to movies which even adults could not see 20 years ago, have their own credit cards, etc. Even our private, religiously affiliated colleges have largely abdicated their *in loco parentis* role.

Officers, however, still are admonished to look out for the welfare of our men. How often have I heard, for example, the term 'Air Force family', or that 'the Air Force looks out after its own'. I am not arguing against common decency. I am arguing against the continual tendency to treat members of the military when off duty as adolescents. (Many of us rationalize our restrictive rulings, of course, as in the best interests of our men — if only they could recognize our wisdom!) Senior officers — and senior non-commissioned officers — frequently act as if their subordinates cannot be trusted and, therefore, need constant supervision. A sergeant told me recently of a request by enlisted men to utilize 'Mastercharge' in base exchanges. Their request reportedly was turned down because higher authorities thought that they might make too many purchases, and later not be able to pay. Yet almost any enlisted man with a half-decent credit rating can use his 'Mastercharge' card at any store in the civilian community.

Traditionally, the new enlistee has been subject to the greatest restrictions on his freedom. But many of these petty and annoying aspects of military life stay with officers and enlisted men all of their careers. There are mileage limits, for example, on how far military personnel may travel on a three-day pass. The list of 'paternal' limita-

tions on what the military can do with their leisure time and with their private lives in short is considerable — especially if they live on a military post.

But are such restrictions necessary to insure operational effectiveness? I would argue that many of them are counter-productive. How many more young men and women would join the military — and remain in the military — if they were treated as responsible adults? I suggest it is not the work or reasonable regulations on the job at which the new generation rebels, but the continual attempt to prescribe a total life style.

Perhaps some combat arms branches still could emphasize strict discipline in all aspects of an individual's life, although the U.S. Army's experimental VOLAR program is demonstrating that paternalism may not be necessary even in the combat arms branches. We know that some people subconsciously seek this kind of a highly structured environment. I have no quarrel with the particular branch or corps which desires to proceed in the old way — if it can recruit sufficient persons to maintain its strength. But I suggest that many branches of the military will have to de-emphasize paternalism if they expect to remain effective organizations.

What Chance Change?

I fully realize how difficult these changes would be for the military. For many officers and enlisted men, the resulting organization would no longer be 'military'. I would be personally uncomfortable with some aspects of my proposed 'military force for the twentieth century'. However, organizational survival may well be the issue for the American military in the next decade. The coming generation of military leaders therefore should examine objectively the issues with respect to the relationship of the military to society, and discard dogma which cannot withstand the test of operational effectiveness. The military has been spared this task for 20 years because of the cold war and a resulting manpower draft. But the luxury of a guaranteed supply of men and a sympathetic public has about run its course. Naturally the military can proceed in the old way. But I do not believe it can develop an effective military force with that approach. The evidence suggests that the military must become more — not less — like the rest of American society. ✂



THE AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY WAR: HOW REVOLUTIONARY?



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FOR the past eighty years, writers have debated the nature of the movement of the British colonists in America in the late eighteenth century towards independence. This movement, in its causes and results, has been characterized in many different ways. In questioning how much change was brought about in America, historians have asked how truly revolutionary was this so-called Revolution.¹ In considering the question, one asks: How akin to the modern concept of 'revolutionary warfare' was the so-called American Revolutionary War? An examination, from this point of view, of the way American independence was won, may contribute some thought to the question as to how truly revolutionary was the American movement to independence. The aim of this article is to assess the extent to which the movement for independence in the American colonies resembled modern revolutionary warfare.

Various definitions are used to describe revolutionary warfare. One which would be acceptable for many struggles, such as recent or

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present conflicts in Cuba, Indo-China, the Philippines, China, Malaya in the Emergency, or Sarawak, is:

Warfare against the established government of a country, by which an opposition political group, using local adherents, attempts to replace the government in some or all of its territory.

Some fairly common characteristics of modern revolutionary wars have been:

- they have been given impetus by internal change which has followed a major war (in most cases, the Second World War);
- a strong ideology has motivated the insurgents;
- political, as much as military, means have been employed;
- the rebels have used guerillas and semi-conventional forces in combination, often against convention-bound forces representing the government; and
- civilian attitudes have played a vital role in the outcome.

Warfare Against the Established Government

In colonial revolutionary wars of the past thirty years, the struggle has been aimed at replacing an established government, which was either staffed by or was representing the colonial power. In 1773, in each of the thirteen American colonies, the chief executive was a governor who, whether British or American, considered himself to be representing royal authority. During the twelve months prior to the outbreak of fighting in April 1775, American patriot 'committees of correspondence' had effectively usurped the authority of the governors in twelve of the colonies,² suggesting that at the commencement of fighting the established government was perhaps patriot rather than British ('Patriot' came to be the term applied to those who fought against the British in the conflict). John Adams could have had this in mind when he wrote that the revolution had been made 'in the union of the colonies [which had been] effected before hostilities commenced'.³

¹ G. A. Billias ed, *The American Revolution: How Revolutionary Was It?* Second Edition, Holt, Reinhart and Winston Inc, New York, 1970, contains a summary of the conflicting interpretations preferred by various historians.

² M. B. MacMillan, *The War Governors in the American Revolution*, Peter Smith, Gloucester, Massachusetts, 1965, pp. 16-17.

³ H. H. Peckham, *The War for Independence: A Military History*, University of Chicago Press, 1967, p. 3.

But the usurped royal governors, some of whom participated in the fighting,⁴ could claim to have plenty of support in the colonies, to be put to the test of arms. Possibly a fifth to a quarter of Americans favoured Britain, and therefore the royal governors, throughout the war;⁵ and some 50,000 American loyalists carried arms in support of the British regular troops who tried to re-establish royal control.⁶ The patriots initially believed their struggle to be against the authority of the English parliament only; but from the publication of Thomas Paine's attack on the king in *Common Sense* in January 1776, patriots recognized their war to be against Paine's 'Royal Brute of Great Britain', himself, whom they had accepted as the final constitutional authority until that point.⁷ Whichever way political power was weighted in the colonies at the outbreak, the war was against the supreme governmental authority.

Use of Local Adherents

As early as January 1773 the Massachusetts Representatives asked the provincial governor why they should 'not then . . . conclude, that . . . the colonies were, by their charters, made distinct states from the mother country?'⁸ However if it is accepted that British Americans fought against their final governmental authority, the king, then one can perhaps accept that the British and patriot armies remained of the same nation. But how important was the participation of the French? Was, perhaps, the war won by French regulars, with American help?

France provided extensive military supplies to the patriots⁹ and French volunteers served with Washington. French naval strength also contributed to the British defeat, particularly in supporting Franco-American ground troops at what was probably the decisive battle —

⁴ J. T. Flexner, *George Washington in the American Revolution*, Little Brown and Company, Boston, 1968, p. 67.

⁵ J. R. Alden, *History of the American Revolution*, MacDonald, London, 1969, p. 453.

⁶ Peckham, p. 199.

⁷ Alden, p. 239.

⁸ J. P. Greene (ed.), *Colonies to Nation*, vol. 2, McGraw Hill, New York, 1967, p. 187.

⁹ In 1777 alone, the French supplied the American armies with 200 brass cannons, 300 fusils, 100 tons of powder, 3,000 tents, a large number of bullets, mortars and cannon balls, and articles of clothing for 30,000 men. (D. Higginbotham, *The War of American Independence*, MacMillan, New York, p. 233).

Yorktown. Yorktown, a victory with great political impact,¹⁰ was won by 10,200 French troops and 9,000 Americans,¹¹ the French commander commenting that the Americans were 'totally ignorant of the operations of a siege'. The campaign was conceived and directed largely by Frenchmen, who ensured nevertheless that the American commander, Washington, was given the status of commander in chief.¹² However, in no battle other than Yorktown did French troops play a significant part.



George Washington

Probably about 100,000 Americans bore arms in the patriot cause, although never more than 30,000 did so at any one time.¹³ British regulars had been contemptuous of their American allies during the French and Indian War, which had concluded thirteen years before the outbreak of the American War of Independence. General Amherst had said that 'if left to themselves [American troops] would eat fried pork and lay in their tents all day long'. Wolfe, the victor of Quebec, described American troops as 'the dirtiest, most contemptible, cowardly dogs you can conceive'.¹⁴ Apparently transformed during the war of independence by their new responsibility to defend hearth and home, American troops were to win, on their own, a number of important victories over British and Hessian professionals. Just prior to the most important of these, at Saratoga, British General Burgoyne was to say: 'Wherever the king's forces point, [hostile] militia to the amount of three or four thousand assemble in twenty four hours'.¹⁵

¹⁰ The Prime Minister, Lord North, received the news of the British defeat 'as he would have taken a ball in his breast', and paced up and down crying 'Oh God! It is all over'. Three months after receiving the news of Yorktown, parliament voted to 'consider as enemies... all those who should advise... further prosecution of offensive war on the Continent of North America'. (Peckham, pp. 187-8).

¹¹ R. Hargreaves, 'Yorktown', in C. Falls (ed.), *Great Military Battles*, Spring, London, 1969, p. 104.

¹² Flexner, pp. 454, 464, 467.

¹³ Peckham, p. 200.

¹⁴ Higginbotham, p. 21.

¹⁵ Higginbotham, pp. 172-3.

While the performance of the *Continental Army* (the name applied to the semi-regular element of the patriot force) was generally to be admired, the patriot state militias were to carry out the important role of establishing military control in many of the areas remote from the scene of the major campaigns; and therefore to prevent the development of any British-inspired loyalist counter-revolution.¹⁶ While French help was considerable, it was American soldiers, continental and militia, who won the war of independence.

Impetus Following a Major War

Most modern revolutions received great impetus from the conditions of social, political and economic turmoil which were caused by changes to the *status quo* during the period of the Second World War. The Seven Years War (1756-62) was in some respects a world war. The British and French, with their respective allies, became locked in combat in Europe, North America and India. The result was a great victory for Britain. But the Seven Years War, known in the American theatre as the French and Indian War, caused a chain of events in the American colonies which were of considerable importance in the decade prior to the war of independence.

The American colonists nurtured a deep distrust of standing armies, born of a conviction that Stuart kings, notably James II, had maintained armies as instruments of tyranny. Nevertheless, the army attained unprecedented popularity during the French and Indian War, because of its destruction of the French power which had threatened the economic and westward expansion of British Americans. Now, however, Britain had to decide what was to be done about her army, which had doubled in size from its pre-war strength.¹⁷ A twin problem was the enormous national debt, which had spiralled to £122 m because of the war. Americans were proud of the assistance they had given during the war; but some influential Englishmen had different views. The Prime Minister, Grenville, complained of American niggardliness in contributing to the war effort.¹⁸

In 1763, a decision emerged to maintain fifteen battalions in America, garrisoned for the most part in the interior. Only two battalions

¹⁶ Higginbotham, p. 11.

¹⁷ J. Shy, *Toward Lexington: The Role of the British Army in the Coming of the American Revolution*, Princeton University Press, 1965, p. 69.

¹⁸ Higginbotham, pp. 33-4.

had been stationed in America just before the outbreak of the French and Indian War.¹⁹ The factors leading to this great increase in the strength of the British Army in America, compared with pre-war totals, had all arisen from the war: a requirement to control American pressure upon the Indians in the newly conquered western areas, and so to avert a costly Indian war; to keep a watch on the 80,000 sullen new French Canadian subjects of Britain;²⁰ and probably to help justify the retention of the greater part of the enlarged army which was desired by the king in the face of the demands of the opposition for economies.²¹

But the problem of the war-induced national debt remained. Who was to pay for the enlarged army in America? The British Government's answer was to take the unprecedented step of taxing the Americans; and of enforcing other means, such as collection of customs duties, for raising revenue in the colonies.

Very few economic demands had been placed upon Americans prior to the French and Indian War. Therefore these new measures were intensely unpopular, and led eventually to war. The colonists, freed of the French threat, now saw little benefit in contributing to the cost of the army, and still less in helping to lighten the load of Britain's national debt. The Massachusetts agent in Britain complained that maintaining a regular army means 'creating a large expense to . . . support a useless, nay I am sorry to say, a dissolute sett of Men to live in Idleness . . . and deprave the manners of the People'.²² By 1768 American resistance to financial measures and continued high cost forced the British to withdraw most of the Army from the interior.²³ This decision coincided with violent resistance in Boston to the hated customs officials, and made it easier to send troops on 'keeping the peace' tasks to that city.²⁴ And in Boston under military rule the deep ideological aversion to a standing army came to full flower; climaxing the twin problems which had grown from the French and Indian War, of the need for a large army in America, and the need to raise money to maintain it; and creating tension in Massachusetts which carried the colonies into war.

¹⁹ B. Knollenberg, *Origin of the American Revolution 1759-1766*, New York, 1965, pp. 34-5.

²⁰ Shy, pp. 52-7.

²¹ Shy, p. 74.

²² Shy, p. 142.

²³ Shy, pp. 240-60.

²⁴ Shy, p. 266.

Ideology

'This MONSTER of a standing ARMY' was born of 'a Plan . . . systematically laid and pursued by the British ministry near twelve years [ago] for enslaving America', declared a colonist, repeating a common belief among Americans.²⁵ The instinctive distrust of a standing army among Bostonians was sharpened by the clash of cultures between puritan Yankee and profane British soldier. 'What has been the Effect of introducing a standing army into our Metropolis?' asked John Adams, 'Have we not seen horrid Rancour, furious Violence, infernal Cruelty, shocking Impiety and Profanation, and shameless, abandoned Debauchery, running down the Streets like a Stream?'²⁶ Jeering Bostonians soon learned to think that a taunted sentry dared not fire,²⁷ and tension led to the so-called Boston Massacre, on 5 March 1770, in which five townsmen were killed; providing propagandists with a bonanza of ideological material. The British soldiers were:

'Like fierce Barbarians grinning o'er their Prey,
[They] approve the Carnage, and enjoy the Day'²⁸

A deep seated fear of oppression by a standing army was an obsession among many Americans, which contributed strongly to the confrontation in Boston which led to war; and later helped to motivate American rebels. The strength of conviction about the danger of a standing army can be seen by the fact that Congress later found it maddening that Washington apparently could not fight successfully with soldiers who were each drafted for only one year.²⁹

But beyond a dislike of standing armies, did a strong ideology motivate patriots? Daniel Boorstin argues³⁰ that the American independence movement lacked dogma. The movement was a victory for constitutionalism, in that the framers of the Declaration of Independence based their arguments on law and history, and not on ideology.

On the other hand, a strong anti-authoritarian trend runs through the writings of Americans of the mid-eighteenth century, indicating an apparent fear of a conspiracy against liberty throughout the English-

²⁵ Higginbotham, p. 48.

²⁶ Shy, p. 385.

²⁷ Shy, p. 317.

²⁸ Greene, p. 165.

²⁹ Flexner, p. 273.

³⁰ Daniel J. Boorstin, 'Revolution Without Dogma' in Billias, pp. 78-86.

speaking world.³¹ This fear can be linked with the distrust of standing armies. 'Rusticus', in *Liberty*, 1768, complains that:

'... Ambition, and oppressive Might,
Presume to rob a subject of his Right',
and of:

'... Fair Liberty declining by Degrees,
Encroaching Slavery lurking round the Land'.³²

Religious leaders urged 'justifiable disobedience' to authority, stressing that man is accountable only to Christ.³³ Churchmen later used the Old Testament to justify the requirement to resist the British militarily: one pastor declared that the looters of Israel and the redcoats desecrating America showed equally an 'insatiable lust of unrighteous gain'.³⁴

Newspapers complemented the pulpit in ideological outpourings. 'A soldier', declared the movement to be 'a most just and holy war... to secure to ourselves and our posterity the inestimable blessing of liberty'.³⁵ Americans admired the anti-authoritarian John Wilkes, the most prominent of a group of well-known English radicals, and drew inspiration from him and from the Whig ideals from the Revolution of 1688.³⁶

A theory prevalent in the literature of the time was that the war had arisen because of the evil in mankind. Britain's moral decay, her 'luxury, effeminacy and irreligion', were ruining the empire. Americans must win back God's goodwill if they were to be victorious. Both Congress and Washington believed that the morale of American troops benefited by organized religion.³⁷

A strong ideology does then appear to have motivated the patriots. It was religious, anti-authoritarian, ascetic and self-deprecating; and obviously owed much to New England puritanism. Perhaps John Adams was right when he said 'The Revolution began in 1620, it was in the minds and hearts of the people from the beginning'.³⁸

³¹ B. Bailyn, 'The Revolution as an Intellectual Movement' in Billias, pp. 87-100.

³² Green, pp. 148-9.

³³ Bailyn, pp. 87-100.

³⁴ Higginbotham, p. 266.

³⁵ Higginbotham, p. 262.

³⁶ Boorstin, p. 84.

³⁷ Higginbotham, pp. 266-7.

³⁸ E. Robson, 'The Namierist School', in Billias, p. 260.

Warfare by Political Means

Typical twentieth century revolutionary armies are directed by a strong regional political apparatus, whose web reaches down into the military itself, to ensure that no military effort is misdirected from political objectives. The revolutionary political structure rivals, and then replaces, the government one; and propaganda is a potent insurgent weapon.

We have already seen that patriot 'committees of correspondence' usurped the authority of the royal governors. These committees resolved to 'obtain the most early and Authentic intelligence of . . . Resolutions of the British Parliament . . . as may . . . affect the . . . Colonies in America, and to keep up . . . Communication with our Sister Colonies, respecting these'.³⁹ Loyalist Lieutenant Governor Bull of South Carolina, speaking of the committees, commented upon 'what perseverance, secrecy and unanimity they . . . conduct their designs; and how obedient the body is to the heads'.⁴⁰ By October 1777 local Whigs had elected a patriot shadow president or governor in each state. Patriots infiltrated and gained control of state militias, expelling loyalists.⁴¹ The patriot governors directed the patriot-controlled militia; some like Clinton of New York or Reed of Pennsylvania, often led state troops against the British Army in the field.⁴²

Prior to the war, Governor Dunmore of Virginia wrote that the 'patriot committee . . . assumes an authority to inspect the books . . . and all other secrets of merchants; to watch . . . every inhabitant and . . . to interrogate them . . . Every county is now arming a company for the . . .



General Sir William Howe

³⁹ *Journals of the House of Burgesses, Virginia*, 12 March 1773, quoted in Greene, p. 194.

⁴⁰ MacMillan, p. 20.

⁴¹ Higginbotham, p. 11.

⁴² MacMillan, p. 98.

purpose of protecting their committees'. (There are obvious modern revolutionary parallels with this practice of forming companies to protect local committees.) Governor Gage of Massachusetts, in September 1774, said that juries were intimidated and judges threatened, and that 'Civil Government is at an end'. Prior to the war, patriot 'Liberty Boys' tarred and feathered those who sympathized with Britain. In June 1776 the patriot Congress urged the patriot organizations in the states to define disloyalty and to counteract it; those who failed the resulting loyalty tests were often placed in patriot-controlled gaols.⁴³

Patriot propagandists were very active and effective. In June 1773 Samuel Adams arranged for the release in the Massachusetts House of Representatives of confidential, possibly stolen letters written by the royal governor. The letters showed the governor to favour 'some further restraint' upon the colonists, and therefore condemned him in the eyes of the House.⁴⁴ A barrage of material inducements directed at the Hessian allies of the British during the war resulted in many Hessian desertions.⁴⁵ In the field of political methods and propaganda the patriot movement typifies a revolutionary organization.

Nature of the Opposing Armies

Washington's Continental Army achieved some successes, but was hampered because of the restriction of many of its members to one year's service only. Washington was careful to avoid conventional face to face confrontations with the enemy of the type favoured in Europe, but emphasized stealth and surprise with his regular force, as at Trenton, where Hessian professionals were out-flanked and defeated after an American march through difficult winter conditions.⁴⁶ These tactics proved frustrating to his main opponent, Major General Howe, who strove unsuccessfully to destroy the principal American army 'as the most effectual means to terminate the expensive war'.⁴⁷ The patriots utilized the militia effectively; and guerilla leaders such as Sumter and Marion achieved fame in the South, where a civil war situation ensued.⁴⁸

⁴³ Higginbotham, pp. 49, 268-70.

⁴⁴ Alden, pp. 134-6.

⁴⁵ Higginbotham, p. 133.

⁴⁶ Flexner, pp. 173-80.

⁴⁷ Higginbotham, p. 150.

⁴⁸ Alden, p. 415.

Francis Marion, the 'Swamp Fox', is often pictured as the 'Robin Hood' of the war. Marion led patriot guerillas in many effective raids



Francis Marion

against British posts and supply lines in the swamps and tangled undergrowth of the South. Thomas Sumter — after his plantation house had been burned by pro-British irregulars — and other patriot leaders, led guerillas in possibly hundreds of skirmishes in the South.⁴⁹ Washington emphasized the development of the Continental Army, as the main arm with which to win the war. But he recognized the value of irregulars who were able to harass the British in what was already, for them, hostile terrain.⁵⁰

On the other hand, the British found difficulty in coordinating operations. The problem which General Gage had at the outset in convincing the ministry of the seriousness of the growing insurgency is shown by his warning to them: 'If you think ten thousand men sufficient, send twenty, if one million [pounds] is thought enough, give two; you will save both Blood and Treasure in the end'.⁵¹ Not enough productive use was made of the considerable loyalist support in the colonies. Loyalist officers were denied the pay and medical benefits allowed to British officers; and loyalists serving with the British were often singled out to perform menial camp tasks. The result was resentment and often desertion.⁵²

Nevertheless, some loyalist troops such as those of Lieutenant Colonel Banastre Tarleton's British Legion were very active. Tarleton

⁴⁹ Higginbotham, pp. 361-2.

⁵⁰ Flexner, pp. 192-3.

⁵¹ Peckham, p. 8.

⁵² Higginbotham, p. 138.

scored some resounding victories against patriot troops in the South, but also burned houses and cornfields of patriot families, sometimes

leaving his victims, according to Marion, 'Sitting in the open Air round a fire without . . . any Cloathing but what they had on'.⁵³



Loyalist guerilla and Indian ally

In the West, Colonel John Butler and his Tory Rangers, supplemented by Indians, laid waste patriot forts and settlements. The Indians recognized that the authority of the English king represented the only likely brake upon westward American expansion onto Indian lands, and gave their support to the British. British and loyalist officers armed the Indians and encouraged them to raid patriot settle-

ments. Patriots were on occasions able to observe armed and painted loyalists accompanying Indian raiding parties, all of which behaved with great brutality.⁵⁴ Irregular forces fighting for the British were effective in a purely military sense, but the barbarities committed by loyalist and Indians, and by 'Bloody Tarleton', were remembered by Americans for many decades.⁵⁵ Much of the activity of British irregulars was counter-productive to the cause of the king.

The blend of insurgent use of guerilla and semi-conventional forces, well received by the population, and of a largely conventional force on the government side which is frustrated in its attempts to bring the rebel force to battle on its own terms, is typical of many revolutionary warfare situations. On this occasion some most effective irregular forces took the field for the government also.

⁵³ Higginbotham, p. 361.

⁵⁴ Alden, pp. 429-36.

⁵⁵ Higginbotham, p. 361.

Role of Civilian Attitudes

Civilian relationships with the British Army in Boston were an important factor leading to war; in addition, some aspects of the behaviour of the British Army during the war contributed to the British defeat. In 1776 General Howe declared that 'the present licentious behaviour of the troops' was 'a disgrace to the country they belong to'.⁵⁶ A British officer wrote at the time '... the fresh meat our men have got here has made them riotous as satyrs. A girl cannot step into the bushes to pluck a rose without running the most imminent risk of being ravished, and they are so little accustomed to these vigorous methods they don't bear them with the proper resignation, and of consequence we have most entertaining courts martial every day'.⁵⁷ Howe's secretary commented that the 'Hessians are more infamous and cruel than any: It is a misfortune we ever had such a dirty, cowardly set of contemptible miscreants'.⁵⁸ Burgoyne's Indian allies, and the Indians led by loyalist officers, behaved with great savagery amongst frontier Americans. The pro-patriot press ensured that the resulting hatreds festered.⁵⁹ By contrast, perhaps Washington's greatest strength as commander-in-chief was his grasp of the importance of influencing civilian attitudes: '... a people unused to restraint must be led, they will not be drove, even those who are engaged for the war must be disciplined by degrees...'. Washington's gentle approach to civilians, together with his enemy's inhumane blunders, ensured the general alienation of the British Army in a 'people's war'.

Conclusion

It can be argued that the *de facto* established governments in the colonies were patriot and not royal; and Daniel Boorstin believes that there was no real ideological basis to the war. However, the American movement to independence conforms with today's commonly accepted characteristics of revolutionary warfare. The patriots rebelled against their final governmental authority, the king; and the struggle was won primarily by local adherents. A major war produced changes which led to the conflict. The patriots appear to have had a strong ideological

⁵⁶ Alden, p. 445.

⁵⁷ Peckham, pp. 46-7.

⁵⁸ Peckham, p. 69.

⁵⁹ Higginbotham, pp. 191, 258.

commitment; and used political as much as military means of struggle. A familiar picture emerges of semi-conventional forces and guerillas fighting in combination, although the British employed para-military forces effectively too. Finally, the vital role which civilian attitudes play in revolutionary warfare is well demonstrated, as British blunders among the colonists contributed to their alienation.

While questions about the nature of the causes and consequences will continue to intrigue historians, the course of the independence movement must be viewed as revolutionary. ✂

ANNUAL AWARDS

The Board of Review has awarded the annual prize of \$60 for the best original contribution published in the *Army Journal* during the year ended June 1974 to Major Warren Perry for 'General Sir John Monash'.

The second prize of \$20 has been awarded to Brigadier A. J. F. McDonald for 'The Indonesian Army'.

BOOK REVIEWS



FULL CIRCLE, by Lieutenant General Sir Sydney Rowell. Melbourne University Press, 1974, pp. xii, 206. \$9.90.

Reviewed by Mr A. J. Hill, Senior Lecturer in History, Faculty of Military Studies of the University of New South Wales, R.M.C. Duntroon.

DURING the spate of memoirs after Hitler's war, Winston Churchill is said to have remarked that his generals were selling their lives dearly. Not so the Australians for whom silence, if not golden, has been customary. Now after almost thirty years it has been broken by General Rowell in this attractive and readable account of his forty-three years service. That only two Australian commanders have published their memoirs remains as much a matter of surprise as of regret; the other is Admiral Collins whose cheerful and anecdotal book *As Luck Would Have It* appeared in 1965. Blamey did not go beyond drafts for some chapters of two books on his experiences in the Second World War; it is not known whether Brudenell White or Monash even contemplated the task; an offer by an English publisher for his memoirs was refused by Chauvel. Historians as well as soldiers may be permitted to hope that General Rowell, who started a good deal in the Army, has begun a new fashion among our taciturn senior officers.

It was Rowell's misfortune to be invalided home from Gallipoli after serving briefly as adjutant and squadron commander in 3rd Light Horse Regiment. Owing to an extraordinary rule barring regular officers once invalided from returning to the AIF abroad, he was denied participation in the dramatic series of Light Horse victories from Romani to Damascus and beyond. The loss of this experience was only a temporary setback. He was at Camberley in 1925-26 when Fuller, Brooke and Montgomery were teaching; Alexander, F. S. Toker and A. E. Nye were among his fellow students. In 1937, he attended the Imperial Defence College with his old classmate Arthur Selby, Keith Park and W. J. Slim. It was in such ways that the best of the handful of dedicated professionals were kept close to the mainstream of military and strategic thinking in the dreary inter-war years when but for the Staff Corps the Army, in Rowell's view, might have collapsed. That they soldiered on for twenty years with miserly pay, derisory superannuation and little prospect of promotion must be remembered to their honour.

Blamey's selection of Rowell as GSO1 of his 6th Division placed the latter in a position analogous to that of Brudenell White in the formation of the 1st AIF; from September 1939 for two years he was virtually Chief of Staff of the 2nd AIF. It is not possible yet to establish the magnitude of his contribution but reading between the lines of his own modest account there can be no doubt of its importance. Like White, he was able to organize two outstanding HQ, first with 6th Division and then with 1st Australian Corps. But Blamey was in some respects a more difficult commander to serve than Bridges or Birdwood, and Rowell ruefully admits that of the three aims he set himself as BGS only one, the establishment of the Reinforcement Training Depot, was achieved. The others — training Corps HQ for operations and the establishment of an AIF administrative HQ under its own commander — were not realized owing to Blamey's deliberate policy. Consequently Corps HQ was required to perform two disparate tasks becoming deeply immersed in routine administration at the expense of its true role. So tight was Blamey's grip that he made no delegation when Corps HQ moved up to Cyrenaica in January 1941 — its first move as a HQ — and only a minor delegation when he went to Greece in April. Rowell asserts that this policy was not only an obstacle to the training of the HQ and of the divisions but also 'led to the over-concentration of the commander on a mass of administrative detail at the expense of

the broader aspects of . . . policy'. He contrasts the organization with that of the NZEF for which 'Freyberg set up a proper base . . . [and] . . . gave its commander the widest delegation and . . . his complete trust and confidence'.

Rowell is critical of Blamey's two hats (later there were three when he became Deputy C-in-C, Middle East), because he 'was constantly involved in matters in no way directly concerned with the training and operational efficiency of the AIF . . .' In his view, the proper system is to have a force commander to deal with the theatre commander while corps and divisional commanders lead their formations in battle. Blamey, he considers, was well suited to the former role while the field commands 'would have been better in the hands of younger and more active officers'.¹ The trials of the withdrawal in Greece, as depicted by Rowell, support his opinion; by 22nd April, the Corps Commander was so 'tired and distressed' that Mackay, after receiving Blamey's verbal orders for the evacuation, felt it necessary to ask Rowell to go through them again. The author is critical of many of the command decisions in Greece from the initial location of the New Zealand division to the order for Blamey, Mackay and Freyberg to return to Egypt.

Rowell's activities, when he got wind of the proposed Syrian campaign, were largely responsible for the readiness of HQ 1st Australian Corps to control the operations although initially there was no corps commander. Blamey was in Cairo wearing his third (Deputy C-in-C's) hat and stubbornly refusing to appoint Lavarack to the Corps. Later he changed his mind and, as Hetherington has shown, revealed energy and determination in dealing with General Maitland Wilson who was trying to fight a battle in Syria from a hotel in Jerusalem. Australians were not impressed by 'Jumbo' Wilson, 'that great facade' as this writer once heard Morshead call him.

Rowell's service in the Pacific falls into three periods; from August 1941 to March 1942 when he was DCGS to General Sturdee, from March to the end of July when he was GOC 1st Corps in Southern Queensland and August-September when he was GOC New Guinea Force. Blamey had selected him for both key commands. His account of the third climactic period and its tragic ending is cool and dignified. For long the only sources for it have been Dudley McCarthy's volume

¹ Blamey was 57 when he commanded Anzac Corps in 1941; G. G. Simonds led 2 Canadian Corps in Normandy at 41. Rowell was 47 when he commanded New Guinea Force in 1942.

of the Official History and John Hetherington's biography of Blamey recently re-issued in expanded form. Rowell's vigorous and destructive analysis of Blamey's reports on him and of Blamey's motives in removing him from his command redresses the balance but Hetherington and Rowell should be read together. While Hetherington's analysis of the clash between the two is adequate as far as it goes — he regards it as a crisis between two men under stress who had little in common but their profession — Rowell's is the more subtle, seeking as it does Blamey's motives in his insecure political situation in September 1942. General Lloyd's remark to Rowell when he arrived in Melbourne after the explosion was, perhaps, as near to the truth as we are likely to penetrate: 'This would have happened to anybody. You were getting too close to the throne!' It is not without significance that the Prime Minister, John Curtin, showed Rowell a list of those who were being discussed in various quarters as possible successors to Blamey. It included his own name.

According to Hetherington, when Blamey told Rowell in July that he was to go to New Guinea and that 7th Division was to move there Rowell remarked: 'The trouble is, it's a month too late' and that view has been confirmed by Gavin Long. 'The setbacks in Papua had been largely the result of the failure of Macarthur and Blamey to send some of their best troops to the threatened area soon enough and promptly to organize air supply on a maximum scale.'² Macarthur, having lost the Philippines, was in no position to lose his next battle in New Guinea yet he failed to visit the threatened area until well after the crisis. Blamey, in a similar position, did not go near Moresby until he was sent by the War Cabinet (12-14 September) but then publicly expressed his confidence in Rowell and his troops. Macarthur's curious performance in his first six months in Australia leads one to wonder what disasters might have befallen the Allies had he been given the supreme command in N.W. Europe against Rommel and von Rundstedt.

If Rowell was the victim of his superiors he suffered also from the weakness and inexperience in military affairs of the Prime Minister. Perhaps only a Hughes or a Menzies could have handled Macarthur and Blamey: Curtin wanted justice for Rowell but instead of calling Blamey to heel when he pursued his subordinate with the venom normally confined to a Sicilian vendetta, he sent Frank Forde, the Army

² *Macarthur as Military Commander*, p. 110.

Minister to persuade Blamey 'to soften his attitude'. Poor Forde did not relish this role and there is a comic irony in his request to Rowell for advice on what he should do. In the end, Curtin was persuaded to intervene on Rowell's behalf.

Only Rowell comes out of September 1942 with credit. At the very least it can be said that he laid the foundations of the victory which Blamey and Herring completed but which was loudly claimed by Macarthur who wrote his own communiques. Rowell quotes Freyberg's statement to Gavin Long: 'Someone has to fight the first battle and he has to fight it with the weapons and troops that his Government has chosen to give him in peace'. This had been Wavell's lot in the Middle East in 1940-41 and so for a time it was Rowell's in New Guinea in 1942.

Blamey was prevented from destroying Rowell and relented sufficiently to allow the British Army to rescue him from exile in Cairo and use his abilities fruitfully in developing 'the total use of air power in direct support of the land battle' and other tactical innovations. He returned to Australia in January 1946 to become VCGS and renew his partnership with Sturdee who had been appointed CGS. Sturdee had made acceptance of his post conditional upon Rowell's appointment and restoration of his rank of lieutenant-general but Rowell did not learn of this until after Sturdee's death. Chifley was now Prime Minister; his position in this story is clear enough from his remark to Rowell on his return: 'I hate bloody injustice'.

This final period of his service, which was crowned when he succeeded Sturdee as CGS in 1950, was rich in experience and innovation. There is much interesting comment and reflection on problems of command, civil-military relations and aid to the civil power for it fell to Rowell in Sturdee's absence to organize the Army's part in the coal strike of 1949. Rowell also had to deal with the Army's involvement in Korea, the first National Service scheme, the development of the ARA and much else on the international plane. As senior of the Chiefs of Staff he occupied a position similar to that of the modern Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff. Thus a soldier's story which begins with a certain element of disappointment in World War I and continues through a brilliant period in World War II until it is checked and turned aside in frustration, concludes with honour and high achievement.

One could wish that this book had been longer especially in those sections where the author discusses some of the great problems of the

profession of arms. It reveals a man of great strength of character, generosity of spirit and a keen sense of humour. He writes with pride but no bitterness and continually acknowledges his indebtedness to those with whom he served, especially Vernon Sturdee, Ker Squires, the staff of 1st Australian Corps and others such as Forde, Menzies, Chifley and F. G. Shedden. The sketches of his contemporaries and of the events in which he moved make *Full Circle* an important contribution to the history of the Army. ✂

MONTHLY AWARD

The Board of Review has awarded the \$10 prize for the best original article in the July 1974 issue of the journal to Major M. G. Langley for his contribution 'Industrial Relations and the Australian Army'.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Sir,

'Blamey, Controversial Soldier'

I wish to challenge a statement which appeared in the above-mentioned Book Review in *Army Journal*, June 1974 (pp. 54-5):

Casey, then a minister in the Lyons government, had the task of convincing Lyons of Blamey's talents. Hetherington relates that Lyons remained sceptical until he met Blamey personally. Casey's judgement of Blamey was to prove sound. The Government's selection of Blamey for senior command is revealed in an interesting way by Sir Robert Menzies (also a member of the Lyons government) in a Foreword to Hetherington's book.

I am at a complete loss to understand the contention that Mr J. A. Lyons (Australian Prime Minister 1931-39) was in any way involved in the selection of Sir Thomas Blamey for senior command. Lyons died in April 1939; he was succeeded as Prime Minister (briefly) by the late Sir Earle Page, who in turn was succeeded by Sir (then Mr) R. G. Menzies. As is common knowledge, World War Two commenced on 3 September 1939 (Mr Menzies having made the historic announcement to the nation). Blamey was appointed to command the Australian Imperial Force (then comprising the 6th Australian Division and ancillary troops) on 13 October 1939.

Kenmore
Queensland

Major R. E. C. Hearle (RL) ✂

* Major Mench replies.

Hetherington does not, nor did I mean to, assert that Blamey was appointed to a wartime command by Lyons acting from the grave. (Lyons died on 7 April 1939; Blamey was appointed GOC 6 Division on 28 September 1939 according to Hetherington (p. 80) and on 13 October 1939 according to Major Hearle and MS records).

As to Lyons' role in Blamey's selection for senior command, Major Hearle misinterprets what I wrote. I am at fault for any ambiguity:

I was merely summarising Hetherington's discussion of the way in which Blamey's career benefited from high political preferment and attention from September 1938 onwards (pp. 78-80). Joseph Lyons was one of Blamey's detractors who changed his mind after he met him.

Hetherington contends that because of Blamey's prominent pre-war service as a member of the Manpower Committee and as Controller-General of the Recruiting Secretariat and because of the opinion which Menzies, Casey and other political leaders had of him, his selection for leadership of the AIF was virtually assured once war broke out.

A further point. I am indebted to Major J. H. Hoare of the Office of the MS for correcting a point of detail. Blamey was commissioned in the *Administrative and Instructional Staff*, not the *Cadet Instructional Corps*. His first posting was: Cadets, 3MD.

Faculty of Military Studies
RMC Duntroon

Major P. A. Mench ✂

Genesis of the Royal Australian Army Dental Corps

It was pleasing indeed to note in *Army Journal* No. 300 (May 1974) that at long last some endeavour is being made to create a history of the Royal Australian Army Dental Corps. This was strongly advocated 30 to 40 years ago, but we never could succeed in getting the project undertaken officially.

At the same time I must — as a participant in those days — express regret at the errors occurring in the article — for accuracy is essential in any historical record.

To set the record right I append a list of the errors I have noted.

This is submitted in no spirit of carping criticism — I applaud the endeavour — but is merely submitted in an effort to have the record accurate:

Page 25 — Line 27, should be 'Australian' Director General of Medical Services.

Page 26 — Illustration, should be 1918 — there was no Australian Camp in Moascar in 1916 — I know for I had the 'Australian Dental Hospital' built there in 1918.

- Page 27 — Line 9, should be spelt DOUGLASS.
- Page 28 — Lines 2 & 5, should be F. A. MAGUIRE.
Line 4, should be AAMC — there was no RAAMC in 1915.
- Page 28 — Illustration, the Dental Officer was Lieut F. A. COMINS of 3rd Light Horse Field Ambulance.
- Page 29 — Line 10, 'LUMB' — Lumb enlisted as a stretcher bearer in the 3rd Light Horse Field Ambulance in Victoria. In Egypt he was seconded for dental duty with Captain A. L. LOGAN, NZMC (Dental Officer) and posted to 1st AGH — which was a South Australian unit.
- Page 30 — Line 1 — should be 'Honorary' Lieutenants.
" 2 — G. DOUGLASS.
" 12 — insert 'only' before 'field allowance'.
" 16 — it was spelt 'Sam Browne' in those days.

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